From Sport Participation as a Legacy of Sport Events to Leveraging Sport Events for Sport Participation: A Scoping Review

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Sport participation as a possible legacy of sport events has become an increasingly popular line of inquiry (e.g., Weed et al., 2015). There is, however, an important call to shift our thinking from legacy to leveraging desired outcomes of sport events (e.g., Chalip, 2006, 2014 & 2018), including sport participation (e.g., Taks et al., 2013 & 2018). Research on leveraging sport events for participation has been sporadic, and there is a need to illustrate this shift and synthesize findings. Thus, the purpose of this study is to conduct a scoping review of literature that addresses sport participation impacts, outcomes, and legacies from sport events, and leveraging events for such outcomes. While scholars have explored health and socioeconomic impacts of major multisport events (McCartney et al., 2010), and sport participation impacts of Olympic and Paralympic Games (Weed et al., 2015), this scoping review is unique in that it addresses events of varying size, scale, and scope (e.g., mega spectator events to mass participation events, multi-sport to single sport, etc.).

In addition to synthesizing the literature, this study contributes to the methodology of the scoping review process by suggesting a more comprehensive method of article identification. This review undertook two systemic search methods: 1) the traditional databases search; and 2) a systematic journal search. In the first method, databases were examined for articles that explored sport participation impacts, outcomes, legacies and leveraging of sport events using appropriate keywords. Article titles, key words, and abstracts were examined for relevance. Additionally, articles had to be either peer-reviewed or book chapters. The second method involved searching the online issues of academic journals containing articles that explored sport participation impacts, outcomes, legacies or leveraging of sport events. Beginning with the top three journals in sport management (JSM, SMR and ESMQ), article titles, key words, and abstracts were examined for relevance. After each round of journal search, the reference lists of identified articles were examined for additional sources that addressed sport participation impacts of sport events. The journals where the additional articles were published were then examined for relevant articles. This process was repeated until no new articles arouse. A total of four rounds of journal searches took place. For both methods, articles had to be available online, and written in English.

The database search yielded 134 articles, and the journal search yielded 103 articles. There are 170 total unique articles, 67 of which were uncovered by both search techniques, while 67 were unique to the database search, and 36 were unique to the journal search. The distinctive outcome between the database search and the journal search is important as it informs researchers that one or the other method alone is insufficient to generate a comprehensive overview of the work in a specific area.

Content analysis is currently in progress, and results on the state of the body of knowledge on sport participation impacts, outcomes, legacies and leveraging of sport events for sport participation will be presented.