

Olympic Games and Mega Events Legacy Planning as a Tourism Initiation Strategy: Developments and Implications



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Abstract Olympic Games and mega sport events could prove to be an effective strategy towards building a new regenerated reality for cities and countries. Spectacular sport venues, outstanding sport performances and the overall exciting event atmosphere attract the attention of the international audience and promote a new positive and appealing image for the host city. However, considerable evidence suggests that the post-event reality becomes problematic when a considerable number of sport venues remain underused and the overall development for local communities is considerably less than expected. With the appealing picture of the staged sport event gradually fading, the local authorities have to face a huge superstructure left behind to exploit but proof suggests that is disproportionate to the capabilities and needs of the local people. Planning a comprehensive legacy scheme is presently strongly suggested by international sport bodies as well as citizens' groups realizing that the viability of Olympic Games and mega sport competitions lie heavily on the post-event development that could justify the enormous costs invested and boost local economy. Tourism initiation and development are examined in the present study as a possible compatible developmental scenario produced by an effective legacy programming prior to event staging or even event bidding. Using qualitative content analysis, a plethora of theoretical paradigms, event-related research, host city experiences and sport bodies' legacy policies are examined here to advice on applicable sport tourism destination enhancement techniques embedded in the basic city's event selection and hosting process. The analysis of available material produced positive indications of legacy programmes encompassing tourism initiation tools as part of a holistic regenerating strategy for local communities, evidently impatient to experience the promised positive returns of a mega event that didn't fail to create a sustainable positive image for the locality.

Keywords Sport tourism · Events tourism · Post-events legacy · Sport venues · Olympic games legacy · Events' impact

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1 Introduction

The success of mega events like Olympic Games and Football World Cup goes beyond a quality competition enjoyed by a wide audience. Evidently, events have the power to intervene in social functions producing positive long-term impacts on the local host communities. The optimistic part of the literature suggests that post-event facilities and infrastructure will contribute to a multifaceted and internationalized local economy. However, authors like Matheson (2012) argue that mega events' positive immediate as well as long-run impact is often exaggerated. Then, Atkinson et al. (2008) suggest that post-event facilities have to present high usage rates and a sufficient viability plan in order to justify the huge investments needed. The post-event reality is questioned, when extravagant sport venues are underused and the lack of a proactive planning behaviour is hugely evident with the cities failing to benefit from the events' potential.

The concept of legacy contemporarily receives significant attention as the most applicable strategy of safeguarding the sport venues as well as acting as a platform of local development. Smith and Fox (2007) support the effective design of legacy programming in order to achieve sustainable and productive post-event development. The rise and development of tourism seem to be the most rational outcome of a well-promoted city that now struggles to manage an exaggerated infrastructure as well as local residents' expectations for a sustainable future. Tourism increases post-event seems to be the most evidenced outcome but whether this is a long-term development remains to be proved. Presently, event legacy planning fails to include tourism development, while the organizing authorities focus largely on the successful bidding and planning of the demanding mega event. Similarly, sport governing bodies perceive legacy narrowly seeking to increase sport participation and leave behind sport-specific facilities that prove their power in developing their sport further. Host cities facing huge infrastructural changes and governing challenges concentrate on the successful accommodation of the event unable to plan ahead and exploit the event's promotional and developmental role.

Thus, the present study aims to examine the factors that affect an efficient legacy planning that would achieve tourism enhancement and further development. Available research, sport bodies documentation and real cases are analysed to provide understanding into the reasoning behind this inefficiency. Hopefully, findings could advise on the embedment of similar practices into the host city selection and hosting processes, but also into the holistic long-term sustainable planning of the host community.

2 Theoretical Considerations

2.1 *Sport Venues as a Local Regeneration Strategy or in Constant Need for Regeneration?*

Sport venues' importance goes beyond their architectural appeal or technological advancement presenting invaluable social and cultural impact in the contemporary era. Accommodating historic performances and worshipping sport expressions, the venues are now categorized amongst monuments of cultural importance (Kiuri & Teller, 2015). Authors like Nelson (2002) and Shimmon (2004) underline the intrinsic value of the sport venues early appreciated and protected by international organizations and actions such as the "Blue Shield" and the "Treaty of Hague" positioning them at the centre of the social, cultural and economic life. Despite the lack of sufficient research proving this appealing character of the new sport venues, indications of this effect on visitors have already been recorded. Work by Clapp and Hakes (2005) attempted to measure this charming effect new American football stadiums have on visitors noting an increase of 32–37% during the first year of operation. Despite this recorded optimism for venue attendance new sport venues authors term this tendency "the honeymoon effect" with temporary results and questionable returns on the huge investments needed.

The rapid growth and universality of sports brought sporting expressions from all continents creating new markets and thus, expanding the spectating masses further. New sports, along with the gradual inclusion of women at all sports, produced an equivalent increase in athletes, technical officials, media and overall participating bodies leading to a massive boost in built infrastructure and sport superstructures locally (Gold & Gold, 2011). These factors along with the growth of Paralympic Games and the pressure by the international sport federations for bigger venue capacities led to an inevitable increase on hosting venues both permanent and temporary and expectedly, construction and organizational costs (Cashman & Darcy, 2008; Darcy & Taylor, 2013; Pitts & Liao, 2013).

The appreciation of a mega event's positive impact is evident in the existing literature mainly based on the international exposure the city receives through price-less broadcasting hours (Chappelet, 2012). However, mapping a viable future for venues post-Games is often overlooked by organizers heavily focused on hosting the event and preparing an operational and welcoming city. One of the most vivid proofs of inefficient post-event legacy planning is the inability to provide a viable sport venue operation. Large sport venues are often unexploited or abandoned in the absence of a holistic usage plan. Facing the post-event reality will be more challenging when the venue use is not a product of a pre-event planning scheme. Answering to demanding event requirements can disorient the post-event usage plans since resources are directed towards the successful staging of the event primarily. Schmedes (2015) argues that refurbishing an existing sport venue to host an event is the logic strategy that will safeguard the resources invested, and therefore justify the reasoning behind constructing the venue in the first place. However, literature fails

to reach an agreement on the most effective management of post-event venue legacy with authors like Anderson (2000) suggesting that constructing a new contemporary sport venue is more effective than having to adjust an existing one since the modern and more sophisticated venue profile would act as a strong motivating factor for increased attendance.

The KPMG Sports Advisory Report (2015) on “Planning for a sustainable future” suggests three basic directions of post-event venue use organizers are facing either prior or after the event staging. Firstly, “maintaining the present venue” structure and main features suggest that there is sufficient demand and that no amendments are necessary. This is mainly the case of Olympic Stadiums and large football venues where capacities and facilities’ rearrangement is inelastic. Secondly, the “capacity downsizing” to meet local needs and owners’ plans suggests a usual post-event strategy since Olympic and mega level facilities will not be needed in the near future. It is considered as one of the most sustainable approaches to operate a sport venue to mega event demands without jeopardizing local needs in the long run. In Athens 2004 Olympic Games, the boxing competition hall reached almost 10,000 seats capacity through temporary construction to be lowered to just 3,000 after the event was completed to satisfy neighbourhood sporting needs. Since then, the constant high usage levels of the hall suggest a great example that mega events can be organized effectively without risking the viability of the venue in future (Kourtesopoulou et al. 2009). Similarly, the present ‘Badminton Concert Hall’ demonstrating its 2004 Olympic history is transformed into a successful theatre and music hall ever since. Lastly, the daring scenario of “venue demolishing” or “reconstruction” suggests a necessity when new sport and spectating requirements cannot be met, and the decision to move forward dictates a radical action to the point of elimination. However, sport tradition often proves to be strong enough to sustain sport venues unaltered strictly for sentimental reasons of the sport community. Additionally, the dilemma between demolishing and refurbishing a sport venue is difficult amongst owners since they would have to admit that the initial decision to be constructed is proved false (Darcy & Taylor, 2013).

2.2 Challenging the Mega Event Legacy Concept

Despite the evident importance of mega events’ legacy, there is no equivalent volume of literature produced that would enlighten the dimensions of planning and implementation of relevant programmes. Legacy as a concept was produced gradually when cities started realizing that mega events can act as an instrument of reaching a variety of sport, political and economic goals (Cashman & Horne, 2013). Bairner (2008) has early emphasized that legacy is an inseparable part of the hosting process and a platform of proving political and organizational power and capability. However, the early design of a legacy plan would not be prioritized but usually follows the successful completion of the event. The majority of organizers would concentrate resources, staff and planning around the successful event hosting than securing future

development. Rosenthal (2017) argued that the challenge of achieving post-event development through legacy venue planning was born back in the 1984 Los Angeles Games. Produce profit and create a constant business attraction mechanism, or focus on the long-term city sustainable development for the well-being of the local people still puzzles policy-makers and organizers. Similarly, Horne (2017) argued that most of the cities present a vivid legacy vision included in the bidding documentation but seem unable to produce a tangible post-event legacy implementation plan. The submitted legacy plans would not be revisited since they are considered non-updated and the interest for event-related issues has diminished.

With Olympic Games and mega events recording increased costs and venues' underuse, criticism started intensifying. Several authors such as Robinson and Torvik (2005) have attempted to evaluate the impact of mega events focusing largely on the inevitable result of the "white elephants" left behind lacking long-term planning that would secure their viability and their capacity to distribute economic wealth widely. In the same tone, Magnani (2013) positioning similar unproductive public investments in a wider social context suggests that these investments basically constitute a mean of transferring resources to the main governing stakeholders than local players.

Giannakopoulou (2020) adds two crucial emerging factors that support the importance for early legacy planning. Anti-democratic practices and corruption allegations amongst different organizers dictate the necessity for effective and actual legacy planning that could justify the hosting and investing decisions by the city, but also by all related institutions mainly the International Olympic Committee and the sports federations. Davies (2005) challenged the distance between satisfying specific competition hosting needs and vague post-event usage levels. The "Munich Treaty" declared the obvious: post-Olympic development should dictate the magnitude and structure of the sport venues and not only the technical requirements of the international competition (Shirai, 2014).

A basic categorization of legacy is built around the infrastructure and all necessary facilities built or rejuvenated to meet the needs of the mega event and constitute mainly "concrete" investments with a long lifecycle (Gratton & Preuss, 2008). Transportation and telecommunication channels, new air, sea, rail and road accessibility routes do not only contribute to the residents' life quality but also serve as business accelerators and environment protectors (Mangan and Dyreson, 2013). In addition, literature tends to deal more extensively with intangible parts of the post-event legacy presenting measurement easiness and safer conclusion extraction. Issues related to volunteerism lift, advancement of organizing mega events' knowledge and expertise, as well as increase of sport participation become positive indicators of post-event local positive impact (Chappelet, 2012). The city benefits largely from effective broadcasting mechanisms and endless televised hours building a positive image of an effective and successful host to the eyes of the world audience. Along with promotional campaigns, the host locality has a powerful tool of creating a competitive profile able to stimulate business and attract new segments. This "economic legacy" suggests the main goal of organizers that plan sustainably and aim to secure returns after the event is over.

Previous work limits the issue of legacy with regard to space, time and stakeholders involved, parts affected and scale and nature of impacts occurring (Barget & Gouguet, 2007). Amongst different scholars attempting to examine the legacy notion, Preuss (2007, 2015) work offers valuable insight into legacy definition and analysis gathering all knowledge produced around the post-event reality. The present study embraces Preuss's legacy "cube" capturing three main dimensions: "irrespective of the time of production and space, legacy is all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for and by a sport event longer than the event itself" (2007, p.211). Furthermore, amongst an extensive list of the legacy dimensions such as infrastructure, culture, image branding and education Preuss (2007) includes the tourism aspect as an inseparable part of the post-event impact scenario. More importantly to the present study, Preuss (2015) stresses the importance of structural changes to support legacy planning achieve increased tourists' flows in the host city in the long run through a new solid local profiling. Measuring positive short but most importantly long-term tourism arrivals as well as overall tourism business acceleration would prove the dynamic route produced by the event hosting. The increase of new job creation, the decrease of local unemployment and the attraction of relevant cultural and leisure partners become crucial indicators of positive event impact justifying the decision to host a mega event. Notably, Preuss (2015) argues that tourism legacy will be achieved "if the event leads to increased economic activity which will happen if the event changes the tourism location factors, i.e. iconic buildings, new museums, etc., and makes the destination more attractive, thus bringing more tourists to the city". This wide recognition of the tourism legacy necessity has been emphasized by the majority of published work but does not seem to be institutionalized yet in the form of applicable policy schemes or even guidelines to serve a post-event city tourism initiation and growth.

3 Method

An effective legacy plan constitutes a complex necessity for mega events' organizers presently lacking sufficient analysis. This paper looks at how event legacies include or propose practices towards generating or enhancing tourism flows in the host area. Focusing largely on legacy application, the study aims to clarify those decisive reasons that make the legacy planning and most importantly implementation an effective post-event developmental instrument. The study seeks to provide insight into the preconditions required to achieve a positive post-event environment through the structural changes needed for a successful legacy implementation. The role of governing sport bodies receives substantial attention due to their capacity to affect sport development but more importantly here, to contribute towards building a strong sport tourism initiating strategy and a positive image for the host city. Additionally, the study signifies the difficulty of obtaining valid data post-event that would justify the investment associated with mega events staging and measure the level of legacy effect in tourism and local development.

Methodologically, knowledge is retrieved employing Schreier's (2014) theory on qualitative content analysis of numerous theoretical approaches and published research, host cities cases examination and sport governing bodies' legacy stances. Comprehensive qualitative content analysis is used to reveal tendencies and implications of embedding legacy in the overall event bidding and planning process. Then, 'qualitative coding' categorized material to certain factors identified to answer the aims of study and hopefully contribute to a sustainable use of the sport venues post-event, as well as build a hospitable tourism environment for the host city in the long run.

4 Extracted Factors Affecting Legacy-Initiated Tourism

4.1 Legacy Planning: A Problematic Post-Event Setting

Sceptic parts of the literature suggest that cities produce an excessive volume of infrastructure and installations, despite the fact that they realize that most will not be needed after the event is completed, but it would be difficult to resist to the demands of international federations and IOC seeking an impressive Games environment. This urge for bigger sport venues is also based on the belief that increased spectators will be translated to larger share in broadcasting rights and ticket sales (Pound, 2016). The international attention evidenced during a mega event for the city and the impressive venues would diminish quickly after the event is completed, while next hosts would start benefiting from exposure.

Horne (2007) argues that an overall successful event staging suggests the inclusion of a mega sport event into the wider long-term planning and operation of the city. The author sums up the effective strategies needed to achieve this development focusing largely on the holistic approach of a city's vision to sustainability. Clear goals, decisions' clarity, construction auditing and viable venues future use become the main axes of planning. More importantly, this managing approach suggests the inclusion of all stakeholders' visions and strategies in order to secure the democratization of decisions for future development. Furthermore, the public and private cooperation needed for many operational sides of the event has to continue to act post-Games to keep the effective funding, technology and professional expertise as well as share the risk undertaken. This would safeguard different parties' expectations and balance their interests (Varrell & Kennedy, 2011). Similarly, Kassens-Noor and Lauermann (2017) suggest that the support of the legacy implementation suggests a mutual responsibility of the host cities but also of the licencing stakeholders. Despite their role as local hosts, local authorities seem to be unable to encounter the huge task of post-event development since a mega event has already challenged the capabilities of the local environment. Rosenthal (2017) suggests balancing post-event needs or creating a business-attractive setting is difficult "but not necessarily incompatible". Equal chance of participation to businesses possibly initiated by a mega event, public

accountability and auditing procedures would secure the democratic and inclusive future of a post-event development. These guaranteed procedures would benefit also IOC and federations like FIFA whose image has been severely hurt (Kassens-Noor, 2016).

However, post-events' legacy planning is not requested by the relevant sport authorities despite a widely spread vision amongst host cities for a promising local development (Giannakopoulou, 2020). Interestingly, De Faria Nogueira (2017) argues that sport authorities base their host selection on the international impact the mega event has in serving their goals and interests, rather than the ability of the event to positively contribute to the further development of the host city. Similarly, despite the wide realization of the need for legacy programming, there seem to be no supervisory institutions to initiate, monitor and evaluate the plans been implemented according to initial promises that go beyond solving the venue usage which inevitably weights local authorities. Horne (2017) expressively highlights the absence of IOC to a city straight after the Games are completed, as well as a supervisory scheme that would initiate, develop and control the legacy implementation. Similarly, Organizing Committees have the restricted role to event managing with no official connection with the host venue location authorities, therefore limiting their input in legacy-related schemes (Vrontou et al., 2018). Stuart and Scassa (2011) propose that IOC along with local institutions and authorities having the power to produce regulation for a number of event-related issues should produce an equivalent number of rules and laws that would safeguard the viability of the legacy programming. In addition, local governments should be proceeding into establishing an independent body with the sole responsibility of guaranteeing the whole legacy planning, reforming and implementing from the bidding procedure to the post-event era and being accountable throughout the entire hosting process.

The tension for enormous sport venues' capacities is also based on the expectations that the Games will lead to increased tourists and hopefully create an incentive for nostalgic sport tourism (Gibson, 2006). Sport venues have become autonomous tourism generators encompassing important hospitality, tourism and leisure forces that create their distinct wide clientele that goes beyond sport spectating (Vrontou, 2022). Similarly, bidding organizations and local governors look at tourism as a possible, logic and expected result of a well-promoted mega event with a spectacular superstructure and a fanatic audience. Therefore, authorities connect positive economic returns directly with tourism increase certainly deriving from a mega event.

The study underlines two crucial reasons identified amongst organizers and relevant studies. Firstly, there is no official and institutional obligation to complete a comprehensive legacy plan that would stimulate the tourism industry and more importantly include tourism development into the city's legacy programming. Secondly, cities facing the challenge of accommodating an event disproportionate to its magnitude, capabilities and resources focus on serving the hosting demands and the facilitation of the event which leaves the city with limited budget and additional burden of venue downsizing and readjustment strategies. Increasingly, mega events have to recognize and undertake the responsibility which corresponds to the expectations born by the city's vision for regeneration, image enhancement and sustainable

economic and social development that means more than short-term spectacularization of the event infrastructure. The present study evidently noted that tourism institutions and hospitality forces are absent from the organizing committees and joined schemes of large events limiting their involvement to serve increased flows Games-time, failing to exploit the momentum of opportunities deriving from mega events hosting.

4.2 Measuring and Evaluating Legacy Effectiveness: A Challenging Task

Safeguarding the credibility of mega events suggests that legacy should become an inseparable part of the bidding and organizing process, measured and audited in the long run (Dickson et al., 2011). Accurate measurement of the legacy implementation would also contribute towards an indisputably positive role of the mega events in host localities. But is it really a feasible task? The literature becomes sceptic over the effectiveness of the legacy programmes when the demand for legacy planning in the bidding phase is limited to simplistic visionary and optimistic promises for a sustainable future through the use of existing venues and the lift of a local image and moral (Giannakopoulou, 2020). More importantly, when the cities finally selected promised endless resources, over-engineered plans and spectacular superstructures over less luxurious bidding efforts, the effect of legacy over localities creates disproportionate impacts. Thus, comparative research becomes of limited value when based on diverse magnitudes and service levels. With city infrastructure occupying a considerable amount of the overall budget, a big number of related stakeholders benefit from a much more efficient business environment but distance themselves from cost-sharing (Matheson, 2012). This creates different and incomparable research settings with varied benefits produced for different post-event social and business players (Stuart & Scassa, 2011).

Despite significant theoretical volume on event impact and legacy, there is no sufficient research on evaluating the post-event legacy implementation and measuring the impact in the long run. Preuss (2015) has early highlighted the difficulty in identifying sport event legacies “in their entirety” due to a labyrinth of interconnected stakeholders’ actions and many non-event-related factors affecting results. Dickson et al. (2011) agree that despite the apparent importance of post-event legacy there is a great lack of evaluation-related literature at all stages of event bidding, preparation and hosting to create valid assumptions. Their work justifies this lack of effective and comparative research output on a set of crucial factors. Firstly, there is an evident inefficiency of the existing evaluation instruments that produce conflicting results of limited credibility or partial value, since the diversity of research areas would demand combined techniques. Then, the interest of the host city in measuring results or funding multi-dimensional research fades due to the fact that hosting another mega event shortly is unfeasible. Being tired and drained from resources, the city realizes

that the findings would not have any practical value since the challenge of handling huge superstructures' costs shadows any post-event development scenarios.

Dickson et al. (2011) emphasize the difficulty of obtaining the appropriate resources to complete a demanding long-term research project on the impact and benefits of a legacy programme. The authors spot the hesitation of governing authorities into gathering valid data because the results could be different from the expected, because they could be perceived as their incompetence to secure positive returns. Additionally, the work of Homma and Masumoto (2013) refers to two main decisive reasons that would support valid legacy measurements. Firstly, "methodological consistency" during data collection would facilitate comparison and avoid deviation due to different methodologies, data collection processes and analysis used each time. Secondly, "data availability" is crucial for valid conclusions since obtaining primary data during event hosting or after event is complete is probably the most difficult research task. The organizing system "dismantles", foreign organizations depart and information is gathered by different new institutions dealing with post-event use. Budgets, costs and figures become a political debate platform translated accordingly, so organizing authorities and governments hesitate to measure and quantify legacy implementation in the fear of having to justify costs and investments with uncertain viability.

With the lights fading after the closing ceremony, the interest of researchers and academia shifts to the next host city and mega event probably due to the difficulty of obtaining data from dismantled organizing committees or replaced governments and local authorities. Similarly, tourism statistics are difficult to be justified based on the event exposure and its influence in creating tourism in the long run, since numerous and diverse reasons can affect visiting flows beyond the sport event appeal. Increased tourism arrivals are a fact in many host localities proving the direct or indirect impact of the mega event but the exact scale, extent and nature of the event remain untapped seeking valid measurement and coverage of all possible influential factors.

4.3 Legacy Cases: The Need for a Holistic City Planning

The vision of host cities for a sustainable post-event future is evident in the bid document submitted to the IOC at a very early stage. However, planning inexperience and event focus affect the post-event development mainly restricting their strategies to secure sport venue use. The Montreal 1976 Games left a sweet taste but also a huge debt for many years later. The Athens Games in 2004 were emotional and well-organized, but were left with permanent venues' number and magnitude disproportionate to the size of the local demand. Similar cases, anticipate benefits deriving from the urban regeneration and the image repositioning without a tangible legacy plan in place. New or refurbished Olympic and football stadiums are directed towards accommodating football clubs such as Barcelona, Athens and Atlanta. IOC's

advice to use as many existing venues as possible hasn't always been the case especially when sport federations have fought for new large sport-specific venues as their legacy.

In reality, host cities have tried to exploit existing facilities in order to lower costs and future underuse such as London, Athens and Tokyo (IOC, 2022). Horne (2017) draws attention to cities focusing their venue planning on post-event use and the elimination of the operational costs, i.e. the design of the Sydney Olympic Village incorporating many stakeholders' aspects such as the Greenpeace, which innovatively included power-saving tools such as solar power and water recycling to support a sustainable operation. The inclusion of adjustability instruments to the needs of the local residents, capacity decrease, multi-purpose facilities and advanced technology would safeguard the viability of the venues in the long run. Chen (2012) points the fact that host cities have located or selected sport venues accessible to local users proves the vision of the cities for post-event local needs' satisfaction. London organizers aiming at post-Games venues been accessible to all residents, improved transport networking, i.e. bus and train lines. At Beijing, sport venues were located at the heart of universities or crowded urban spaces to facilitate usage mainly post-Games. There are examples where some city operations such as shopping, housing and cultural activities were embedded in the sport venue district securing constant local visits and activity.

In terms of tourism initiation and further development, Barcelona remains a bright example where sport, leisure, hospitality and all related market forces were gathered to produce a competitive new tourism future for a city that realized early the importance of legacy mapping prior to the Games. 'Parc de Mar' that accommodated the sport of sailing during the Barcelona Games became a "must visit" tourism and hospitality area ever since, affecting the total of the business sector in the wider area. Barcelona becomes a successful example of legacy planning that the Games were combined and included in the overall existing, predefined and announced long-term development plans of the city (Rosenthal, 2017). Similarly, the quality facilities, advanced technology and the location in the heart of the seaside summer tourism activity and huge coastal reconstruction project the Athens Olympic Marina managed to present quality Olympic sailing competition and more importantly, a successful and profitable operation post-Games contributing drastically to the enhancement of the tourism profile of Athens.

Limited literature on legacy lifting tourism development has been analysing the process of designing a post-event local tourism programme. Olympic Games have affected the tourism industry and have produced a new regenerated image for the city and the region. The work of Ferrari and Guala (2015) in three different Italian host cities proved the positive impact of the events on the local tourism presenting significant arrival increases that reached 90% in the consequent years. The hosted events managed to work outside the traditional industries and invest in changing the traditional image towards a more extrovert economic and cultural profile. Genoa and Turin engaged mega events as part of a regeneration process presenting strong public decisions and partnerships, and admitting to a decisive lesson learnt stating that "the events can only succeed if they are part of a scenario, a planning capacity

that involves the legacy and a collective project, participated by the social capital, associations, public and private bodies". A valuable result of the study suggests that in the case of Genoa tourism is not an 'automatic output' of mega events but needs a holistic effort of improvements, image building and multifacet alterations.

Similarly, the case of Turin 2006 Winter Olympic Games investigated by Bottero et al. (2012) presents a similar positive tourism impact with increased arrivals and a rejuvenated image for the local host area. More importantly, the study emphasizes on the "Turin model" that engages a type of governance "where local authorities have become major players, beyond the territorial scale and regardless of the different political party in power". The study focuses on the "increased fluidity" of the decisional model that includes extensive planning pre-event. "Agenzia Torino 2006" is the key public organization in charge of the implementation of the local Olympic preparation running in parallel with the organizing committee. The main goals of this public participative scheme clarify future goals, monitors public responses to event coming and most crucially "plan the tangible and intangible legacy". The authors emphasize the fact that for the first time, a long-term plan was mapped for Turin future in the post-industrial era. One of the key themes early targeted was the production of a "new type of tourism" representing "the possibility of contributing to the endogenous development of a new sustainable tourism, based on an increase in the hospitality culture, a balanced and careful use of resources, the self-management of local systems, the diversification of tourism models and the territorial diffusion of economic and social benefits". The model continues offering actions to achieve these goals such as training tourism operators, produce quality certificates, create demand and supply diversification projects and actions of strengthening tourism competitiveness. Still, the study questions the governance of this type of pre-planning schemes when the post-event reality is turbulent due to ever-challenging economic and social conditions and governance alterations.

4.4 IOC and Sports Organizations' Stance into Initiating Tourism-Related Legacy

The issue of legacy has gradually received attention either as a mechanism of securing huge investments or as an effective local development vehicle. The last two decades legacy became a crucial part of tool of facing growing negativism towards post-event organizers' ineffectiveness to exploit the potential events offer to develop localities. Presently, International Olympic Committee (IOC) has incorporated a compulsory legacy planning demonstration process as a fundamental part of the event bidding stage (Hartman & Zandberg, 2015). The "Olympic Games Impact" (OGI) was produced to serve as the basis of building an effective framework for organizers (IOC, 2006). 126 indicators build an extensive scorecard table and an attached technical booklet analysing the purpose and extent of every indicator complete a

promising evaluation tool seeking to drive post-Games development. These post-event viability indicators include environmental, socio-economic and political data, all gathered to evaluate the event operation and the whole framework of event hosting locally as well as nationally. IOC's OGI study involves a 12-year period and presents four specific reports. Namely, the "Baseline Report" includes demographic and local features two years prior to the selection of the host city becoming the base for the following reports. Then the "Pre-Games Report" analyses updated features while the "Game-Time Report" focuses on data gathered during the event staging. Finally, the "Post-Games Report" becomes the crucial stage offering final conclusions on the impact of the Games in the host environment. "Sustainability, legacy and inclusion" are at the heart of IOC strategy aiming at a positive impact before competition even begun.

Critic parts of the literature expanding the reasoning behind this IOC's commitment to promote the impact evaluation suggest that a positive post-event legacy development would lift the responsibility burden off IOC that has often been accountable for a negative post-event reality. Additionally, measurable evidence of a positive impact would obviously justify the huge public investments needed to facilitate the event and the tax moved down to citizens in the name of a better future. Similarly, facing the new reality where few and only powerful countries presently seek to host Olympic Games and mega events overall, IOC demonstrates their catalytic power for the local host tangibly, aiming to motivate additional places to become hosts and therefore secure the future of the Games (Gratton & Preuss, 2008). In the same lines, despite the appreciation of the study's value in guiding legacy planning in the host environment, criticism has been recorded by academics and organizers when the emphasis is given towards auditing short-term specific impact indicators than producing an instrument of holistic local development through event hosting (Atkinson & De Lisio, 2014).

Authors have noted the limited evaluation capabilities of the programme lasting just two years after the event completion and propose at least 15–20 years to secure validity of results (Gratton & Preuss, 2008). Bouchon (2017) agrees that a long-term post-event study should be conducted at least ten years later due to the several economic and societal changes occurring ever since that would dramatically affect the local environment. The application of the impact study is challenged further especially when the post-event management structure undergoes huge changes. One of the basic factors leading to a successful impact programme as suggested by Homma and Masumoto (2013) is the definition of the appropriate institution that would undertake, monitor and deliver a complete and valid study. This is more complicated when the organizing committees disappear a few months after the event staging and their advanced knowledge on event operation is ineffectively transferred to local players, namely the National Olympic Committees and local authorities lacking expertise on similar developmental issues. The same authors add another crucial political factor that challenges the impact study's effectiveness further. Democratic countries could prove to be very unstable and unpredictable organizers with inconsistent post-event legacy planning. The variety and wideness of the stakeholders involved suggest an ever-changing behaviour, long negotiations and conflicting interests creating a

turbulent policy, hosting and post-event legacy setting (Könecke & de Nooij, 2017). Authoritative regimes lack complicated procedures, inclusion of local say and present less costly and timely negotiations, offering IOC evidently ease and control. Literature wonders whether this obvious facilitation by authoritative regimes would drive IOC away from democratic but demanding and unstable organizers and most importantly, unable to secure Olympic legacy, thus Games credibility (Könecke, Schubert & Preuss, 2016).

An in-depth analysis of the latest policy documents by IOC fails to create optimism facing a lack of tourism legacy suggestions and reflecting a certain level of anxiety towards a sustainable Olympic future. However, the analysis appreciates that the production of these documents set the basis for more efficient operations and post-Games development locally, advising for sustainability practices' inclusion at all stages of the event hosting. Starting from the "Olympic Agenda 2020+5" (IOC, 2021) certain recommendations contribute to the "delivery of lasting benefits to the Host communities prior to and after the Olympic Games", while vividly urge the achievement of legacy plans through a governance structure and relevant funding scheme early in the hosting process. The recommendations suggest "less permanent construction in cultural protected areas" to protect local character, while emphasizing the need to 'monitor and measure' the impact and the legacy plans constantly. A continuous interacting with all stakeholders, entities and localities towards encouraging legacy programmes is promoted towards the common notion that "Once an Olympic City always an Olympic City". Limited reference to the tourism dimension is recorded in the advice to "enhance the Olympic Games hospitality experience while increasing associated revenues for the OCOGs and the Olympic Movement" but only Games-time.

This growing concern over the challenge of hosting sustainably leads to continuous production of new instruments and guidelines aiming to make cities embrace a post-event Olympic legacy and secure the positive image of the Games. Similarly, IOC's (2017) "Strategic Approach" (2017) and the "Legacy Reporting Framework" (IOC, 2018) demonstrate IOC's commitment towards promoting a sustainable future for host cities starting from the bidding phase till years after event hosting. Furthermore, IOC's latest "Over 125 years of Olympic venues: Post-Games use" (2022) represents a more tangible evidence of sport venues usage through the initiation of "permanent legacy initiatives" seeking "to mark important sites that hosted specific events or activities related to an edition of the Olympic Games and bring forward important legacy stories". However, despite this considerably large optimistic volume of developmental guidelines by IOC, the present study underlines the lack of tourism-related recommendations that would offer host cities a tourism initiation perspective. The only exception to the above is included in the "Criteria for Regular Use" suggesting "regular ongoing tourism/leisure offer (venue tours, site visits, sight-seeing)" as a tourism post-event legacy proposal. Obviously, this limited reference is insufficient towards initiating an event-related tourism future for host cities in need for a guiding vehicle in order to build on the gained Games exposure.

Similarly, International Sport Federations (IFs) being the governing bodies for sports gather all rules and regulations' mechanisms around the core goal of developing sports further. Olympic and non-Olympic sport federations face fierce competition in the arena of different leisure products that through broadcasting reach the most remote markets. One of the most crucial constitutional roles of the sport federations is to constantly develop their sport to different continents, nations and localities and thus, increasing the number of participants worldwide. The role of the IFs in mega events becomes of great importance when they decide on crucial parts of the venue design and planning, and participate in all crucial negotiations with the organizers, especially at the first stages of event planning. Besides their direct involvement in event preparation and expressed authority over the facilitation of competition procedures, the post-event development becomes their interest. Actually, forcing a post-event sport-specific development becomes not only a crucial responsibility but a demonstration of the IF power and efficiency. Powerful IFs concentrate to the effective preparation of the competition but equally to the claim of a strong legacy for their sport. IFs' interest is evidenced in the first stages of construction when their influence and pressure are placed on securing their sport legacy in the form of quality sport facilities equipped and planned to serve their sport. Mainly, sport federations focus on sport-specific legacy than a holistic viable development satisfying their constitutional responsibility but causing additional burden to local authorities. In an effort to secure their sport legacy IFs force huge capacities, extravagant facilities and thus, a questionable future through superstructures disproportionate to local needs.

IOC and sport federations despite their early appreciation of the inter-linkage between sport and tourism (Cooperation with the World Tourism Organization, IOC, 1999) have not included an explicit requirement for tourism-related post-event development. In addition, sustainable tourism is promoted as "strategic intent for 2030" aiming to contribute to environmental solutions but does not offer any applicable local tourism initiation practices. Understandably, IFs' sport managing responsibilities limit their decisions to sport venue suggestions and future use, failing to incorporate sports development and venue legacy into a wider local economic, social and tourism development.

5 Conclusions

There is wide acceptance that planning an extensive legacy programme is crucial to the benefit of all. Priority should be now given to justified, calculated and adjusted to the local features strategy leading to a sustainable development for the host region. International sport and business organizations' pressure for bigger and overstated superstructures should be diminished when viability cannot be guaranteed. Organizers have to be facilitated to balance sport and mega event requirements with the holistic local long-term planning and decided democratically by all involved players. Long-term viability of the post-event locality is heavily based on the assemblage of

all participating parts' incentives, interests and motives as well as their structure, goals and different operations.

Similarly, tourism development is included in the economic prosperity of the local community and is an inseparable consequence of the promotion the city receives due to the event staging. Tourism must be the impact of a well-planned legacy strategic plan exploiting the appealing image transferred through the broadcasted event and not as a product of utopist external agendas of international organizations defending their interests (Kassens-Noor & Lauermann, 2017). International sport bodies should also be directed to include sport tourism-related legacy schemes and contribute to the viability of the sport venues and the overall tourism lift of the area. In addition, sport governing bodies should embrace legacy planning at all stages of bidding, preparing and hosting of a mega event locally creating a culture of proactive planning. More importantly, the creation of a multi-stakeholders planning and supervisory body could be initiated to secure a well-planned legacy scheme, constant evaluation of legacy implementation related to viable venue operations and effective tourism development.

This democratic and all-inclusive scheme is the biggest challenge host cities will have to face due to the complex and multifacet nature of the players deriving from sport, organizers, business, government, tourism industry, local authorities and a plethora of involved international organizations. However, the dynamic produced by the most appealing leisure product in the world, that of mega sport events, creates space for optimism that significant tourism activity combining the sporting thrill and the uniqueness of each host locality can be developed sustainably.

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