

Residents' Perceived Social-Economic Impact of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games

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Abstract

This study was designed to examine whether the Olympic Games was a catalyst for changes to Beijing residents' quality of life based on social-economic perspectives and how these changes affected their continuous support for the Games. Residents who lived in Beijing 18 months or longer were invited to participate in this survey research (N = 412) in October 2009. Based on the results, the residents' support for the Games was still high after 2 years of hosting the Games. Factor analyses revealed five social-economic changes: Culture Enrichment, Basic Living, Entertainment Opportunities, Environment, and National Pride. Both improved Entertainment Opportunities and increased National Pride were significant reasons why Beijing residents continued to support the hosting of the Games. No direct relationship was determined between residents' improved quality of life and their continued support for the Games.

Key Words: legacies, hosting Olympics

Introduction

To determine the overall success of an Olympic Games, an important question needs to be asked and answered. Did the Games meet the objectives that the government and people expected them to achieve? Previous researchers have concluded that mega events such as the Olympic Games can have an impact on economic, infrastructure, social, cultural, psychological and political aspects of a hosting nation or region (Mihalik & Cummings, 1995; Nixon & Frey 1996; Preuss 2000). According to Ritchie (1984) and Ritchie and Aitken (1985), the objectives of hosting Olympic Games can be divided into many economic perspectives including attracting investments and creating jobs, as well as strategic perspectives such as bringing a country or region into the world spotlight, which can leverage other intangible benefits (i.e., pride and international recognition).

The 2008 Beijing Olympics set records for being the most watched (Alavy, 2010), most participated, and most expensive Games in the history of the modern Olympics. Over 4.7 billion viewers worldwide (Nielsen Media Research, 2008) tuned in to the competition in which 205 participating regions and countries (Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad Official Site, n.d.) participated, and over \$40 billion dollars were either directly or indirectly invested (Sands, 2009). The huge investment during the period from 2001 to 2008 transformed the cityscape of Beijing by restoring 25 historic areas, including many of the city's landmarks, old streets, and historical sites. Three new subway lines were opened shortly before the Opening Ceremony (BOCOG Official Site, n.d.). The performances of Chinese athletes at the Beijing Games successfully met the country's plan (Project 119) to boost their medal standing.

China placed first in the gold medal count and was second in the total medal count behind the United States, the traditional medal winners.

From an outsiders' point of view, the Beijing Olympics and China's coinciding social-economic model of development has been deemed as a "political spectacle with intentions to create a façade of sustainable and equal economic growth in China while creating a new world power" (Gottwald & Duggan, 2008, p. 339). Furthermore, the success of the Games has been defined as a showcase of China's soft-power in a global platform (Horton, 2008), which signaled the emergence of a modern China with a robust economy and increasing cultural and political influences around the world (Davis, 2009), establishing China's legitimacy as a global power (Horton, 2008).

Purpose of the Study

There are many ways to judge the success of an Olympic Games for the hosting country. One way is by counting how many new Olympic records are set and how many medals are won by a country's athletes. A second way is to evaluate the entertainment value of the Games in how the spectacular opening and closing ceremonies showcase the hosting country's enormous population, resources and a powerful government to the world (Meyer, 2009). And a third way is to study the social-economic impact the Games have on the hosting country. The Olympics is a phenomenon that begins with a winning bid many years before the first competition. Then the Games are finally conducted after years of planning and preparation. But perhaps one of the most intriguing phases for a country hosting the Games is the years after the Games, when the true economic benefits and costs slowly evolve. It may be many years after the closing ceremony that a more accurate assessment of the social-economic benefits and costs of the Games can be calculated and the overall legacy of the Games for the host country may be more clearly evaluated. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the social-economic changes of the Beijing Olympic Games to its residents and how these changes affected their continuous support for the Games.

Significance of the Study and Research Questions

As the first BRIC country (Brazil, Russia, India, and China not counting Moscow 1980 Games under the USSR regime) to host the Olympic Games, the overall legacy of the Beijing Olympics has been closely analyzed by Russia and Brazil, the winners of the 2014 and 2016 Olympic bids, as well as the International Olympic Committee. Five years after the Beijing Games, most related studies conducted before and during the Games studied the objectives and anticipations of the Olympics. Few researchers have focused on the perceived legacies of the Beijing Olympics by the residents. However, there is a need to conduct this type of research, because residents traded in short-term negativities in exchange for hoping for long-term benefits (Ap, 1992; Furrer, 2002; Jurowski,

Uysal & Williams, 1997; Ritchie & Lyons, 1990; and Tien, Lo, & Lin., 2011) Therefore, it is important to understand residents' perceptions of hosting the Olympic Games. Results of this study could help future Olympic hosting nations establishing residents' long-term support for the Games after the Olympic torch is extinguished. Finally, four research questions were formulated for this study: (a) What were residents' level of continuous support for the 2008 Olympic Games one year later? (b) What were residents' perceived social-economic changes due to hosting the Games? (c) How did these perceived changes affect residents' quality of life? And (d) how did these changes affect residents' long-term support for the Beijing Olympic Games?

Theoretical Foundation and Literature Review

Social exchange theory (SET) was introduced by Homans (1958) as a concept of social behavior affected by exchange of not only intangible goods but also symbolic values such as approval, pride and prestige. Participants would review both short-term and long-term benefits of the exchange. SET has been used successfully to study residents' perceptions of the impact of tourism (Ap, 1992; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Jurowski et al., 1997; Perdue, Long & Allen, 1987; 1990). Based on these findings, SET may be suitable to study why residents support mega-event such as Olympic Games and residents' perceptions of the long-term benefits of the Olympic Games, in exchange for short-term negativities brought by the event (Jurowski et al., 1997). Olympic hosting community residents paid for part of the Games through taxes and now live with all the consequences of the Games, positive and negative. Local residents endured years of construction in their city resulting in a new infrastructure and other tangible benefits that may not have been available to them without the Olympics. How the SET applies to mega-events needs to be investigated.

Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005, p.880-881) systematically reviewed the social exchange theory and concluded "that certain types of benefits are likely to be exchanged in different ways. The less particularistic and the more concrete a benefit is, the more likely it is to be exchanged in a short-term-term, quid pro quo fashion. In contrast, benefits that are highly particularistic and symbolic are exchanged in a more open-ended manner." For monetary benefits (concrete), those residents who were economically dependent on tourism and those who participated in outdoor activities generally supported hosting the Salt Lake Olympics (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002). However, it might be a difficult case to compare the residents of Salt Lake City to the residents of Beijing due to Beijing's population and complexity of its economy. The residents of Beijing might expect some other benefits to exchange in order to retroactively support the Games. Jurowski et al. (1997) also concluded that not only economic components, but also social and environmental factors were exchanged between the host community and its residents. Levi-Strauss (1969) explained that services, gifts, and goods that were exchanged symbolize various factors. These factors might be values that were deemed sacred, spiritual, or blessed, or they may be sentimental, symbols, influence, power, the supernatural, and economics. Jurowski et al. (1997) and Deccio and Baloglu (2002) also pointed out that there is more to the tourism exchange than money. Time, shifting values, community solidarity, power, traditions, culture, and many other

elements contribute to the tourism exchange process.

The financial success of the Los Angeles Olympic Games signaled the commercialization of the modern Olympics (Hudson, 2003). However, the 1984 Games had little or no impact on GDP growth and unemployment of the nation given the overwhelming size of the U.S. economy (Tien, et al., 2011). When taking a holistic view of the pros and cons of hosting an Olympic Games, Andranovich, Burbank, and Heying, (2001, p.113) suggested that hosting the Olympics is "... a potentially high-risk strategy for stimulating local economic growth." Thus, the hosting nations look beyond the direct indicators of macroeconomics such as GDP growth and unemployment rate. Instead, they have adapted a theme of sustainable development (Tien et al., 2011), such as the Green Games of Sydney 2000, the Games of Culture of Athens 2004, the One World, One Dream of Beijing 2008, and the One Planet Olympics of London 2012. In order to realize the sustainability, Furrer (2002) proposed that the organizing committees and the hosting nations must achieve integrated social-economic development with financial, social, ethical, and ecological balances and responsibilities.

The enhanced international awareness of a region is among the profound long-term effects conveyed by a mega event (Ritchie & Yangzhou, 1987). Specifically, the residents in Georgia perceived community pride and international recognition, which was just as, or more important than, the economic benefits of the Atlanta Olympics (Mihalik & Cummings, 1995; Mihalik & Simonetta, 1998). Similarly, residents rated international recognition for Calgary as being just as, or more important than, perceived economic benefits after the Calgary Winter Games (Ritchie & Lyons, 1990). As for the Beijing Olympics, the slogan chosen by the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games: "One World, One Dream" illuminated China's integration into the world and its optimism about the future. And the Games seemed to be an "ideal platform for projecting China's image internationally and domestically" (Xing & Chalip, 2009, p. 215). The change and enhancement of the image of a city or country due to hosting an Olympic Games appears to have led to a sense of pride among its residents (Mihalik & Cummings, 1995; Mihalik & Simonetta, 1998; Ritchie & Lyons, 1990).

In order to enhance the image of Beijing and the Games, years prior to the Games, China's only national network TV station China Central Television (CCTV), launched a series of nationwide campaigns to promote public courtesy and civility among citizens and tourists under the national theme of a "harmonious society." CCTV also targeted the other major concern, air pollution. The network promoted several green initiatives hoping to catch the momentum of the government's efforts to reduce air pollution in Beijing. According to Deccio and Baloglu (2002), mega events can serve as catalysts for bringing attention to environmental concerns. Different from previous investigators who have suggested that residents might consider environmental issues as concerns if not major concerns for a mega event (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Jurowski et al. 1997; Mihalik & Simonetta, 1998; Ritchie & Aitken, 1985), the Beijing Olympics presented an opportunity for residents to breathe cleaner air in an improved natural environment, which was hopefully sustainable. To tackle the air pollution problem, the municipal government announced an ambitious "Air Quality

Guarantee Plan for the 29th Olympics in Beijing.” The pollution control efforts showed that the overall air quality during the Beijing Olympics Games was improved dramatically when compared to the June of 2008 data (Wang, Tang, & Sui, 2003; Wang et al., 2010).

Balancing preserving cultural heritage and municipal development was vital for the “harmonious society” in the case of the Beijing Olympics as well. Cultural heritage and tourism development are other social-economic factors that can be impacted by hosting the Olympics Games. Hall and Zeppel (1990) reported that creating a strong prospective of cultural and heritage in tourism can establish an alternative and sustainable tourism development model. In this notion, the Beijing government restored 25 historical landmarks such as the Forbidden City prior to the Beijing Olympics (BOCOG Official Site, n.d.), which might have otherwise not been done. Because of the Olympics, a lasting contribution to the tourism industry of Beijing was created.

Method

Participants and Data Collection

Participants were all Chinese citizens and residents who had lived in the metropolitan areas of Beijing for 18 months or longer. These residents had experienced the effects of the Olympic Games prior to, during, and after the event. Convenience sampling was used as the method of data collecting in October 2009. A total of 600 survey questionnaires were distributed with 412 (N = 412) valid questionnaires returned (a return rate of 69%). Eight trained college students from Beijing Sports University were divided into four research teams that distributed survey questionnaires at different locations in Beijing in order to capture the diversity of the residents in the metropolitan area of Beijing. Research teams stood at the designated locations and asked people walking by to volunteer in filling out the survey questionnaire. These locations were eight college campuses, five office buildings, three residential areas, and public areas with dense human congestion, such as major subway hubs. The survey questionnaire usually took 15 to 20 minutes to finish and the students were greeting the participants by explaining the research rationale and answering any question they might have during their completion of the questionnaire.

Instrument Development

In order to measure Beijing residents’ perceived social-economic changes due to the 2008 Olympic Games, a survey instrument was developed based on Jurowski’s (1997) Social Impacts of Tourism Scale (SITS) which has been used in previous Olympic Games. The survey instrument was comprised of 16 items in which participants were asked to rate how much their lives worsened or improved for each of the items. Their ratings were based on their perceptions of the 2008 Olympics using a 5-point scale where 1 equals “worsened,” 2 equals “slightly worsened,” 3 equals “no change,” 4 equals “slightly improved” and 5 equals “improved.”

There were 12 original items from Jurowski’s et al. (1997) SITS on the survey instrument. Due to the unique nature of the Chinese social and political system, the original item “local services” was divided into “service quality from government agencies” and “service quality from businesses.” Furthermore, given the importance of the theme of a “Green Olympics” and the

government’s effort to clean up the air pollution in Beijing, the original item “natural environment” was expanded into “public acceptance of green and environment conservation concepts” and “air quality and natural environment.” Finally, in order to measure resident’s perceptions concerning the effectiveness of the nationwide campaign for a “harmonious society,” the item “public courtesy and civility” was added, as well as the item “overall quality of life in Beijing.”

The importance of national pride as a non-economic impact on the Olympic hosting community has been approved by various studies at different Olympic Games (Mihalik & Cummings, 1995; Mihalik & Simonetta, 1998; Ritchie & Lyons, 1990). It could be a very important factor for residents of Beijing and even citizens of China to continuously support the 2008 Olympics. The sentiment of national pride was solicited by asking participants to rate the following statement: “After the Beijing Olympics, I feel that I am prouder of being a Chinese than before” with 1 equals strongly disagree and 5 equals strongly agree.

Deccio and Baloglu (2002) suggested that a mega-event could improve the host community’s quality of life due to its economic dependency on tourism. However, Deccio and Baloglu (2002) collected their data from the locals prior to the 2002 Winter Olympics. Their conclusion can only be considered as participants’ expectation. Therefore, this study inserted a variable to measure whether the residents perceived “overall quality of life in Beijing” worsened or improved one year after the Olympics. For the dependent variable: residents’ support for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, it was also measured by 5-point Likert Scale with 1 equals strongly oppose and 5 equals strongly support. Finally, social-demographic questions were participants’ gender, age, income, occupation, education, years and areas living in Beijing were asked in order to categorize responses for various groups.

The last step in developing the survey instrument was to translate it into Chinese. The survey instrument was initially translated by the authors of this study and then evaluated by a panel of experts who were: one management, one psychology and one sport management professor whose first language was Chinese.

The initial test for the reliability of the survey instrument was through a pilot study. Fifty undergraduate students from one of the universities in the metropolitan area of Beijing were invited to complete the survey instrument. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the modified SITS was .85. This value is above .70, so this instrument was considered reliable with the sample (Pallant, 2005).

Data Analysis

Jurowski, et al. (1997) grouped SITS into three factors “economic impact”, “social impact”, and “environmental impact.” Deccio and Baloglu (2002) replicated Jurowski’s study and discovered that the reliability coefficient for one of the three factors was very low. Therefore, Deccio and Baloglu conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and identified two factors, which were named “opportunities” and “concerns.” Due to the modification of the original SITS, the present investigators also used the EFA to explore the interrelationships among the 16 SITS items. A follow up, confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) was conducted to investigate the internal factor structure of the

scale through the maximum likelihood method using Analysis of Moment Structures (Amos) 16.0. After the reliability and validity of the instrument were confirmed, a path analysis using Amos 16.0 was used to draw and illustrate the logical flow of the factors that impact on residents' support for the Beijing Olympic Games.

Results

The four trained research teams distributed 600 survey instruments at designated locations. There were 412 survey instruments collected yielding a return rate of 69%. Since the survey instrument was designed to measure Beijing residents' perceived impact of hosting the 2008 Olympics, the participants who reported "do not live in Beijing" and those who lived less than 18 months in Beijing were deleted from the sample data. In the end of the data collection 381 valid survey instruments remained for data analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

The survey instrument was completed by 61% males and 39% females. A large majority of the participants (78%) were between the ages of 20 to 39. More than 45% of the participants identified that they had lived in Beijing for 2 to 5 years, and 37% more than 5 years. Approximately 18% of the participants lived in Beijing for 18 months to 2 years. Individual's annual income was almost evenly distributed among the four categories: under 5000 US Dollars, between 5000 to 10000 US Dollars, between 10001 and 16000 US Dollars, and above 16000 US Dollars.

Just one year after the 2008 Olympic Games, support for the event was still high with a mean score of 4.36 from a 5-point scale. When asked whether the overall quality of life in Beijing after the Olympics worsened or improved, participants reported a mean score of 3.66. Descriptive statistics also revealed that the biggest perceived change among all items was "opportunities for recreation and sport facilities" in other words more chances to engage in recreation and sport activities with a mean score of 3.88. The second and the third ranking items were "public accepting green and environment conservation ideas" and "public courtesy and civility" with mean scores of 3.84 and 3.83, respectively. The only perspective where support worsened was the "cost of housing and renting" with a mean score of 2.88. Other items that indicated slight positive changes were "employment opportunities", "cost of food and living expenses", and "traffic congestion". The mean and standard deviation for each of these variables are listed in Table 1.

Factor Analysis

The initial exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization rotation revealed four factors and explained 65.4% of the variance. Five items with double loading were deducted from the model: "employment opportunities," "tourism industry in Beijing," "public safety," "service quality from government agencies," and "service quality from private business." After the elimination, the second EFA using the same rotation method identified four factors with a combined 76.7% explained variance. These four factors were given the following names.

Factor 1 - Culture Enrichment, comprised of three items: "public

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of the Variables.

Descriptive Statistics			
Item Name		Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic
1	Employment opportunities	3.097	1.011
2	Opportunities for shopping	3.705	.827
3	Opportunities for recreation and sport facilities	3.879	.777
4	Tourism industry in Beijing	3.730	.892
5	The costs of food and living expenses	3.161	1.014
6	The costs of housing and renting	2.838	1.280
7	Traffic congestion	3.202	1.147
8	The public safety	3.637	.849
9	The service quality from government agencies	3.565	.869
10	The quality from businesses	3.640	.781
11	The air quality and natural environment	3.730	.888
12	Public accepting green and environment conservation ideas	3.836	.798
13	Public courtesy and civility	3.831	.750
14	The preservation of culture and historical heritages	3.780	.776
15	The relationship between residents and tourists	3.740	.759
16	The overall quality of life in Beijing	3.663	.786
17	National pride	4.101	.737
18	Support the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games	4.363	.721

courtesy and civility;" "preservation of the culture and historical heritages;" and, the "relationship between residents and tourists."

Factor 2 - Basic Living, which included three items: "the cost of housing and renting;" the cost of food and living expenses;" and, "traffic congestion."

Factor 3 - Entertainment Opportunities included two items: "opportunities for shopping;" and, "opportunities for recreation and sport facilities."

Factor 4 - Environment also comprised two items: "the air quality and natural environment;" and, "public accepting green and environmental conservation ideas."

Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were completed for the 10 remaining SITS items for the purpose of investigating the internal structure fit of the proposed EFA model. The initial model indicated a close to acceptable fit indices (chi-square = 128.11 (29), $p < .001$, CFI = .93, NFI = .91, RMSEA = .09), therefore a step-by-step procedure was performed to develop a prudent model by adding the error covariance which had the largest modification indices (MI) (Byrne, 2010). This analysis revealed that the largest error covariance was related to Item 14 "preservation of culture and historical heritages" and Item 15 "relationship between residents and tourists", therefore a parameter between these two items was added. This modified model (Model 2) made a notable improvement to the initial model fit. In particular, the overall chi square value decreased to 97.32 with a degree of freedom of 28. The CFI improved to .95 and NFI improved to .93. And lastly, the RMSEA value decreased .80. Both Item 14 and Item 15 were

placed in Factor 1 - Culture Enrichment, and with this modification an acceptable model was produced.

It was further discovered that there was also error covariance related to Item 7 “traffic congestion” and Item 11 “air quality and natural environment.” When the parameter was incorporated into the model, it suggested content overlap. Based upon the literature (Wang et al., 2010), traffic congestion has an effect on air quality, and covariance can be explained (Byrne, 2010). Therefore, a decision was made to keep the regression parameter in Model 3 to demonstrate the covariance between the items. Moreover, the modification led to some improvements of the model fit (chi-square = 86.47 (27), $p < .001$, CFI = .97, NFI = .94, RMSEA = .076). The comparisons between the initial CFA Model 1 and Models 2 and 3 are illustrated in Table 2.

Factor loadings in the modified SITS modified Model 3 are provided in Figure 1. After the internal validity had been examined, the new Cronbach’s alpha reliability tests were conducted. The results indicated that four factors of the modified SITS had appropriate internal consistency ($\alpha = .79$ for Culture Enrichment, $\alpha = .80$ for Basic Living, $\alpha = .75$ for Environment, and $\alpha = .76$ for Entertainment Opportunities).

After establishing the valid factors of the modified SITS, a path analysis was conducted to discover the possible cause and effect relationship between variables. The AMOS 16.0 identified a good to acceptable fit model (chi-square = 13.25 (4), $p < .05$, CFI = .97, NFI = .96, RMSEA = .078). The significant path coefficients between the cause and effect variables in the path model are illustrated in Figure 2. The support for the 2008 Beijing Olympics was significantly and positively influenced

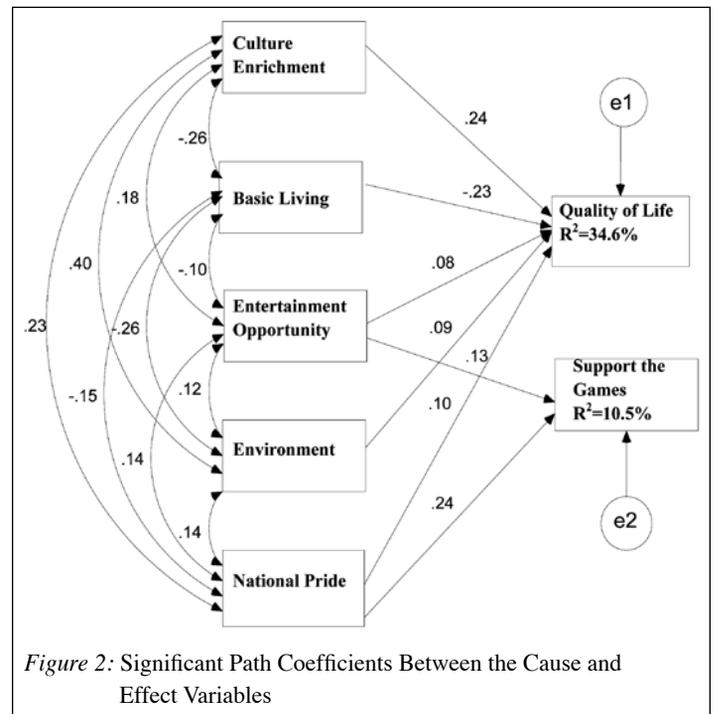
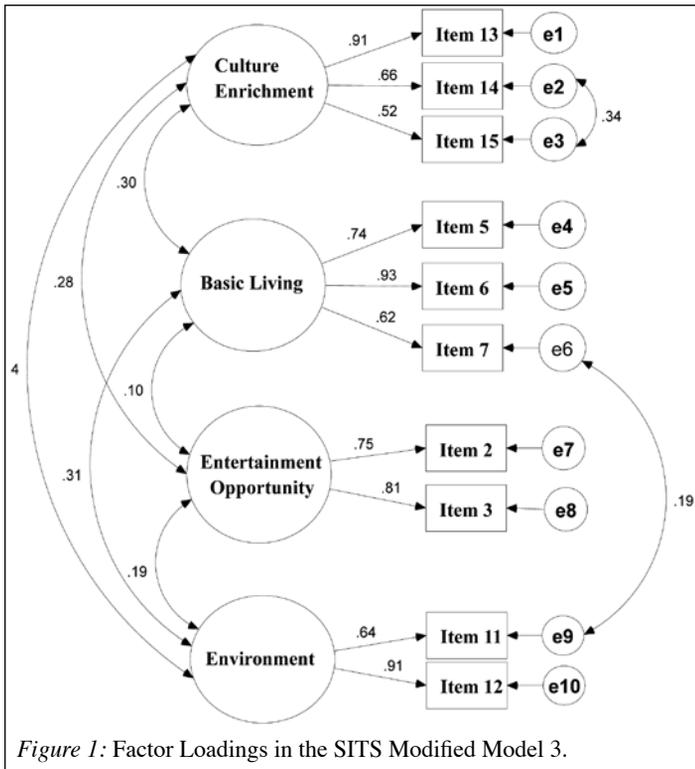


Table 2. Comparisons Between the Initial CFA Model and Model 2 and Model 3.

Fit Index	Value Considered Good Fit	Value					
		Model 1	Indication of Fit	Model 2	Indication of Fit	Model 3	Indication of Fit
χ^2	Smaller value better fit	128.11	Acceptable	97.32	Adequate	86.47	Adequate
	based on sample size	df 29, p		df 28 p		df 27 p	
		<.001		<.001		<.001	
RMSEA	Value lower than .07	.095	Inadequate	.081	Acceptable	.076	Acceptable
CFI	Value higher than .90	.928	Adequate	.950	Adequate	.966	Adequate
TLI	Value higher than .90	.889	Inadequate	.920	Adequate	.939	Adequate
AGFI	Value higher than .90	.882	Inadequate	.909	Adequate	.915	Adequate
GFI	Value higher than .90	.938	Adequate	.954	Adequate	.958	Adequate

by “improved entertainment opportunities” (.127, $p < .001$) and “national pride” (.238, $p < .001$). Meanwhile, the “quality of life” was significantly and negatively impacted by the cost of “basic living” (-.233, $p < .001$), in the same time positively impacted by the improvement in all other areas including “culture enrichment” (.242, $p < .001$), “entertainment opportunities” (.078, $p < .05$), “environment” (.09, $p < .05$), and “national pride” (.10, $p < .05$). No significant relationships were determined between “support of the 2008 Olympics” and residents’ perceived changes in the areas of “culture enrichment,” “basic living,” and “environment.” Finally, the perceived change in “quality of life” had no significant impact on the “support for the 2008 Olympics.”

Discussion

This study supports previous research that the SET has proven to be a useful concept when studying resident’s perceptions of a mega-event, such as the Olympic Games, because it can be used to explain why and how much support residents have for the Olympic Games (Ap, 1992; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Jurowski et al., 1997; Perdue et al., 1987; 1990). According to the previous investigators, individuals who reside close to the Olympic Games may be willing to trade some inconveniences or shortcomings, such as price increases, tax hikes, and traffic congestion due to construction for a mega event, in return for possible long term prosperity, community solidarity, national pride, publicity, culture enrichment, and improved recreation opportunities (Deccio & Baloglu., 2002; Mihalik & Cummings, 1995; Mihalik & Simonetta, 1998; Ritchie & Yangzhou, 1987).

This study was designed to determine if the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games impacted residents’ quality of life from various perspectives, as well as, how these changes (Culture Enrichment, Basic Living, Entertainment Opportunities, and Environment) affected their long term support for the Olympics. A factor analysis indicated four dimensions of changes: “Culture Enrichment”, “Basic Living”, “Entertainment Opportunities”, and “Environment”. Furthermore, “National Pride” received a positive boost ($M = 4.10$) due to the Games. These findings were in line with the results from previous studies, which indicated Olympic Games had positive impact on aspects such as culture, environment, and entertainment opportunities. (Crumbaugh, 2002; Mihalik et al., 1998; Ritchie et al., 1987).

Further this study was designed to determine how changes affected the overall quality of life in Beijing. The path analyses revealed that except for the factor named “Basic Living” (-.233, $p < .001$), all other factors made a contribution to the improvement of the quality of life, including “National Pride” (.100, $p < .05$). Five elements together explained about 35% of the variance. Apparently, residents focused more on the social benefits such as the “Environment” (.090, $p < .05$), “Entertainment Opportunities” (.080, $p < .05$), and “Culture Enrichment” (.242, $p < .001$), even though the fundamentals of basic living including traffic, housing, and cost of living stayed the same or slightly worsened. These results might explain why residents averaged 3.66 on a 5-point scale in terms of “improvement of quality of life”.

In addition, this research was designed to determine how these changes might affect residents’ continuous support for the 2008 Olympic Games, the path analyses indicated that only the

“Entertainment Opportunities” (.127, $p < .001$) and “National Pride” (.238, $p < .001$) significantly impacted on the residents’ continuous support for the Games. These two factors together explained about 11% of the variance. Other factors including the improvement of quality of life were insignificant to residents’ support of the Games. Given the benefits of “National Pride” are highly particularistic and symbolic (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), they address residents social and esteem needs. As Tien et al. (2011) concluded, each Olympics has its unique long-term perspectives, and the Beijing Olympics was no exception. The objective of the Chinese government was to utilize the Olympic Games for the purpose of establishing China as a world power, as well as to legitimize China’s social-political model (Gottwald & Duggan, 2008; Horton, 2008). Due to this goal, Chinese National TV emphasized national pride, solidarity and prosperity prior and during the Games. The Chinese government may have met and even exceeded its objectives given the boosted national pride among Beijing residents, and as a result was the most important factor for residents’ continuous support for the Olympic Games. Beijing residents also recognized the government’s efforts in preserving Beijing’s culture and historical heritage, as well as reducing air pollution. These improvements were seen to lead to a better quality of life in general.

Another interesting finding that this study revealed was that improved entertainment opportunities were viewed as a significant reason to support the Olympic Games. Many of the Beijing Olympic facilities were located at the city’s universities. Since a portion of the participants of this study were college students in Beijing, they had easier access to the Olympic facilities than other Beijing residents and the benefits they received due to using these facilities might be directly related to their positive view of the Olympic Games.

Just after the conclusion of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, the world experienced the worst economic recession since the Great Depression. However, even though there were some signs of an economic slowdown, China was still able to maintain an 8.7% GDP growth in 2009 (CNN, 2010), which was preceded by 15 years of more than 10% average GDP growth. Although Beijing residents reported that their quality of life improved due to the Olympic Games, this improvement cannot only be attributed directly to the Olympic Games. In fact, according to Tien et al. (2011), the economic benefits of the Beijing Olympic Games had almost disappeared and inflation began to affect food (Censky, 2011) and housing (Official Website of the Beijing Government, n.d.). These economic situations may explain why this investigation found that “basic living” had a negative impact on the quality of life. It may be that residents understood that no change or slightly worse basic living conditions had little to do with the Olympic Games. In other words, the cost of living was increasing prior to the Olympic Games and was going to continue to increase after the Games concluded.

In conclusion, the research model explains only 11% of residents’ continued support for the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. Although the investigators reported that national pride was the most important factor for Beijing residents continued support for hosting the Olympic Games, there are most likely other reasons that this study did not uncover. The results did support similar

research (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Jurowski et al., 1997; Mihalik & Simonetta, 1998) concerning residents' continued support for Olympic Games. This study and other research have revealed that this is a complicated phenomenon because residents support Olympic Games for a variety of reasons, and that each Olympic Games unfold their own unique perspective.

Therefore, there are number of limitations to this investigation. First, the results of this study can only apply to the sentiments of the Beijing residents related to Beijing 2008 Olympics. Second, clearly identified is the sample size. A total of 412 participants in a population of almost 20 million was considered minimal. However, the researchers developed and tested an adequate survey instrument that can be further used to measure the long-term benefits of the Beijing Olympics for years to come. Third, future researchers might analyze how social-economic changes are viewed by various demographic groups in the Chinese society, and the sustainability of the legacies of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.

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