

PERCEPTION OF SPORTS EVENTS HELD IN A PERMANENT SPORTS FACILITY: THE CASE OF THE MADRID SPORTS PALACE

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Abstract:

The aims of this study were to analyse perceptions regarding the sporting events held in the Madrid Sports Palace and to analyse whether those perceptions vary by age or gender. One hundred and ninety-five residents answered the Ntloko and Swart (2008) questionnaire. The dimensions most highly rated were *economic benefits* (3.9 ± 0.8), *the event as a regional showcase* (3.6 ± 0.7), and *the event as entertainment* (3.4 ± 0.6). However, the respondents did not agree with *the negative environmental impact* (2.0 ± 0.8). Men rated *the use of public money* ($z=2.4$; $p<.05$) and *the regional showcase* ($z=2.0$ $p<.05$) more positively than women. Finally, women rated *the increase in prices* ($z=2.0$; $p<.05$) more highly than men. The age groups differed significantly only regarding *the promotion of community pride*. Seniors and middle-aged adults rated it more positively than young adults ($\chi^2(2)=9.9$; $p<.01$). The fact that in an urban sports facility regular sporting events take place on a regular basis means that there are diverse perceptions, though mainly positive, and those perceptions differ from the perceptions about mega events that take place once in a life time at temporary sports facilities.

Key words: *events, perception, residents, legacy, investment*

Introduction

Most sporting events are planned from the perspective of positive legacy involved for the host community (Thomson, Schlenker, & Schulenkorf, 2013). A positive legacy could be tangible when it refers to creating employment opportunities (Weed, 2013), fostering the urban planning and infrastructures (Añó, Duclos, & Pablos, 2010; Smith 2012), and the economic impact of a sporting event (Lee, 2001; Matheson, 2012). There are also authors that affirm that intangible legacy will imply an increase in sports practice, a positive environmental impact and the development of social and cultural values achieved by a sporting event (Carlsen & Taylor, 2003; Llopis, 2012; Smith, 2012; Taks, 2013; Weed, 2013), which create general well-being in the community of residents. The concept of legacy could be understood as a long-term or permanent outcome for the cities in which sporting events are organized (Getz, 2005; Gratton & Preuss, 2008; Preuss, 2007; Taks, 2013; Thomson, et al., 2013). Some other authors consider the legacy in terms of during and after an event (Chalip, 2003; Chappellet, 2003; Preuss, 2003). Long-term legacy could be considered as tourism infrastructure, urban development and sports infrastructure (Preuss, 2007),

while the short-term legacy would be related with tourist spending and event-related investment transitory (Preuss, 2003). However, some studies advise that the legacy of a sporting event can turn negative when it produces undesirable effects for the host community. Those negative effects may involve the increase in prices, crime, taxes, traffic, noise and litter, and may even have negative political and economic consequences for the community (Barget & Gouget, 2007; Llopis, 2012; Preuss & Solberg, 2006; Thomson, et al., 2013).

The host community includes the people or residents staying at the event location or in its close proximity and they are the people who are most likely to understand the event and its impact by virtue of their proximity and hosting of the event (Delamere, 2001; Barker, Page, & Meyer, 2002). The residents' perception is a key issue when applying to host a mega event (Añó, Calabuig, Ayora, Parra, & Duclos, 2013; Getz, 2005, 2008; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Ritchie, Shipway, & Cleeve, 2009). Knowing the residents' positions about an event could help the organization to anticipate their reactions during the event (Delamere, Wankel, & Hinch, 2001). The residents' support for mega events is near 80% in most cases (Cegielsky & Mules, 2002; Henderson,

Foo, Lim, & Yip, 2010, Fredline, 2000; Zhou, 2010). The Madrid bid for the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games achieved support from 76% of Madrid residents (Fundación Madrid 2020, 2013).

The residents' perceptions are usually gathered through questionnaires (Getz, 2005). These questionnaires are structured around the following dimensions: economic, social and cultural, political and environmental (Delamere, 2001; Delamere, et al., 2001; Fredline, 2006). The economic benefits are commonly a dimension that is most highly rated in sporting events (Chalip, Green, & Hill, 2003, Lee, 2001). Fredline (2000) notes that the infrastructural benefits depend on the regularity of the competition and that unique events such as mega events are rated lower than those, e.g. sports leagues, occurring over an extended period of time. But, the increase in the number of facilities is not directly related to increased sport participation (Thomson, et al., 2013). Augmented media coverage due to sporting events is associated with an improved city image (Añó, et al., 2010; Añó, Calabuig, & Parra, 2012; Balduck, Maes, & Buelens, 2011; Henderson, et al., 2010). On the other hand, the environmental impact differs depending on the type of sport. Normally, the negative effect is related to motor sports because of the pollution and noise that are generated (Barget & Gouget, 2007; Fredline & Faulkner, 2002a, b).

The level of a competition determines its effect on tourism. One-time mega events like the Olympic Games or certain sports' World Championships are those whose effect on tourism is the highest (Getz, 2005; Gratton & Taylor, 2000). A moderate level of tourism attraction would be found with regular leagues, while local events would have the least effect on tourism. Furthermore, the level of an event determines the geographical extent of the legacy: local, regional and national effects are related to small, medium and mega sporting events, respectively (Thomson, et al., 2013). Small events are normally planned by a local community, which provides them with higher social impact than the medium and mega sporting events. The medium-sized and mega sporting events are normally planned by stakeholders not directly related to the community leaders, but by administration politicians or by professional club managers. Those stakeholders rarely take into account local opinion (Taks, 2013). Kellet, Hede and Chalip (2008) noted that when there is no specific policy to foster the social involvement regarding a sporting event, it rarely occurs. Moreover, the dimensions evaluated in each case have multiple constraints related to the place and the time of their occurrence. For example, as for the Olympic Winter Games of Torino 2006, the perception of the residents was higher during the dates of the event (winter of 2006) than in the years before (2003-2005) and after (2007) the event took place (Guala & Turco, 2009). The location constraints are

the historical framework, the surroundings, and the environmental conditions (Fredline, 2006). Time constraints regard type of sport, season of the year, level of competition, and the number of days on which an event takes place (Barker, 2004). Therefore, residents' perceptions should be taken into consideration cautiously, with the understanding that they may be biased by these constraints.

The analysis of spectators of a sporting event considers those spectators to be consumers. Previous studies have pointed out that sport is not deemed to be feminine (Snelgrove, Taks, Chalip, & Green, 2013; Taks, 2013). Although women's attendance has increased in recent decades (Mc Cabe, 2007, 2011), there are some gender differences regarding motivation and focus during the matches (Mc Cabe, 2007; Snelgrove, et al., 2013). Women that attended sporting events have been shown to be more motivated than men (Mc Cabe, 2007, 2011). Fans' perceptions also vary according to the performance level of a sporting competition. At professional level, they focus on the team, while at regional level they focus on sport in general (Robinson & Trail, 2005). The type of sport, individual or team, influences the fans and their motivation, too (Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999). For example, female and male basketball fans are more motivated by the knowledge of the sport than football fans (Robinson & Trail, 2005). Basketball is also supposed to be intended for young consumers (Snelgrove, et al., 2013).

Most of the previous sporting events that have been analysed were occasional. They occurred at one place and at one time only. The majority of studies regarding those sporting events are based on spectators' perceptions, not on the residents' perceptions. It would be interesting to analyse the residents' perception of regular sporting events held in a sports facility in their town; thus, the Madrid Sports Palace is the case that is studied in the present research. It is a facility that was constructed in the 1960s, and sporting events regularly take place there. The aims of this study were: i) to analyse the residents' perceptions of sporting events held at the Madrid Sports Palace, and ii) to analyse whether those perceptions vary by gender or by age.

Methods

Sample

The data were collected by a questionnaire circulated to the residents living in the proximity of the Madrid Sports Palace. People who lived or worked in the analysed neighbourhood were considered to be the residents. Madrid City has 21 districts and 132 quarters. One hundred and ninety-five subjects (81 males and 114 females) participated in the study. Their age ranged from 20 to 81 years of age ($M=48.8$, $SD=17.5$). Most of the respondents lived

in the city of Madrid (94.4%), and 45.6% of them were from the Goya quarter of the Salamanca district of the city. Only 5.6% were from other cities in the Madrid autonomous community. The error associated with the Madrid City population was 7% at a 95% confidence interval.

Questionnaire

The Ntloko and Swart (2008) questionnaire was the data collection tool. This questionnaire was suitable for this case because it was focused on the residents' perception, while most of the sporting events questionnaires are based on the spectators' perception. It could also be applied because it covered more than the social and economic dimensions which are usually taken into consideration. The questionnaire was translated into Spanish by a professional translator with a sport sciences background. The final content of the questionnaire was approved by a panel of experts. All the experts selected had a minimum of 10 years of experience in the sport management field. The profile section of the questionnaire began with age, gender, district of residence, autonomous community of birth, country of origin, and whether participants had been at the basketball game in the previous days. If they had not attended, they were asked if they had ever attended any game at the Madrid Sports Palace. If the answer was still 'no', a multiple choice option with reasons for not attending was provided ('Unaware/ Didn't know'; 'I didn't have time'; 'I was working'; 'I didn't want to go'; 'I didn't know where it was'; 'too expensive'; 'I wasn't in the area'; 'I am too old'; 'I take care of relatives' and 'Other'). Then, they had to rate 32 items on a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1 = totally disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = totally agree). Those items covered 10 different dimensions: *event as entertainment, use of public money, economic benefits of the event, event disruption to local residents, use of public facilities, the event and promotion of community pride, environmental impact of the event, the event as a regional showcase, impact of the event on price, and community benefits in relation to the event* (Table 2).

Procedure

A cross-sectional quantitative methodology was applied. Proportional stratified random sampling was done regarding age and gender (Mertens, 2005; Thomas & Nelson, 2001). After performing random paths on the Goya and surroundings quarters, the survey was completed through a personal interview. The fieldwork was carried out over a month and in 10 days in which basketball games were played at the Madrid Sports Palace. The attendance of the games was around 50% of the venue capacity (12,500 spectators for basketball). The two teams played in the professional league and they were from the city of Madrid.

Data analysis

A database with all responses from the questionnaires was created in order to analyse them with SPSS, v.18 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). For the descriptive analysis, percentages were calculated for qualitative parameters, while means and standard deviations were calculated for the quantitative parameters. A Mann-Whitney U test or a Pearson chi-square test was applied for comparison between groups. The significance level was set at $p < .05$.

Results

Attendance and barriers

Sixteen percent of the respondents attended the last basketball match at the Madrid Sports Palace. Of the 83.6% that did not attend, 74.8% had previously been at a sporting event at this facility. The main barriers for never having been to a sporting event at the facility were 'I was unaware' (20%), 'I didn't want to go' (20%) and 'I am too old' (20%) (Table 1).

While just 12.3% of women attended the last basketball match compared to 22.2% of men, that difference was not significant ($\chi^2(1)=3.4$; $p=.065$). Women were also less likely to have ever attended a sporting event at the Madrid Sports Palace than men (71% for women and 81% for men) ($\chi^2(1)=2.0$; $p>.05$). Men cited reasons such as 'working' (36%), 'the price of the tickets' (18.1%), and 'not knowing about the event' (20.7%), while women felt 'too old' (24.1%), 'didn't want to go' (24.1%), or 'did not know about it' (20.7%) (Table 1). These differences were not significant ($\chi^2(7)=9.9$; $p>.05$) either.

The results show how young adults (20-34 year olds) attended the previous basketball game to a greater extent than middle-aged adults (35-64 year olds) and seniors (65 years old and older) with attendance rates of 38.3%, 13.4%, and 2%, respectively ($\chi^2(2)=28.4$; $p<.001$). The middle-aged adult population had attended a sporting event at the Madrid Sports Palace at some point more frequently than young adults and seniors with attendance rates of 82.1%, 75.9%, 62%, respectively ($\chi^2(2)=6.8$; $p<.05$). The main constraint was different for each age group ($\chi^2(14)=33.9$; $p<.01$). 'The lack of time' (50%) was the main barrier for the young adults, while 'work' (33.3%) was most frequently cited by the middle-aged adults, and 'feeling too old' (42.1%) was the main reason for the seniors (Table 1).

Residents' perceptions

Table 2 shows the values for certain statements related to the basketball game or to the sporting events held at the Madrid Sports Palace. The statements most highly rated were 'the event is an opportunity to attend an interesting event' (4.2 ± 0.9), as well as the 'the event creates jobs' (4.0 ± 1.0).

Table 1. Barriers to attending a sporting event by gender and by age group

	Gender		Age group†			Total %
	Men %	Women %	20-34 %	35-64 %	+65 %	
I had no idea, I didn't know	18	21	0.0	20	26	20
I don't have time	9.1	10	50.0	6.7	0	10
I work	36	6.9	16.7	33	0	15
I didn't want to go	9.1	24	16.7	13	26	20
I didn't know where it was	0	6.9	0.0	6.7	5.3	5
It is too expensive	18	3.4	16.7	13	0	7.5
I am too old	9.1	24	0.0	0	42	20
Other	0	3.4	0.0	6.7	0	2.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Note: † significant difference between the age groups, $p < .05$

Table 2. Frequencies, means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of perceptions

	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	M	SD
The event provided an opportunity to attend an interesting event	1.3	3.2	14.6	38.9	42.0	4.2	0.9
The event provided an opportunity to have fun with family and friends	5.1	14.1	23.1	28.8	28.8	3.6	1.2
The event provided an opportunity to meet new people	44.2	29.5	16.0	8.3	1.9	1.9	1.1
The event increased entertainment opportunities for locals	2.6	7.7	21.2	35.9	32.7	3.9	1.0
The event was a waste of public money	42.2	24.5	15.6	12.0	5.7	2.2	1.3
Too much money was spent on the event that could be spent on other activities	34.0	24.2	28.4	9.3	4.1	2.3	1.1
The event assisted in increasing public spending for sport	2.1	9.3	25.3	34.0	29.4	3.8	1.0
The event was good for the economy since it creates jobs	2.6	3.6	21.5	31.8	40.5	4.0	1.0
The event was good for local business (increases turnover)	3.1	5.7	23.3	43.0	24.9	3.8	1.0
The event disrupted the lives of local residents and created inconvenience	18.6	18.0	32.0	19.1	12.4	2.9	1.3
The event caused traffic congestion and parking difficulties	10.8	19.0	32.3	25.1	12.8	3.1	1.2
The event created excessive noise	30.8	25.1	19.0	18.5	6.7	2.5	1.3
The event increased crime	44.1	30.1	15.1	7.0	3.8	2.0	1.1
The event was associated with some people behaving inappropriately such as excessive drinking or drug use	43.2	34.1	16.2	3.8	2.7	1.9	1.0
The event promoted the development and better maintenance of public facilities (roads, parks, etc.)	11.8	14.5	25.8	28.5	19.4	3.3	1.3
The event denied local residents access to public facilities (roads, parks, etc.)	14.5	21.8	26.4	24.4	13.0	3.0	1.3
The event made locals feel more proud of the city/ country	12.3	8.2	28.2	39.0	12.3	3.3	1.2
The event made locals feel good about themselves and their community	13.4	11.9	39.2	25.8	9.8	3.1	1.1
Ordinary residents should get a say in the planning and management of the event	45.4	16.0	12.4	13.9	12.4	2.3	1.5
The event had a negative impact on the environment through excessive litter	40.5	30.5	15.3	6.3	7.4	2.1	1.2
The event had a negative impact on the environment through pollution	32.6	38.3	20.7	7.8	.5	2.1	1.0
The event had a negative impact on the environment through damage to natural areas	45.4	27.8	16.5	8.2	2.1	1.9	1.1
The event showcased the area in a positive light	4.6	6.7	23.1	27.7	37.9	3.9	1.1
The event attracted tourists to the area	4.1	12.4	24.2	32.0	27.3	3.7	1.1
The event attracts future business to the area	8.7	18.5	23.1	27.7	22.1	3.4	1.3
The event has increased media coverage of the area	7.3	10.4	24.0	33.3	25.0	3.6	1.2
The event leads to increases in the price of some things such as food, transport and property values	7.7	14.9	35.9	20.5	21.0	3.3	1.2
As a result of the event, more people are buying homes in the area	44.9	28.1	16.8	7.0	3.2	2.0	1.1
During the event period, the overall cost of living has increased	35.6	27.3	20.1	11.9	5.2	2.2	1.2
The community benefited directly from the event	10.3	19.0	34.4	22.1	14.4	3.1	1.2
Only some members of the community benefited from the event/ event increases social inequity	33.3	19.8	27.6	13.5	5.7	2.4	1.2
The event increases interaction between locals and tourists	34.9	28.2	26.2	6.7	4.1	2.2	1.1

Note: An event refers to basketball games hosted at the Madrid Sport Palace. Scale: 1 = totally disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = totally agree.

Table 3. Perceptions by gender and by age group. Means (M) and standard deviations (SD).

	Gender				Age Group							
	Men		Women		20-34		35-64		65 y +		Total	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Event as entertainment	3.4	0.5	3.4	0.6	3.3	0.5	3.4	0.5	3.5	0.7	3.4	0.6
The event provided an opportunity to attend an interesting event *†	4.3	0.9	4.1	0.9	4.3	0.8	4.0	0.9	4.3	0.9	4.2	0.9
The event provided an opportunity to have fun with family and friends	3.7	1.2	3.6	1.2	3.4	1.1	3.8	1.1	3.5	1.4	3.6	1.2
The event provided an opportunity to meet new people	2.0	1.0	1.9	1.1	1.8	1.1	2.0	1.0	2.2	1.2	1.9	1.1
The event increased entertainment opportunities for locals	3.8	1.1	4.0	1.0	3.9	1.1	3.9	1.0	3.8	1.1	3.9	1.0
Use of public money *	2.7	0.6	2.8	0.7	2.9	0.6	2.7	0.7	2.7	0.7	2.7	0.7
The event was a waste of public money	2.1	1.2	2.2	1.3	2.2	1.1	2.1	1.3	2.1	1.3	2.1	1.2
Too much money was spent on the event that could be spent on other activities	2.3	1.0	2.2	1.2	2.3	1.1	2.3	1.1	2.1	1.2	2.3	1.1
The event assisted in increasing public spending for sport	3.7	1.1	3.9	1.0	4.0	1.0	3.7	1.0	3.7	1.1	3.8	1.0
Economic benefits of the event	4.1	0.8	3.8	0.9	4.0	0.8	3.9	0.8	4.0	0.9	3.9	0.8
The event was good for the economy since it created jobs	4.2	1.0	4.0	1.0	4.0	1.0	4.0	1.0	4.2	0.9	4.0	1.0
The event was good for local business (increased turnover)	3.9	0.8	3.7	1.1	3.9	0.9	3.8	1.0	3.7	1.0	3.8	1.0
Event disruption to local residents	2.4	0.6	2.5	0.6	2.6	0.5	2.5	0.7	2.3	0.5	2.5	0.6
The event disrupted the lives of local residents and created inconvenience	2.8	1.3	3.0	1.2	3.1	1.1	2.9	1.4	2.7	1.2	2.9	1.3
The event caused traffic congestion and parking difficulties †	3.1	1.1	3.1	1.2	3.5	1.0	3.0	1.2	3.0	1.2	3.1	1.2
The event created excessive noise	2.4	1.2	2.5	1.4	2.3	1.2	2.5	1.4	2.5	1.2	2.5	1.3
The event increased crime	1.8	1.0	2.1	1.1	2.0	1.2	2.1	1.1	1.7	0.9	2.0	1.1
The event was associated with some people behaving inappropriately such as excessive drinking or drug use †	1.8	0.9	2.0	1.0	1.9	1.2	2.0	0.9	1.7	1.0	1.9	1.0
Use of public facilities	3.2	1.0	3.1	1.1	3.1	1.1	3.2	0.9	3.1	1.1	3.1	1.0
The event promoted the development and better maintenance of public facilities (roads, parks, etc.)	3.4	1.2	3.2	1.3	3.2	1.3	3.4	1.2	3.2	1.3	3.3	1.3
The event denied local residents access to public facilities (roads, parks, etc.)	3.0	1.2	3.0	1.3	2.9	1.3	3.1	1.2	2.9	1.3	3.0	1.3
The event and promotion of community pride ‡	2.8	0.9	3.0	0.8	2.6	0.8	3.0	0.8	3.0	0.9	2.9	0.8
The event made locals feel more proud of the city/ country †	3.1	1.2	3.4	1.1	2.8	1.2	3.4	1.1	3.5	1.2	3.3	1.2
The event made locals feel good about themselves and their community †	3.0	1.2	3.1	1.1	2.7	1.2	3.1	1.2	3.3	1.0	3.1	1.1
Ordinary residents should get a say in the planning and management of the event	2.3	1.4	2.3	1.5	2.1	1.5	2.4	1.5	2.3	1.5	2.3	1.5
Environmental impact of the event	1.9	0.7	2.1	0.8	1.9	0.7	2.1	0.9	2.0	0.6	2.0	0.8
The event had a negative impact on the environment through excessive litter *	1.8	1.0	2.3	1.3	1.9	1.0	2.2	1.4	2.0	1.1	2.1	1.2
The event had a negative impact on the environment through pollution	2.0	0.9	2.1	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	0.9	2.1	1.0	2.1	0.9
The event had a negative impact on the environment through damage to natural areas	2.0	1.1	1.9	1.0	1.9	1.2	2.0	1.1	1.8	0.9	1.9	1.1
The event as a regional showcase **	3.8	0.7	3.5	0.6	3.7	0.7	3.6	0.7	3.5	0.5	3.6	0.7
The event showcased the area in a positive light	3.9	1.2	3.9	1.1	4.1	1.0	3.8	1.1	3.7	1.3	3.9	1.1
The event attracted tourists to the area	3.8	1.1	3.5	1.2	3.8	1.2	3.5	1.1	3.8	1.0	3.7	1.1
The event attracts future business to the area *	3.5	1.2	3.2	1.3	3.5	1.4	3.3	1.2	3.4	1.2	3.4	1.3
The event has increased media coverage of the area †	3.8	1.2	3.5	1.1	3.5	1.3	3.9	1.1	3.1	1.2	3.6	1.2
Impact of the event on price *	2.4	0.8	2.6	0.7	2.5	0.7	2.5	0.8	2.5	0.8	2.5	0.8
The event leads to increases in the price of some things such as food, transport and property values	3.2	1.1	3.4	1.2	3.4	1.2	3.3	1.2	3.3	1.2	3.3	1.2
As a result of the event more people are buying homes in the area	1.9	1.1	2.0	1.1	1.8	1.0	2.0	1.1	2.1	1.2	2.0	1.1
During the event period the overall cost of living has increased	2.1	1.1	2.3	1.2	2.2	1.0	2.2	1.3	2.3	1.1	2.2	1.2
Community benefits in relation to the event	2.6	0.6	2.5	0.7	2.5	0.6	2.6	0.7	2.5	0.6	2.6	0.7
The community benefited directly from the event	3.2	1.1	3.1	1.2	3.1	1.2	3.0	1.1	3.2	1.3	3.1	1.2
Only some members of the community benefited from the event/event increases social inequity	2.4	1.2	2.4	1.3	2.5	1.2	2.4	1.3	2.3	1.1	2.4	1.2
The event increases interaction between locals and tourists *	2.3	1.2	2.1	1.0	2.0	1.1	2.3	1.1	2.1	1.1	2.2	1.1

Note: * significant difference between the gender groups, $p < .05$; ** significant difference between the gender groups, $p < .01$; † significant difference between the age groups, $p < .05$ level; ‡ significant difference between the age groups, $p < .01$ level; Scale: 1 = totally disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = totally agree.

As for gender comparison, three significant differences appeared (Table 3). Men valued 'the opportunity to attend a sports event' more highly ($z=1.9$; $p<.05$). However, women felt more deeply than men that 'the events caused excessive litter' ($z=2.6$; $p<.01$). Concerning *the event as a regional showcase*, men perceived the event in a more positive way than women regarding 'attracting future business to the area' ($z=1.7$; $p<.05$) and that the event 'increased media coverage of the area' ($z=2.1$; $p<.05$).

As for age comparison, six significant differences regarding the statements appeared (Table 3). The young adults and the seniors rated the 'opportunity to attend a sporting event' more highly than the middle-aged adults ($\chi^2(2)=6.5$; $p<.05$). 'Traffic and parking problems' were perceived more highly by young adults than middle-aged adults or seniors ($\chi^2(2)=7.3$; $p<.05$). Middle-aged adults felt in a stronger way that there were 'drugs and alcohol problems' ($\chi^2(2)=6.9$; $p<.05$). Middle-aged adults and seniors felt to a greater degree that the event caused 'locals to feel proud of their city' ($\chi^2(2)=10.1$; $p<.01$) and that 'residents feel good about themselves and their community' ($\chi^2(14)=33.9$; $p<.01$) than the young adults. The middle-aged adult group rated the statement 'the event has increased media coverage of the area' ($\chi^2(2)=12.9$; $p<.01$) more positively than the young adults and seniors groups.

Global dimensions

The dimensions were analysed by calculating the average for each group of statements (Table 3). The dimensions rated most highly were *economic benefits* (3.9 ± 0.8), *the event as a regional showcase* (3.6 ± 0.7), and *the event as entertainment* (3.4 ± 0.6). However, the respondents did not agree with *the negative environmental impact* (2.0 ± 0.8). Men rated *the use of public money* ($z=2.4$; $p<.05$) and *the regional showcase* ($z=2.0$; $p<.05$) more positively than women. Finally, women rated *the increase in prices* more highly than men ($z=2.0$; $p<.05$). The age groups differed significantly only regarding *the promotion of community pride*. Seniors and middle-aged adults rated it more positively than young adults ($\chi^2(2)=9.9$; $p<.01$).

Discussion and conclusions

Attendance

The results demonstrate higher attendance to sporting events by subjects in the present study than by the general Spanish population. The attendance registered at the events held in the Madrid Sports Palace was similar to previous studies of occasional events (Añó, et al., 2010; Ntloko & Swart, 2008). This percentage increases when the question asked is whether the subject has ever been to a sporting event at the Madrid Sports Palace. This is logical, considering that the probabilities increase over

time. In fact, residents have more chances to attend a sporting event if the format of the competition is a regular league rather than a one-time competition. The Sport Habits 2010 survey of the Spanish population found that 9% of the subjects responded that they attended sporting events 'frequently', while 18% attended a sporting event 'once in a while', and 21% 'scarcely' (García Ferrando & Llopis, 2010). Thus, the results of the present study were better than those from the Spanish population. The integration of the Madrid Sports Palace into the urban life style, due to how long it has been there, could be one of the reasons for this result.

Barriers

'Not being aware' of events was the most frequently cited barrier (31.5%) in the study by Ntloko and Swart (2008), which is in accordance with the present study. It is interesting to point out how the barrier of 'feeling too old' is the same as the third most frequently cited barrier to practicing physical activity in the 2010 survey (García Ferrando & Llopis, 2010, p. 185). That perception demonstrates how this population associates sporting events with young people (Snelgrove, et al., 2013).

The event as entertainment

Concerning *the event as entertainment*, only 10.2% of the subjects responded positively with regard to 'the opportunity to meet new people', while in the study by Ntloko and Swart (2008), 73.5% of the interviewees agreed or totally agreed with it. This difference could be due to the fact that events that occur once in a lifetime boost the feeling of living a 'unique moment'. As for the opportunity to attend an interesting event, the majority of the interviewees agreed with that statement. This result agrees with previous studies (Fredline & Faulkner, 2002b).

The use of public money

The subjects perceived that 'the event increases public spending on sport' (63.4% agreed or totally agreed). Further, they did not agree that the event was a 'waste of public money' (66.7% disagreed or totally disagreed) nor did they agree that 'too much money was spent that could be utilized for other activities' (58.2%). These two results are in accordance with results by Ntloko and Swart (2008), where interviewees agreed with the investment of public money (44.5%) and disagreed with an option that the money could be spent better on other activities (39%). Further, the number of South Africans (17%) and Madrid residents (17.7%) that agreed, or totally agreed, that 'the event was a waste of public money' was similar (Ntloko & Swart, 2008). These results diverge from the study by Añó et al. (2010) where the residents of Valencia did not associate the event

with any urban development or development of employment, or of infrastructure. Likely, the short duration and the temporary character of mega events affect the negative perception of public investment. However, the public investments that remain can be enjoyed by the citizens, and their use can remain a legacy to the local community (Taks, 2013).

The economic benefits of the event

This factor was the most highly rated one by the residents. Such a result is consistent with many studies (Añó, et al., 2010; Chalip, et al., 2003; Mihalik & Simonetta, 1999; Waitt, 2003; Zhou & Ap, 2009). Seventy-two percent of the residents agreed or totally agreed that ‘the event is good for the economy since it creates jobs’, and 67.9% agreed or totally agreed that ‘the event is good for local businesses (increases turnover)’. Both percentages are higher than those found by Ntloko and Swart (2008) and Añó et al. (2010, 2012). Once again, the fact that the Red Bull Wave Africa event and the Formula 1 event were one-time events could produce the negative perception regarding employment. In the same way, it could be stated that permanent sports facilities, that regularly host sporting events, are perceived as promoters of employment.

The event disruption to local residents

The results coincide with those by Añó et al. (2012), where the effects were mainly related to traffic congestion and parking difficulties. This result partially agrees with the results found in the Ntloko and Swart (2008) study where the respondents did not agree with any of the responses. This could be considered reasonable, taking into account the traffic and parking problems that normally occur downtown in medium-sized and large cities. In the present study, the noise was not cited as an annoyance. This is likely due to the fact that the sport held at the Madrid Sports Palace was indoor basketball, which does not generate as much noise as motor sports (Lorde, Greenidge, & Devonish, 2011; Ohmann, Jones, & Wilkes, 2006; Zhou, 2010).

The use of the public facilities

The responses given regarding this factor were more positive than those found in the two mentioned studies (Añó, et al., 2010; Ntloko & Swart, 2008). In the study by Añó et al. (2012) residents declared that there was an improvement in the city’s infrastructures, but they negatively rated their utility afterwards. In this sense, previous studies have pointed out that a negative perception regarding public investment could lead to a loss of political confidence (Añó, et al., 2012; Llopis, 2012; Preuss & Solberg, 2006; Thomson, et al., 2013). This discrepancy between the residents’ perceptions of the infrastructure could be due to the age of the facility

analysed (from the 1960s) and its strong integration into the urban setting.

The event and the promotion of the community pride

With regard to the promotion of community pride, the residents confirmed that ‘the event made locals feel prouder of their city’ and ‘the event made residents feel good about themselves and their community’ (51.3% and 35.6%, respectively). Previous studies have shown a low sense of belonging or ownership at mega events (Añó, et al., 2010, 2012; Henderson, et al., 2010; Zhou, 2010). Therefore, medium-sized and small sporting events seem to develop community pride (Taks, 2013).

Environmental impact of the event

The majority of the residents of Madrid (70%) did not perceive a ‘negative environmental impact by way of litter, pollution, or green area degradation’. These results are consistent with the results in the study by Ntloko and Swart (2008), in which participants disagreed with these negative impacts as well (57.5%, 60.5%, and 58.5%, respectively).

The event as a regional showcase

Regarding *the event as a regional showcase* or visibility for the hosting city and its relation to tourism, all previous studies overlap in that sporting events improve the city’s image and that they are a platform for media to show the city to the world (Añó, et al., 2010, 2012; Baldock, 2011; Henderson, et al., 2010; Lee, 2001; Ntloko & Swart, 2008). The number of future visitors depends on the number of visitors-spectators and the size of the event (Añó, et al., 2012; Chalip, et al., 2013). In summary, the perception of the sporting event as a possible positive regional showcase was maintained in this case.

Impact of the event of prices

Regarding *the impact of the event on prices*, the residents of Madrid perceived that some products, e.g. food, increase their price (41.5%), but they did not perceive that more people bought houses in the area (10.2%).

Community benefits in relation to the event

A considerable percentage (36.5%) of the respondents felt that the local community benefited from the sporting events held in the Madrid Sports Palace. This result is in agreement with the 38.5% of the Ntloko and Swart (2008) study.

Gender differences

Men rated *the event as entertainment*, *the use of public money*, and *the event as a regional showcase* more highly than women. The results are par-

tially in accordance with those by Añó et al. (2012) where men rated every dimension analysed more highly than women. Analysing each statement one by one, it should be highlighted that men value the 'opportunity to attend an event' and 'to grow business' more strongly than women. This fact could be related to the Spanish population and the concept it has of sport. Men tend to see sport as entertainment (46% for men and 32% for women) and as a show (13% for men and 6% for women) (García Ferrando & Llopis, 2010, p. 162). Women perceived 'the increase in prices' and the 'quantity of litter' to a higher degree. As understood in Spain, the role of women in the family is closely related to managing the house, including cleaning and grocery shopping. Thus, this group would be more sensitive to those aspects of the event.

Age differences

The age analysis confirms that the young adult group attends sporting events more frequently than the seniors or middle-aged adult groups (Snelgrove, et al., 2013); further, this result supports data about the Spanish population, where the younger group attended sporting events more frequently than any other group, particularly basketball matches (García Ferrando & Llopis, 2010, p. 49; SSC, 2013). The most evident difference was the one regarding *developing community pride* by the events held at the Madrid Sports Palace. The middle-aged adults and seniors groups identified with that statement to a greater degree than the younger group. In this sense, the age of the facility may affect such a finding, as the older people are more aware of this facility' construction in the 1960s. These results differ from Añó et al. (2012) where the young adult population rated all factors more highly than middle-aged adults or seniors. The present study demonstrates that there were age differences for a variety of dimensions. The youngest group perceived 'the opportunity to attend a sporting event' and 'the traffic and parking problems caused by the event' more strongly than the other groups. The middle-aged and older adults perceived the statements that 'the events cause problems with alcohol' and that 'the event increased regional showcase' more frequently than the youngest group. In this sense, this perception may be associated with various concepts of sport that different age groups in the Spanish population have. While the young adult group feels sport is an entertainment, the senior and middle-aged adult groups tend to perceive sport as a show (García Ferrando & Llopis, 2010, p. 162). The differences from the present study and the previous studies by Añó and Ntloko and Swart could be the age range of the samples, given that the present study's sample has a higher average age than the other studies. Also, the study by Añó et al. (2012) analysed a Formula 1 event, a sport with which youth

population identifies more than with other sports (Añó, et al., 2012; Fredline, 2000).

Limitations of the study

The study presents some limitations in relation to the specificity of the time and location that were analysed, which makes it difficult to extrapolate these results with any other city or time (Fredline, 2000; 2004 & 2005). Additionally, the proximity of the respondents could have led this research to obtain more positive responses than if we had questioned those living farther away (Cegielsky, et al., 2002; Fredline, 2000). The fieldwork was carried out over the regular season instead during summer time; this fact could have biased the results, too. Finally, the size of the sample could have been larger in order to associate the results with lower error. Even so, useful information is presented to assess the perception of Madrid City residents regarding the regular events held in a permanent, urban facility like the Madrid Sports Palace.

To summarize, and taking the research's aims as points of reference, some conclusions can be drawn. A permanent facility which regularly hosts sporting events provides an opportunity for the local community to attend sporting events. On the one hand, the comparison of the results from the present study with the results of the previous mega events studies shows that local residents have similar perceptions, namely, that sporting events are an entertainment opportunity, that they produce economic benefits, bring wider media coverage and produce a positive impact on tourism. On the other hand, the events also caused traffic congestion and parking problems to big cities like Madrid. Further, these types of events in permanent sports facilities are positively perceived by residents regarding the use of public money, the use of public facilities, and the creation of job opportunities with no negative effect on the environment. Building community pride is higher for this kind of event, likely due to the community identifying with the local teams. In the end, the residents believe that the investment in sport positively affects the local community.

The gender differences found are in accordance with the Spanish population, in which men attend sporting events more frequently than women. Men are more conscious of the economic and business possibilities of the events than women, while women are more aware of the increase in prices and the quantity of litter generated by the events than men. The functions given by Spanish society regarding the management of the home could be the reason for these differences. Regarding the age analysis, the youngest group attends sporting events more frequently than middle-aged adults or seniors groups. This fact is similar to the general population and to results found in previous studies. The middle-aged adult and senior age groups per-

ceived a better promotion of community pride by the events at the Madrid Sports Palace than the young adult group.

Finally, the fact that in an urban sports facility regular sporting events take place on a regular basis means that there are diverse perceptions, though mainly positive, and those perceptions differ from the perceptions about mega events that take place once in a life time at temporary sports facilities.

The present study provides the opportunity to assess the opinion of Madrid City residents about the sporting events celebrated in the Madrid Sports Palace, showing a high level of integration to the local community. For future research, a comparison between other sports facilities from different cities is proposed to analyse the effect of the organizational culture of the city on the community and its residents.

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