



Psychic income and social capital among host nation residents: A pre–post analysis of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa



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H I G H L I G H T S

- Analysis of hosts' perceptions of mega-events focusing on data collection timing and social impact measurement.
- Pre and post event psychic income and social capital levels assessed in South African context.
- Psychic income increased among South African residents eight months after the FIFA 2010 World Cup.
- Little change in social capital among host nation residents eight months after the FIFA 2010 World Cup.
- Social utility of mega-events discussed in context of event leveraging and legacy literature.

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Following a growing focus on the social impacts of mega-sport events over the past decade, this study examined perceptions of psychic income and social capital among South African residents prior to, and following, the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Psychic income is a measure of event-related pride/euphoria and social capital is a proxy for social cohesion. Using a quasi-experimental trend design, residents of five host cities were surveyed three months pre-event ($n = 1749$), and eight months post-event ($n = 2020$). ANOVA, MANOVA and MANCOVA were used to evaluate the data over time. Psychic income significantly increased from pre to post-event; males and Black South Africans rated psychic income significantly higher. Three social capital dimensions decreased and two exhibited no change post-event; Black and younger South Africans perceived higher social capital levels. The social utility of mega-events, the concept of event-related legacy, and the operationalization of social impact and data collection time-frames for future studies are discussed.

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1. Introduction

As academics adopt increasingly critical approaches to investigating the outcomes associated with mega sport events (e.g., the Olympic Games; the FIFA World Cup), questions have been raised about the likelihood that hosting such events can create positive

impacts (Lenskyj, 2002). While event impacts are typically categorized into three domains (i.e., economic, environmental, and social), economic impact, which includes increased tourism has received most of the scholarly and anecdotal attention (Li & Jago, 2012). However, this domain has been the most contentious among scholars, and often the most disappointing for host nations (Kim, Gursoy, & Lee, 2006). In light of these contested findings, the estimated and actual economic benefits from mega-events have become difficult to justify and confirm (Lee & Taylor, 2006). Consequently, more attention has been devoted to the social utility of mega-events such as psychic income (i.e., the 'feel good factor'), which may translate into a sustainable legacy for a host society, such as social capital (i.e., community connectedness) (Chalip, 2006; Misener & Mason, 2006; Schulenkorf, 2009, 2010).

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However, while some attempts have been made at measuring psychic income (e.g., [Kim & Petrick, 2005](#); [Waitt, 2003](#)), researchers have yet to measure change in social capital as a result of mega-event hosting. Indeed, [Sharpley and Stone \(2012\)](#) suggest, "...social capital provides a framework for developing a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural impacts of events on communities" (p. 356).

[Cornelissen \(2008\)](#) posited that hosting mega sporting events is a key part of the global political economy. These events are seen as a means by which governments can achieve various objectives. For South Africa, [Cornelissen \(2008, 2010\)](#) described how the 2010 FIFA World Cup, even during the bid phase, was imbued with political goals, both external (e.g., reimagining, re-branding, or international status) and internal (e.g., nation building or societal transformation). She argued that during the post-apartheid era sport was actively used as an instrument of social cohesion as the government tried to harness "... the social momentum and emotional tide generated by sport" ([Cornelissen, 2008](#), p. 482). Tying the idea of nation building to sport began for South Africa when President Mandela attempted to utilize the national pride derived from hosting and winning the 1995 Rugby World Cup to achieve social reconciliation goals, a story immortalized in the film *Invictus*. [Ndlovu-Gatsheni \(2011\)](#) noted that following the 1995 Rugby World Cup a sense of community prevailed, and [Labuschagne \(2008\)](#) reported that "... a divided and troubled country was for the first-time truly united, albeit temporarily, as the 'rainbow nation'" (p. 4). However, this sense of community was gradually undermined by socio-historical conditions such as distrust, animosity, and economic inequality that have continued to plague the nation ([van der Merwe, 2007](#); [Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011](#)).

In the years following the 1995 Rugby World Cup, the South African Sport Tourism (SAST) program was initiated to strategically foster tangible reconstruction and development programs ([Swart, 1998](#)). As part of the SAST initiatives, South Africa hosted the 1996 African Cup of Nations and the 2003 Cricket World Cup and submitted a bid for the 2004 Olympic Games. Yet, as [van der Merwe \(2007\)](#) noted, the power of sport to achieve national goals appeared to have disappeared during this period. However, the 2010 FIFA World Cup garnered significantly more appeal to Black South Africans than cricket or rugby, since soccer was viewed more as the 'people's game'. Accordingly, this event offered an opportunity to not only achieve Pan African policy objectives ([Cornelissen, 2008](#)), but to reignite the spirit of the 'rainbow nation' and potentially unify the nation through sport ([Cornelissen, 2010](#)).

[Horne \(2007\)](#) suggested that one of the "... known unknowns" of hosting mega-events is the impact on the attitudes and beliefs of the residents of the host country (p. 88). While during an event, pride, enhanced self-esteem, patriotism, euphoria, and community are readily expressed by residents ([Fredline, 2005](#)) i.e., psychic income, [Horne](#) posited that there was a lack of knowledge about the longer term social impacts or legacies on host communities. In the case of South Africa, one important impact was the effect of the event on social cohesion. Thus, the purpose of this study was to compare levels of psychic income and social capital as a proxy for social cohesion, prior to and after the 2010 World Cup, among South African residents.

2. Literature review

2.1. Mega-events and social impact

Over the past decade, researchers have investigated the various impacts associated with hosting the world's two sport mega-events, the Summer Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup. A variety of research designs and a range of impact variables have

been used. While none of the reviewed studies have directly measured social capital, and have tangentially measured psychic income, targeting the socio-psychological findings in these studies provides support for the contention that hosting such events can generate positive social impacts. The 2000 Sydney Olympic Games is often considered the first in a new generation of the Games where world-level cities began to actively compete to host the event with explicit social and economic goals in mind ([Shoval, 2002](#)). Using a panel study of Sydney residents (i.e., same participants), with two data collection phases (two years before and during the Games), [Waitt \(2003\)](#) found enthusiasm for the Games increased over the two years. [Waitt](#) noted that the Games were strategically organized to "... manufacture consensus in an era of increasing socio-economic polarization in Sydney" (p.198). He suggested that Sydney Olympic Bid Ltd.'s (SOBL) invitation to "... share the spirit" (p.198) was an attempt at generating "... an imagined national identity within sporting traditions" (p. 198). Interestingly, he found that enhanced community spirit and feelings of belonging were more prevalent among newer non-English speaking migrants and residents who lived closer to the Olympic complex.

[Gursoy and Kendall \(2006\)](#) addressed the perceived benefits and costs of hosting the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City. They found that residents holding stronger perceptions of event-related benefits also expressed more support for hosting and a greater sense of community attachment. The only references to event-related pride and self-esteem were associated with a higher tolerance of event-related costs. Additionally, when locals were involved in the planning and delivery of the event, a stronger relationship with event support and positive outcomes was witnessed. The authors suggested that temporal effects should be considered in future studies because attitudes before, during, and after the event could be quite different. Similar to [Waitt \(2003\)](#), [Gursoy and Kendall](#) collected data during the event and as such their findings could have been influenced by the effects of event-related euphoria.

The 2002 FIFA World Cup co-hosted by South Korea and Japan yielded an array of impact studies. [Kim and Morrision \(2005\)](#), citing a [Samsung Economic Research Institute \(2002\)](#) study, pointed to feelings of national unity, which accrued from celebrations hosted around the country during the event. In fact, the authors found in a post-event survey (three to four months after) of international tourists that South Korea's image as a passionate country had improved significantly as a result of hosting the World Cup. Similarly, [Kim and Petrick \(2005\)](#) investigated impacts of the 2002 FIFA World Cup and changes in perceptions over time (pre/during and three months after) with a panel study design, and found differences by age and gender. Females rated perceived positive impacts (i.e., enhanced image) more highly than males. Older residents rated tourism upgrades higher, and younger residents noted such negative impacts as traffic congestion and disappointment over economic benefits. Middle aged residents perceived the World Cup as an opportunity to enhance patriotism, although three months after the event, these emotions had decreased.

[Kim, Gurosy, and Lee \(2006\)](#) also investigated resident perceptions of the 2002 World Cup prior to, and after the event using a trend study design (i.e., different participants). Similar to [Kim and Petrick \(2005\)](#), [Kim et al.](#) found that residents tended to rate benefits more highly before the event and were particularly disappointed with economic benefits afterwards. Although, anticipated problems such as crime, traffic congestion, and price increases never materialized to the predicted extent. Instead, residents rated increased cultural and social benefits more highly after the World Cup. Once again, however, these two studies demonstrate that temporal effects may influence resident

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