

Change of Attitudes and Country Image after Hosting Major Sport Events

Vilte Auruskeviciene¹, Asta Pundziene¹, Vida Skudiene¹, Geir Gripsrud², Erik B. Nes², Ulf H. Olsson²

¹ISM University of Management and Economics
Ausros Vartu str. 7^a, LT-01304, Vilnius, Lithuania
e-mail: vilte.auruskeviciene@ism.lt, asta.pundziene@ism.lt, vida.skudiene@ism.lt

²BI Norwegian School of Management
Nydalsveien 37, N-0442 Oslo, Norway
e-mail: geirgripsrud@bi.no, ulf.h.olsson@bi.no, erik.nes@bi.no

Although a change of country image in general is a rather long process (Kuvykaite & Kerbelyte, 2008), hosting sports events may contribute to changing a country's image. When governments and cities host major sports events like the Olympics it is partly because such events are perceived as a means to promote the image of the host. The cost of an event like the Olympics is considerable, and in most cases the local and/or the national government has to pick up the lion's share of the bill. The Norwegian government sponsored the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympics by more than one billion euro. The Summer Olympics are even more expensive, and as an example the South Korean government spent more than three billion US dollar on the 1988 Summer Olympics according to Nebenzahl and Jaffe (1991). A report released in 2002 stipulates that the NSW government in Australia spent more than one billion dollars on the 2000 Olympic Games in Sidney. Therefore, it is very important to know if these investments of money and effort change the image of the hosting country.

This study presents the effects of the Torino (Turin) 2006 Winter Olympics on the image of Italy in Lithuania. Two random samples of students at major Lithuanian universities were selected. Students were interviewed because they are part of society, which are very interested in sports events like Olympics. The first sample consisted of 297 respondents and was collected before the Winter Olympics in Torino. The second sample consisted of 346 respondents and was collected after the event.

There is no consensus among scholars regarding the country image concept. The understanding of the nature of this phenomenon varies in terms of target group (investors, students, visitors, etc.). By synthesizing various approaches Laroche, Papadopulos, Helsop, & Mourali (2005) define three main country image dimensions: cognitive, affective and conative. However, little research has been conducted to test it.

This research tested the following country image dimensions: image of the people in the country, image of the societal system and the level of animosity towards the country.

The following three general hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: Animosity dimension of country image is influenced by a major sport event such as Winter Olympics.

H2: Societal dimension of country image is influenced by a major sport event such as Winter Olympics.

H3: People dimension of country image is influenced by a major sport event such as Winter Olympics.

The research results indicate that the Animosity dimension of Italy after the Olympics changed negatively which means that Lithuanian students got less favourable impression of Italy. The other two hypotheses were not supported.

Several factors contribute to the explanation of the research results: there was a lot of negative press concerning the logistics of the games, the Torino Olympics chose the slogan 'Passion lives here' and then failed to show any according to their polls: there were few inspired spectators at some of the events.

Keywords: country image, sport events, Winter Olympics in Torino.

Introduction

Countries – as well as states and cities - compete fiercely to host major sports events despite the substantial costs involved. The cost of an event like the Olympics is considerable, and in most cases the local and/or the national government has to pick up the lion's share of the bill. The Norwegian government sponsored the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympics by more than 1 billion euro. The Summer Olympics are even more expensive, and as an example the South Korean government spent more than 3 billion US dollar on the 1988 Summer Olympics according to Nebenzahl and Jaffe (1991). A report released in 2002 stipulates that the NSW government in Australia spent \$ 1.326 billion on the 2000 Olympic Games in Sidney (www.gamesinfo.com.au/home.html), and the budget for the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro is an astonishing 14.4 billion dollars.

A major reason why governments and regional authorities are willing to accept the costs incurred, is a general sentiment that sponsoring such an event will stimulate business and the community in various ways. Hosting a major sports event like the Olympics is a showcase for a country (and/or state and city) and is covered

by the media worldwide. Coverage is usually not restricted to the games alone, but typically also includes background stories related to the site of the event. The extensive media coverage may influence the attitudes towards the country where the event takes place among the people exposed. Ultimately, the test of whether hosting the Olympics has any effect or not is to what extent changes in exports, tourism, foreign direct investment and etc are taking place. A basic problem is that such variables are influenced by a large number of variables and the relevant time period is unknown. Still, efforts are carried out to estimate the economic effects of hosting large sports events. In the case of the Sidney Games for instance, PricewaterhouseCoopers was commissioned to put together the available evidence concerning economic and business benefits (www.games.info.com.au/pi/arpicoe.html). We suggest that more research should be concerned with the effects of major sports events on the image abroad of the country or place hosting the event.

The problem of the paper is related to the fact that countries spend lots of money on hosting major sports events but the impact of these events on the country image is controversial. **The main aim of this paper** is to evaluate the sports events impact on different aspects of country image measuring the country image before and after the Torino (Turin) 2006 Winter Olympics. **The research object** is the major sports events impact on country image.

Research methods: literature review on country image research, students' survey.

The paper presents an original evaluation of the change of the country image by measuring affective response to the country's people, country's economic, political, educational development and technological advancement before and after the major sport event.

The paper has five main sections. First, the conceptual framework of country image concept is presented, second, the research hypothesis is developed, third, the research method is discussed, fourth, the research findings are presented and finally conclusions of the research are provided.

Conceptual framework

Image is a psychological concept and refers to the mental pictures that individuals hold regarding a place or a product (Gibson, Qi, Zhang, 2008). Image is a purposefully or accidentally created concept that reflects a certain object in human mind. Usually image is created according to the attributes and features which correspond with a certain phenomenon. It is a dynamic concept as it changes depending on the phenomenon or people mindset changes. In some cases image is defined as thinking system, set of attitudes, or impressions and perceptions of objects (Poesz, 1989).

Country image was defined 40 years ago by Nagashima (1970) who claimed that country image is "the picture, the reputation, the stereotype that businessmen and consumers attach to products of a specific country. This image is created by such variables as representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history, and traditions." (p. 68). Thus, in this way image is associated only with the businessmen's and

consumers' opinion about the country's products. Later the country image definition has been extended and additional target groups which countries seek to influence such as visitors, residents and work power, investors, students, export markets were added (Kotler, Haider, Rein, 1993; Gilmore, 2002). Another broader perspective was adopted by Martin and Eroglu (1993) who defined country image as "the total of all descriptive, inferential and informational beliefs one has about a particular country" (p. 193).

Scientists analyze country image concept mainly from the two perspectives: product-specific (Nagashima, 1970, 1977; White, 1979; Narayana, 1981; Cattin, Jolibert & Lohnes, 1982; Jaffe & Nebenzahl, 1984; Han & Terpstra, 1988) and destination-specific (Crompton, 1979; Um & Crompton, 1990; MacKay & Fesenmaier, 1997, 2000; Foster & Jones, 2000; Koneenik & Ruzzier, M., 2008).

The product-specific country image analysis is based on different constructs.

Nagashima (1970, 1977) analyzes country image using price and value, service and engineering, advertising and reputation, design and style, and consumer' profile dimensions. White (1979) names dimensions such as expensive, price, technicality, quality, workmanship, inventiveness, selection, serviceability, advertising, durability, reliability, brand recognition; Narayana (1981) points to quality, recognition, prestige, production form, expensiveness, popularity, functionality; Cattin, Jolibert and Lohnes (1982) focus on pricing, reliability, workmanship, technicality, and performance; Jaffe and Nebenzahl (1984) talk about product-technology, marketing and price country image dimensions; Johansson and Nebenzahl (1986) identify only two dimensions: economy and status; Han and Terpstra (1988) claim that technical advancements, prestige, workmanship, economy and serviceability are country image dimensions.

The destination image is in research presented as "the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that person has of a destination" (Crompton, 1979) or as a "holistic construct which, to a greater extent, is derived from attitudes towards the destination's perceived tourism attributes" (Um & Crompton, 1990). MacKay and Fesenmaier (1997) suggest that a country's destination image "is a composite of various products (attractions) and attributes woven into a total impression". Thus, country image as a destination construct is also seen as a set of different dimensions.

Lala, Allred and Chakraborty, (2009) argue that country image relates to seven dimensions: economic conditions, conflict, political structure, vocational training, work culture, environment, and labor. Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999) relates country image to emotions, identity, pride and autobiographical memories.

Klein, Ettenson and Morris (1998) introduced the concept of animosity in predicting buying behaviour of foreign products and tested it on Chinese consumers evaluating Japanese products. The Animosity Model of Foreign Product Purchase (p.92) posits that "animosity" and "consumer ethnocentrism" are antecedents of "willingness to buy". An important point is that animosity is unrelated to product judgments, while the effect of consumer ethnocentrism on willingness to buy is partly mediated by its influence on product judgments. The animosity model has also been applied to study the

willingness of Australian consumers to buy French products during – and after - a period of French nuclear testing in the Pacific (Ettenson & Klein, 2005). The authors argue “the animosity model does not focus on consumers’ quality judgments, as in the typical country-of-origin paradigm, but on their hostility toward a target nation and their associated willingness to purchase products from that nation” (p. 204).

Obermiller and Spangenberg (1989) classified country image dimensions and defined them as cognitive, affective and normative. Later Laroche, Papadopulos, Helsop, and Mourali (2005) proposed a similar classification defining a cognitive component, which includes consumers’ beliefs about the country’s industrial development and technological advancement, an affective component that describes consumers’ affective response to the country’s people, and a conative component, consisting of consumers’ desired level of interaction with the country.

Hypotheses development

Some studies of country image indicate the potential for improving the country image through the organization of events (Gartner, 1989; Nebenzahl and Jaffe, 1991; Gripsrud and Nes, 1996; Gilmore, 2002; Kim and Morrison, 2005; Custodio and Gouveia, 2007). Nebenzahl and Jaffe (1991) found that the 1988 Seoul Summer Olympics improved the image of selected consumer electronic products originated in South Korea among Israeli consumers that had a high exposure to media reporting the event. The impact of hosting the Barcelona Olympics alongside with other national promotional programme events improved Spain’s image (Gilmore, 2002). Kim and Morrison (2005) found that hosting the 2002 FIFA World Cup influenced positively the image of Korea. Gripsrud and Nes (1996) found no effects on the evaluation of Norwegian products before and after the 1994 Lillehammer Olympics in a sample of Dutch engineers, but they did find that the Olympics influenced positively the attitude towards the people of the country. It means that the impact of mega sport events on the country image is controversial.

The proposed conceptual framework consists of three dimensions: (1) image of the people in the country, (2) image of the societal system and (3) the level of animosity towards the country (Table 1).

The following three general hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: Animosity dimension of country image is influenced by a major sport event such as Winter Olympics.

H2: Societal dimension of country image is influenced by a major sport event such as Winter Olympics.

H3: People dimension of country image is influenced by a major sport event such as Winter Olympics.

Time (before and after the games), sports interest and previous visits to the country were used as fixed factors because the research indicated that the country image is closely related to the past travel experience (Lepp and Gibson, 2003), time (Nebenzahl and Jaffe, 1991; Gripsrud and Nes, 1996), and sports interest (Gripsrud and Nes, 1996). The more experience a person has with a country the less likely is that media exposure from a large sports

event will be able to alter the various dimensions of country image. Furthermore, a prerequisite for being influenced by the media exposure is that the person is watching the reports in the media, in particular the TV programs.

Method

Design of the scale. The scale developed by Gripsrud and Nes (1996) was used to measure the *People* and *Societal* country image dimensions. The scale for the *Animosity* dimension was from Klein (2002). Table 1 provides the questionnaire items used in our study. All the statements were measured using seven-point Likert scale ranging from highly disagree to highly agree.

Table 1

Operationalization of constructs

Dimension	Questionnaire statement
People	People from this country are trustworthy
	People from this country are likable
	People from this country have refined taste
	People from this country are industrious
Societal	This country manages economy well
	The technological level in this country is high
	This country has a very good ability to handle big and complex projects
	The educational level in this country is high
	This country has admirable role in world politics
Animosity	I don’t like this country
	I like this country
	I feel anger towards this country

Selection of respondents. Since the hypotheses are related to the country image changes caused by a major sports event, the data were collected before and after the Winter Olympics in Torino (Italy) in February 2006.

Because previous studies (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Lepp & Gibson, 2003) found that nationality, age and education level can influence country image, our study was designed to control these three variables by focusing on a homogeneous population, Lithuanian students below 25 years old.

Time (before and after the games), sports interest and previous visits to the country were used as fixed factors because the research indicated that the country image is closely related to the past travel experience (Lepp & Gibson, 2003), time (Nebenzahl & Jaffe, 1991; Gripsrud & Nes, 1996), and sports interest (Gripsrud & Nes, 1996).

Two random samples of students at major Lithuanian universities were selected. The first sample consisted of 297 respondents and was collected before the Winter Olympics in Torino. The second sample consisted of 346 respondents and was collected after the event. The respondents were asked to evaluate Italy concerning each questionnaire statement.

Analysis approach. The analysis process consisted of two parts. Firstly, in order to assess the dimensionality of the scale, exploratory factor analysis was performed. Factor analysis was performed using four steps (George & Mallery, 2008): 1) calculation of a correlation matrix of all

Table 3

variables to be used in the analysis; 2) extraction of factors; 3) rotation of factors to create a more understandable factor structure; 4) Interpretation of results. After the interpretation of results, the factors were saved and later used in the second part of the analysis.

In the second part of the analysis general linear models were estimated using ANOVA. The three-way ANOVA is a procedure that designates a single dependent variable and utilizes exactly three independent variables to gain understanding of how the independent variables influence dependent ones.

People, societal and animosity dimensions were used as dependent variables. Time, sports interest and previous visits to the country were used as fixed factors. SPSS 15 software was used to perform factor analysis and three-way ANOVA.

Results

Exploratory factor analysis

In order to assess dimensionality of the scale, exploratory factor analysis was performed (see Table 2). To determine whether distribution of values is adequate for conducting factor analysis, KMO test was performed. The levels are as follows: >0.9 marvellous, >0.8 meritorious, >0.7 middling, >0.6 mediocre, >0.5 miserable, <0.5 miserable (George & Mallery, 2008). The KMO was 0.8 indicating meritorious level.

Factor loadings obtained from the rotated solution were high (>0.5) (see Table 2). The results demonstrate that the dimensionality of country image consists of the three dimensions: societal, animosity and people. Factors were saved and ANOVA analysis was performed.

Table 2

Exploratory factor analysis

	Component		
	People	Societal	Animosity
trustworthy people	.731	.133	.122
likable people	.620	.049	-.378
refined taste	.508	.112	-.272
industrious people	.495	.369	.151
economy	.213	.662	-.032
technological level	.031	.780	-.061
ability to handle projects	.080	.703	-.122
educational level	.155	.631	-.061
politics	.098	.648	-.003
empathy	-.089	-.012	.753
sympathy	.288	.241	-.669
feeling anger	.107	.002	.674

Three-way ANOVA

In order to find significant differences between groups by comparing the means of those groups on some variable of interests, three-way variance analysis was performed. Firstly, three-way ANOVA was performed with animosity factor being dependent (see Table 3).

Test of between-subjects effects (Dependent Variable: Animosity)

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	341.237(a)	320	1.066	1.183	.071
Intercept	1.126	1	1.126	1.249	.265
Time (before, after)	7.399	1	7.399	8.205	.004
Previous visit to the country	18.705	6	3.118	3.457	.003
Sports interest	32.164	47	.684	.759	.874
Time * Previous visit to the country	6.036	6	1.006	1.116	.353
Time * Sports interest	28.095	39	.720	.799	.800
Previous visit to the country * Sports interest	164.907	172	.959	1.063	.321
Time * Previous visit to the country * Sports interest	37.208	41	.908	1.006	.465
Error	267.813	297	.902		
Total	609.062	618			
Corrected Total	609.050	617			

R Squared = .560 (Adjusted R Squared = .087)

The results demonstrated that time and previous visits to the country have significant main effects on animosity (p<0.05). The means of animosity dimension of Italy significantly differs when results before Winter Olympics are compared. In order to find the direction of mean change, descriptive statistics were analyzed (see Table 4).

Table 4

Descriptive statistics of Animosity dimension

Time		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Before	I don't like this country	296	1.89	1.393
	I feel anger	296	1.90	1.407
	I like this country	294	5.99	1.254
	Valid N (listwise)	292		
After	I don't like this country	345	2.33	1.657
	I feel anger	344	2.06	1.540
	I like this country	345	5.78	1.514
	Valid N (listwise)	342		

All the statements (see Table 4) were measured using 7-point Likert scale ranging from completely disagree to completely agree. Descriptive statistics of animosity dimension demonstrated that after the Olympics respondents agree more on negative statements and less on positive statement, meaning that in general sympathy with Italy decreased. The ANOVA results proved that variable time has significant impact on animosity therefore hypothesis H1 is accepted.

The analysis of variance revealed that neither societal nor people dimension is significantly influenced by time variable ($p > 0.05$). Therefore it can be concluded that the hypotheses $H2$ and $H3$ are rejected.

Conclusions

1. It has been proved by the previous research that the impact of mega sport events on the country image can have either a positive effect or no effect. This indicates that the respondents' attitude towards the country either changed positively or didn't change.
2. This study tested the following country image dimensions: image of the people in the country, image of the societal system (economic, political, educational development and technological advancement) and the level of animosity towards the country.
3. Lithuanian students participated in the study. Because previous studies showed that nationality, age and education level can influence country image, this study was designed to check these three variables. Two random samples of students at major Lithuanian universities were selected. The first sample consisted of 297 respondents and was collected before the Winter Olympics in Torino. The second sample consisted of 346 respondents and was collected after the event.
4. The county's image measurement indicated that the image of the people and societal system is not significantly influenced by time variable ($p > 0.05$).
5. Time has the main significant effect on animosity ($p < 0.05$). Descriptive statistics of animosity dimension demonstrated that sympathy with Italy decreased after Winter Olympics.
6. Several factors contribute to the explanation of research results: there was a lot of negative press information concerning the logistics of the games. The Torino Olympics chose the slogan 'Passion lives here' and then failed to show any according to their polls: there were few uninspired spectators at some of the events.
7. As in any research, the results of the current study cannot be interpreted without taking into account the study limitations. First, the results of the study represent only young Lithuanians' attitude towards the image of the country hosting major sport event. Future studies could obtain data from respondents across the other respondents' age groups and countries. Second, the research was started when the promotional campaign on Torino Olympic games was on the way and this fact might have influenced the findings. Finally, the control country was not used to see whether the study findings had not been influenced by other factors.

References

- Baloglu, S., & McCleary, K. W. (1999). A model of destination image formation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26, 868-897.
- Cattin, Ph., Jolibert, A., & Lohnes, C. (1982). A cross-cultural study of "made in" concepts. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 13, 131-141
- Crompton, J. (1979). An assessment of the image of Mexico as a vacation destination and the influence of geographical location upon that image. *Journal of Travel Research*, 17 (Spring), 18-23.
- Custodio, M. J. F., & Gouveia, P. M. D. C. (2007). Evaluation of the cognitive image of a country/destination by the media during the coverage of mega-events: the case of UEFA EURO 2004 in Portugal. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 9, 285-296.
- Ettenson, R., & Klein, J. G. (2005). The fallout from French nuclear testing in the South Pacific: a longitudinal study of consumer boycotts. *International Marketing Review*, 22, 199-199.
- Foster, N., & Jones, E. (2000). Image versus identity: representing and comparing destination images across a tourism system – the case of Wales. In M. Robinson, N. Evans, P. Long, R. Sharpley and J. Swarbrooke (Eds), *Management, Marketing and the Political Economy of Travel and Tourism*. Centre for Travel and Tourism and Business Education Publishers Ltd.
- Gartner, W. C. (1989). Tourism image: attribute measurement of state tourism products using multi-dimensional scaling techniques. *Journal of Travel Research*, 28, 16-20.
- George, D., & Mallery, P. (2008). *SPSS for Windows Step-by-Step: A Simple Guide and Reference, 15.0 Update*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Gibson, H. J., Qi, Ch. X., & Zhang, J. J. (2008). Destination image and intent to visit China and the 2008 Beijing Olympic games. *Journal of Sport Management* (22), 427-450
- Gilmore, F. (2002). A country-can it be repositioned? Spain - the success story of country branding. *Brand Management*, 9 (4-5), 281-293.
- Gripsrud, G., & Nes, E. B. (1996). Hosting the Olympics: a natural experiment of country image effects. In J. Beracs, A. Bauer, and J. Simon, (Eds). *Proceedings 25th EMAC Conference*, Budapest, 511-523.
- Han, C. M., & Terpstra, V. (1988). Country-of-origin effects for uni-national and bi-national products. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 19, 235-255.
- Jaffe, E., & Nebenzahl, I. D. (1984). Alternative questionnaire formats for country image studies. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 21, 463-471.

- Johansson, J. K., & Nebenzahl, I. D. (1986). Multinational production: effects on brand value. *Journal of International Business Studies, Fall*, 101-26.
- Kim, S. and Morrison, A. (2005). Change of images of South Korea among foreign tourists after the 2002 FIFA World Cup. *Tourism Management*, 26, 233-247.
- Klein, J. (2002). Us versus them, or us versus everyone? Delineating consumer aversion to foreign goods, *Journal of International Business Studies*, 33 (2), 345-363.
- Klein, J. G., Ettenson, R., & Morris, M.D. (1998). The animosity model of foreign product purchase: an empirical test in the People's Republic of China. *Journal of Marketing*, 62, 511-523.
- Konecnik, M., & Ruzzier, M. (2008). The customer's perspective on the tourism destination brand: A structural equation modeling study. *Transformations in Business & Economics*, 7(1), 169-184.
- Kotler, P., Haider, D. H., & Rein, I. (1993). *Marketing Places. Attracting Investment, Industry, and Tourism to Cities, States, and Nations*. New York: The Free Press.
- Kuvykaite, R., & Kerbelyte, I. (2008). Critical success factors for country branding. *Economics & Management*, 2008:13, 281-291.
- Lala, V., Allred, A., & Goutham, Ch. (2009). A multidimensional scale for measuring country image. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 21, 51-66.
- Laroche, M., Papadopoulos, N., Helsop, L. A., & Murali, M. (2005). The influence of country image structure on consumer evaluations of foreign products. *International Marketing Review*, 22 (1), 96-115.
- Lepp, A., & Gibson, H. (2003). Tourist roles, perceived risk and international tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30, 606-624.
- Mackay, K. J., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2000). An exploration of cross-cultural destination image assessment, *Journal of Travel Research*, (38), 417-23.
- MacKay, K., & Fesenmaier, D. (1997). Pictorial elements of destination in image formation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24 (3), 537-565.
- Martin, I. M., & Eroglu, S. (1993). Measuring a multi-dimensional construct: country image. *Journal of Business Research*, 28 (3), 191-210.
- Nagashima, A. (1970). A comparison of Japanese and U.S. attitudes toward foreign products. *Journal of Marketing*, 34, 68-74.
- Nagashima, A. (1977). A comparative "made in" product image survey among Japanese businessmen. *Journal of Marketing*, 14, 95-100.
- Narayana, Ch. L. (1981). Aggregate images of American and Japanese products: implications on international marketing. *Columbia Journal of World Business*, 19, 31-35.
- Nebenzahl, I. D., & Jaffe, E. D. (1991). The effectiveness of sponsored events in promoting a country's image. *International Journal of Advertising*, 10, 5-32.
- Obermiller, C., & Spangenberg, E. (1989). Exploring the effects of country-of-origin labels: an information processing framework. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 16, 454-459.
- Poiesz, T. B. C. (1989). The image concept: its place in consumer psychology. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 10, 457-472.
- Um, S., & Crompton, J. (1990). Attitude determinants in tourism destination choice. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 17, 432-448.
- Verlegh, P. W. J., & Steenlamp, J. B. E. M. (1999). A review and meta analysis of country-of-origin research. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 20, 521-246.
- White, Ph. D. (1979). Attitudes of U.S. purchasing managers toward industrial products manufactured in selected western European nations. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 10, 81-90.

Viltė Auruškevičienė, Asta Pundziene, Vida Škudienė, Geir Gripsrud, Erik B. Nes, Ulf H. Olsson

Požūrio pokytis ir šalies įvaizdis po svarbių sporto renginių

Santrauka

Nepaisant didelių olimpinė žaidynių organizavimo sąnaudų, šalys gana aktyviai konkuruoja dėl galimybės organizuoti žaidynes. Norvegijos vyriausybė 1994 m. Lillehammerio žiemos olimpinėms žaidynėms išleido daugiau kaip vieną milijardą eurų. Vasaros olimpinės žaidynės yra dar brangesnės. Pavyzdžiui, Pietų Korėjos vyriausybė 1988 m. olimpinėms žaidynėms išleido daugiau kaip tris milijardus JAV dolerių (Nebenzahl ir Jaffe, 1991).

Pagrindinė priežastis, dėl kurios šalys nori organizuoti olimpinės žaidynes, yra ta, kad tokie renginiai skatina verslą, o intensyvūs žiniasklaidos pranešimai gali paveikti visuomenės požiūrį į žaidynes organizavusią šalį.

Gana sunku nustatyti kokią įtaką didieji sporto renginiai daro šalies eksportui, atvykstamajam turizmui, užsienio investicijoms, šalies įvaizdžiui ir pan., nes minėtus rodiklius veikia aibė įvairių kintamųjų. Vis tik yra dedamos pastangos ekonominiams ir socialiniams tokių renginių efektui nustatyti.

Daugelis atliktų tyrimų (Gartner, 1989; Nebenzahl ir Jaffe, 1991; Gripsrud ir Nes, 1996; Gilmore, 2002; Kim ir Morrison, 2005; Custodio ir Gouveia, 2007) rodo teigiamą didelių sporto renginių įtaką šalies organizatorės įvaizdžiui. Tačiau yra keletas tyrimų, kurie rodo neutralią didelių sporto renginių įtaką atskiriems šalies įvaizdžio aspektams (Gripsrud ir Nes, 1996).

Problema. Šalys išleidžia daug pinigų olimpinėms žaidynėms organizuoti, bet žaidynių įtaka šalies įvaizdžiui yra kontraversiška.

Pagrindinis straipsnio tikslas – ištirti skirtingus šalies įvaizdžio aspektus ir įvertinti Italijos įvaizdį prieš Turino žiemos olimpinės žaidynes ir po jų.

Tyrimo objektas – didelių sporto renginių įtaka šalies įvaizdžiui.

Tyrimo metodai: literatūros analizė, lietuvių studentų apklausa prieš olimpinės žaidynes ir po jų.

Naujumas. Straipsnyje atliktas originalus didelių sporto renginių įtakos šalies įvaizdžiui tyrimas, vertinant Lietuvos studentų požiūrį į a) šalies žmones; b) bendrą simpatiją šaliai; c) šalies ekonominių, technologinių, politinių, išsilavinimo lygį ir šalies gebėjimą valdyti didelius projektus prieš olimpinės žaidynes ir po jų.

Šalies įvaizdžio sąvoka buvo apibrėžta prieš 40 metų. Anot Nagashina (1970), šalies įvaizdis yra „paveikslas, reputacija, stereotipas, kurį verslininkai ir vartotojai priskiria tam tikros šalies produktui. Šis įvaizdis yra sukuriamas tokių kintamųjų, kaip reprezentatyvūs produktai, nacionalinės charakteristikos, ekonominė ir politinė šalies situacija, istorija ir tradicijos“ (p. 68). Šiame apibrėžime šalies įvaizdis yra siejamas tik su verslininkų ir vartotojų nuomone apie šalies produktus. Vėliau šalies įvaizdžio apibrėžimas buvo išplėstas papildomomis tikslinėmis grupėmis, kurias šalis siekė paveikti: lankytojais, rezidentais ir darbo jėga, investitoriais, studentais. (Kotler, Haider ir Rein, 1993; Gilmore, 2002). Kita platesnė perspektyva buvo pasiūlyta Martin ir Eroglu (1993), kurie teigė, kad šalies įvaizdis yra „aprašomųjų, prielaidomis ir informacija grįstų įsitikinimų visuma apie tam tikrą šalį“ (p. 193).

Dažniausiai šalies įvaizdžio samprata yra analizuojama iš dviejų skirtingų perspektyvų: produkto (Nagashima, 1970, 1977; White, 1979; Narayana, 1981; Cattin, Jolibert ir Lohnes, 1982; Jaffe ir Nebenzahl, 1984; Han ir Terpstra, 1988) ir apsilankymo vietos (Crompton, 1979; Um ir Crompton, 1990; MacKay ir Fesenmaier, 1997, 2000; Foster ir Jones, 2000).

Šalies įvaizdžio tyrimai (Gartner, 1989; Nebenzahl ir Jaffe, 1991; Gripsrud ir Nes, 1996; Gilmore, 2002; Kim ir Morrison, 2005; Custodio ir Gouveia, 2007) rodo, kad dideli sporto įvykiai gali pagerinti šalies įvaizdį. Nebenzahl ir Jaffe (1991) teigia, kad 1988 m. Seulo vasaros olimpinės žaidynės pagerino atskirų elektronikos produktų, pagamintų Pietų Korėjoje, įvaizdį tarp Izraelio vartotojų. Gilmore (2002) nustatė, kad Barcelonos vasaros olimpinės žaidynės pagerino Ispanijos įvaizdį. Kim ir Morrison (2005) ištyrė, kad 2002 m. FIFA Pasaulio taurė futbolo čempionatas turėjo teigiamos įtakos Korėjos įvaizdžiui.

Tačiau yra keletas tyrimų (Gripsrud ir Nes, 1996; Gibson, Qi, Zhang, 2008), kurie rodo, kad požiūris į šalies įvaizdį po svarbių sporto renginių gali nekisti. Pavyzdžiui, Gripsrud ir Nes (1996) nustatė, kad 1994 m. Lilehamerio žiemos olimpinės žaidynės nepakeitė olandų inžinierių nuomonės apie norvegiškus produktus, tačiau teigiamai paveikė požiūrį į šalies žmones.

Šiame tyrime šalies įvaizdis analizuojamas vertinant tris dimensijas: požiūrį į šalies žmones, požiūrį į šalies socialinę sistemą (šalies ekonominių, technologinių, politinių, išsilavinimo lygį ir šalies gebėjimą valdyti didelius projektus) ir priešišumą šaliai.

Tyrimo hipotezės:

H1: Didieji sporto renginiai veikia priešišką požiūrį į šalį, kurioje vyksta sporto renginys.

H2: Didieji sporto renginiai veikia socialinę šalies, kurioje vyksta sporto renginys, įvaizdį.

H3: Didieji sporto renginiai veikia požiūrį į šalies, kurioje vyksta sporto renginys, žmones.

Tyrimo metodologija

Šalies įvaizdžiui matuoti buvo naudojama Gripsrud ir Nes (1996) bei Klein (2002) 7 balų Likerto skalė.

Anksčiau atlikti tyrimai (Baloglu ir McCleary, 1999; Lepp ir Gibson, 2003) parodė, kad tautybė, amžius ir išsilavinimas gali daryti įtaką požiūriui į šalį. Todėl šiame tyrime buvo kontroliuojami trys kintamieji – amžius, tautybė ir išsilavinimas. Tyrimui buvo pasirinkta homogeniška imtis - dviejų pagrindinių Lietuvos universitetų studentai iki 25 metų.

Ankstesnė kelionių į šalį patirtis, laikas (prieš sporto renginio ir po jo) ir domėjimasis sportu buvo naudojami kaip nepriklausomieji kintamieji, nes tyrimai rodo, kad šalies įvaizdis yra glaudžiai susijęs su kelionių į šalį patirtimi (Lepp ir Gibson, 2003), laiku (Nebenzahl ir Jaffe, 1991; Gripsrud ir Nes, 1996) ir domėjimusi sportu (Gripsrud ir Nes, 1996).

Iš viso buvo apklausti 297 respondentai prieš Turino žiemos olimpinės žaidynes ir 346 respondentai po jų.

Tyrimo rezultatų analizė buvo atliekama dviem etapais. Aiškinamoji faktorinė analizė buvo atlikta norint nustatyti skalės dimensiškumą. Po rezultatų interpretacijos faktoriai buvo išsaugoti ir panaudoti antrajame analizės etape, kuriame naudojant ANOVA buvo nustatyti bendri linijiniai modeliai. Žmonės, socialinė sistema ir priešiško dimensijos buvo naudoti kaip priklausomieji kintamieji. Laikas, domėjimasis sportu ir ankstesnė kelionių į šalį patirtis buvo naudojami kaip nepriklausomieji kintamieji.

Tyrimo rezultatai

Aiškinamoji faktorinė analizė buvo atlikta norint nustatyti skalės dimensiškumą. KMO testas buvo atliktas tam, kad būtų nustatyta, ar verčių pasiskirstymas yra adekvatus atliekamai faktorinei analizei. KMO reikšmė buvo 0,8. Ji pakankamai didelė (George ir Mallery, 2008).

Rotuota faktorinė analizė parodė, kad faktorių reikšmės yra didelės (>0,5), išskyrus keletą kintamųjų. Rezultatai parodė, kad šalies įvaizdis susideda iš trijų dimensijų. Taip nurodė ir Gripsrud ir Nes (1996). Faktoriai buvo išsaugoti ir atlikta ANOVA analizė.

Three-way ANOVA buvo atlikta priklausomuoju kintamuoju pasirinkus priešišumą šaliai. Rezultatai parodė, kad laikas veikia priešišumą šaliai ($p < 0,05$). Priešiško dimensijos vidurkis reikšmingai skiriasi, kai yra lyginami rezultatai prieš olimpinės žaidynes ir po jų.

Norint nustatyti priešiško šalies vidurkių pokyčius prieš olimpinės žaidynes ir po jų, buvo atlikta aprašomoji statistika. Aprašomoji statistika parodė, kad vertinant priešiško dimensiją po olimpinės žaidynių respondentai mažiau sutiko su neigiamais teiginiais ir daugiau su teigiamais, kas rodo, jog priešiškas šalies po olimpinės žaidynių padidėjo, o hipotezė H1 pasitvirtino.

Three-way ANOVA rezultatai priklausomaisiais kintamaisiais pasirinkus socialinę ir žmonių dimensijas parodė, kad laikas nedaro reikšmingos įtakos nei socialinei, nei žmonių dimensijai ($p > 0,05$). Todėl, galima teigti, kad hipotezės H2 ir H3 nepasitvirtino.

Diskusija

Keletas veiksnių gali paaiškinti tokius tyrimo rezultatus. Pirma, žiniasklaidoje buvo pasirodę gana daug neigiamos informacijos, susijusios su žaidynių logistika. Antra, remiantis vykdytų apklausų rezultatais, Turino olimpinės žaidynių šūkis „Aistra gyvena čia“ neatspindėjo žaidynių dvasios ir nepritraukė žiūrovų. Trečia, Lietuvoje nėra populiarios žiemos olimpinės žaidynių sporto šakos.

Šis tyrimas turi keletą trūkumų. Visų pirma, tyrimas atspindi tik jaunų lietuvių požiūrį į Italiją prieš olimpinės žaidynes ir po jų. Kitų šalių ir amžiaus grupių respondentų nuomonė taip pat būtų svarbi. Antra, tyrimas buvo pradėtas, kai Turino olimpinės žaidynių reklaminė kampanija jau buvo prasidėjusi. Šis faktas taip pat galėjo turėti įtakos tyrimo rezultatams. Trečia, atliekant tyrimą nebuvo naudota kontrolinė šalis, norint nustatyti, ar tyrimo rezultatams nedarė įtakos kiti veiksniai.

Raktažodžiai: *šalies įvaizdis, sporto įvykiai, Turino žiemos olimpinės žaidynės.*

The article has been reviewed.

Received in September, 2009; accepted in February, 2010.