

PERCEPTION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS ABOUT SPORTS MEGA EVENTS: 2014 SOCCER WORLD CUP AND 2016 OLYMPIC GAMES

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INTRODUCTION

The XV Para and Pan-American Games (Rio 2007 Pan) marked the beginning of a series of Brazilian applications to host international sports mega events. After this point, Brazil, and especially the State of Rio de Janeiro, were transformed into the scenery for various mega events, with the next ones being the 2014 Soccer World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games. This last event marked the end of this Olympic cycle and included the participation of around 11544 athletes, from 207 nations, and 60 thousand volunteers (IOC, 2016).

In the context of local society mobilization and opportunities for using professional skills, we supposed that Physical Education students would be extremely well qualified to provide a perspective of these sports mega events since the events' main activity, sport, tends to be identified as a part of their field of knowledge.

Perception surveys are an important tool for understanding local reality (SOUSA and SILVA, 2008). Normally, perception studies focus on the subject-object relationship, understanding that these subjects, through their relationship with the object-world, construct that world as well as themselves. This relationship guided this study's supposition since the atmosphere that was created for the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games could motivate students majoring in physical education to participate in various ways, from volunteers to spectators.

But what is the perception of physical education students regarding the hosting of these sports mega events in Brazil?

This study aimed to discover the perception of physical education students regarding the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games.

THEORETICAL BASE

It is possible to define sports events as “festive occasions that involve exhibitions of one or several sports modalities” (GETZ, 1997). According to the dimension that certain sports events reach, they are defined as special, with the mega events category taking the lead.

Holding these events makes it viable for us to work with the concept of legacy. According to Raeder (2008), legacy can be defined as:

“A series of material and immaterial goods that achieve socio-spatial permanence in the urban fabric thanks to actions executed due to the implementation of a mega event” (p. 206).

In this article, as we are dealing with the perceptions of a group regarding the influence of these mega events on the labor market, professional valorization, sports culture, and social legacy, our approach will focus on intangible legacy, as it is understood by this specific group.

In this context of immaterial legacy, we will focus on each of its dimensions to understand the dynamics of interactions between sport and society: public perception, sports culture, and citizen participation (SOUSA and SILVA, 2008).

Regarding the scenario of citizen participation, especially for the group that is being examined, physical education students, we suppose that this field’s affinity to sports provides a plethora of professional opportunities, as they could work, even as volunteers, alongside directors, coaches, athletes, referees, and in other support jobs, besides seeing their field of action facilitate the involvement of so many other directly related areas.

Considering some of the studies produced to this point (CARVALHO et al., 2008; CAVALLI et al., 2008; FERREIRA, 2008; MATARUNA, 2008; MOURÃO et al., 2008; SOUSA e SILVA, 2008, RIBEIRO et al., 2014), the authors suggest that these studies continue to be reapplied to different populations and samples, especially as these sports mega events get closer, possibly leading to media influence.

METHODOLOGY

This is an exploratory study, which allows investigators to increase their experience regarding a certain issue, and the results are treated descriptively (TRIVIÑOS, 1993).

The study used a questionnaire containing 29 closed questions as its data collection instrument. Two of the questions were open, to allow a more specific analysis.

The population mostly included physical education students at various points of their education. From a universe of 695 students at the university, the sample was

composed of 249 students, 167 men and 82 women, with ages varying between 18 and 55 years, which makes this sample selection probabilistic, and not a matter of convenience.

Of the 29 points on the questionnaire, eight had to do with the respondents' profile, nine focused on the students' perception of the events' impact on their working conditions, on physical education professional valorization, on their personal lives, on the population's general life conditions and on opportunities for new businesses in the physical education field. The 12 other questions were only answered if the respondent had already been a volunteer in any sports mega events.

After the questionnaire was approved by the ethics committee linked to the higher education institution (HEI) in the city of Rio de Janeiro where the study was conducted, it was conducted with the students during their classes at this HEI.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents' distribution in age groups was observed. Most of the participants were part of the 18-25 years age group, adding up to 132 students.

We stratified our sample by which semester each student was a part of to discover if there would be a significant difference in perception depending on how long they had been studying. Most of the students in semesters 5 – 8 and almost homogeneously distributed in the 5th and 6th final median categories.

The questions that were a part of the data collection instrument sought to clarify matters pertaining to work and personal conditions, professional valorization and opportunities, interest in practicing sports, and the population's living conditions, generally speaking.

The students considered that the professional market will improve broadly and generally. However, individually speaking, they do not believe that their own working conditions will be affected.

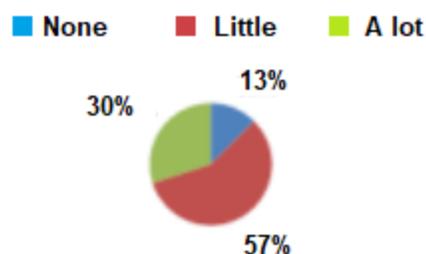
As for their perception regarding the existence of a possible correlation between sports mega events and work conditions, we obtained the following results. It is important to note that a total of 70% see the occurrence of these two mega events as something that will not contribute positively to their work conditions.

Table I: Distribution of students by age group

Age Group	Quant.
	N
18 to 25 years	132
26 to 35 years	89
36 to 45 years	22
46 to 55 years	6
56 to 65 years	0
over 66 years	0

Figure I: Perception of work conditions

Do you believe the World Cup and the Olympics held in Brazil will have any influence on your work conditions?



Just as Ribeiro et al. (2014) found with physical education professionals who were already a part of the workforce (50%), 60 of our participants considered that their work conditions would not change much.

Also regarding the labor market but regarding the opportunities for new businesses in the physical education field, the students in question stated (61%) that in this category, the 2014 Soccer World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games would contribute positively to the creation of new work opportunities, unlike the 39% who considered there would be little (38%) to no (1%) contributions in this sense.

Upon comparing this study with the one conducted by Ribeiro et al. (2014) about work possibilities, our answers were also more positive. Almost 55% (32) of the respondents believed that these mega events would have a lot of influence on the physical education labor market.

As for work opportunities, the results, as shown in figure 1, showed that 55% of the students thought these events would have little influence in professional valorization and, if we add the 7% who believe there will be no impact at all, we get a total of 62%. This result is understandable since, by law, they are still not authorized to work in this field.

These results agree with those expressed by physical education professionals. Studies conducted by Carvalho (2008) and Ribeiro et al. (2014) demonstrated that professional valorization is not influenced by mega events. Carvalho (2008) investigated the influence of the Rio 2007 Pan-American Games on professional valorization and the participants, who were physical education professionals, indicated that although there is more value attributed to their professional activities during the (64%) the mega event

when compared with an earlier period (36%), there is also a decline after the event is over (48%). In addition, Ribeiro et al. (2014) showed results that are very similar to the ones in this study, demonstrating that 55% of the professionals considered that these mega events will have little influence of professional valorization.

Regarding sports culture, which is included in the question about whether the impact from these events boosts interest in sportive practices, most of the students stated that the events will have a lot of influence (70%) on said interest.

Considering that this study was conducted before the events occurred and was geared towards students majoring in physical education, is it possible that in a comparison with other groups, which are more distant from the social space these students occupy, there would be similar results?

With this in mind, we analyzed the study conducted by SOUSA and SILVA (2008), in which the results showed that before the Rio 2007 Pan-American Games happened, the perception of physical education students from the city of Fortaleza regarding the interest in sportive practices in their neighborhoods was small (15.7%) when compared to their perception after the Games (33.3%), but the peak of this interest happened during the event (57.2%). This finding contributes to the hypothesis that if 70% of the current study's participants believe the events will have a lot of influence on sportive culture even before they happen, this percentage should be even higher after the events.

It is possible to state that, in general, sportive practices are magnified during and after the event, as shown in the results, since winning medals is an explicit factor for the development of sportive culture, just as sports icons become references for many children, teens, and adults, as mentioned before.

An evaluation of the scenario that has been exposed to this point shows that it is the sportive legacy these events leave behind that could more sense on a community level in the context of sports adherence than as a tangible tool for the field's professionals.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis of the perception of physical education students regarding the impacts of the 2014 Soccer World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games mega events on their personal and professional lives, professional opportunities and valorization, the interest in practicing sports and in the population's general life conditions, can be considered vital for the study of the sportive cultural legacy and to bring up the social responsibility of sports mega events. Although the data found in this study leads us to believe that the Physical Education students noticed little influence on most of the matters related to this

issue, it is still worth conducting future studies to investigate whether the results would change if this questionnaire was used with Professors of Physical Education from the same institution or with professors from a different institution, or even with professors from a private institution.

The full portuguese version of this article is available at:

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