



The Effects of Sports Mega-Events on Host Communities: A Systematic Review of Studies in Three Recent Decades

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This review was purposed to systematically explore how host communities have been affected by the sports mega-events. This systematic review identified the related literature strengths and weaknesses, identified the existing gaps in this regard, and provided the following researchers with new state-of-the-art strategies and implications.

Methodology: The Web of Science databases, Scopus, Google Scholar and PubMed have been thoroughly explored. Moreover, a manual search has been carried out in the most relevant references and documents to ensure sufficiency. Indeed, data surveys and extraction were conducted based on a predefined protocol, and finally, 40 selected documents have been analyzed.

Findings: The results revealed that the effects of sports mega-events on the host communities could be categorized into positive and negative ones. Most studies have explored subjects inferred from the findings, including socio-economic impacts, tourism, heritage, image, media, hygiene, cultural, and environmental effects. However, other affected has implications by prostitution-related, psychological, spatial, commercial, voluntary, financial and recreational issues have been rarely considered.

Originality: This study provides policy-makers and event planners with a complete summary of the studies conducted in the past three decades, which is a valuable and credible source to realize the related decision-making processes. Reviewing the documents revealed points about the effects of holding big events that had previously received less attention.

Keywords

Hosting Impacts
Event Management
Sports Mega-Events

Article type

Original article

Received: 2021/07/06

Accepted: 2021/08/02

How to cite this article:

Elahi, A., Gholampour, S., & Askarian, F. (2021). The Effects of Sports Mega-Events on Host Communities: A Systematic Review of Studies in Three Recent Decades. *Sports Business Journal*, 1(1), 13-30. <https://doi.org/10.22051/sbj.2021.36862.1007>



1. Introduction

Sports mega-events are included in social and cultural mega-events globally of palatial, famous and prestigious characterizations grasped by different society classes (Roche, 2000). These events are deemed those long one-time events that deeply affect, whether positively or negatively, the host communities (Brent Ritchie, 1984; Kim et al., 2006). This effectiveness has been merely considered positive by most host applicants. They have simplified to achieve the host for such events with naïve premises, while repeatedly observed hosting these events would negatively affect the host communities. In this regard, (Müller, 2015) stated that every significant event could not be considered "mega". Indeed, what makes a mega-event distinguished from the major ones is the event size. Regarding size, investment, and effects, the mega-events are so great to an extent which affects the entire community economy and are widely reflected and echoed in global media (Hover et al., 2016).

In other words, sports mega-events in virtue of various dimensions, including visitor-friendly attractiveness, destination image and urban transformations, can attract extensive media coverage (Müller, 2015). Olympic Games and World Cup are considered the most prominent and famous sports mega-events in which many visitors and audiences are ever interested. They have an entire stock of unique, untouchable features and dreams realized once a 4-year certain period (Shone & Parry, 2004). Therefore, constructing tourism infrastructures and absorbing numbers of foreign visitors are highly treated as one of the most distinctive benefits of hosting sports mega-events. Such factors cause the hospitality industry to be grown in long-term times, and the host country or community is fortunately situated on the mounting tourism map and growth in the soon future. It is evident that tourism growth is a distinctive mode to attract additional investments, and compensate organizational costs, spent in such events (Peeters et al., 2014). The host cities try to reconstruct their cultural, economic and urban visions by holding these events to compete and guarantee a financial benefit (Viehoff & Poynter, 2016).

Therefore, hosting the sports mega-events seems reasonable as highly expected positive socio-economic, cultural, political and environmental effects caused after the act (Greenwell et al., 2019). These effects lead developed and developing countries to increasingly request and announce their readiness to hold such events (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). However, possible adverse effects should never be ignored by the policy-makers and researchers. In general, there are some literature relevancies about the systematic review of sports events and their consequences. They have been conducted with different methodological approaches. Of the most related studies, the following cases can notably mention:

- 1- Developing a physical activity legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games: a policy-led systematic review (Weed et al., 2012)
- 2- A systematic review of the Chinese outbound tourism literature: 1983–2012 (Keating et al., 2015)

- 3- The Olympic Games and raising sport participation: a systematic review of evidence and interrogation of policy for a demonstration effect (Weed et al., 2015)
- 4- Sports event legacy: A systematic quantitative review of the literature (Thomson et al., 2019).

Although various studies have been globally released on sporting event effects, especially the mega-events, there is no exact and rich information on all possible positive and negative impacts caused by the sports mega-events. Scientifically systematic methodologies can play a remarkable role in this field. Hence, this systematic review has been conducted to conclude and provide the related literature findings and results regularly and identify the existing gaps. Consequently, it can be effective in the making-decision process for sports managers, policy-makers, and government officials. Furthermore, this systematic review can help future researchers explore all positive and negative outcomes of the sports mega-events and mention these outcomes better.

This study uses a systematic review approach to identify the possible positive and negative effects of events. Also, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses and identifying gaps in past research has been one of the main goals of the present study. The results of this study may reduce some of the ambiguities about the possible positive and negative effects of sports mega-events. The results of this study can provide a roadmap for scholars and managers of sports events to have a more comprehensive understanding of the hosting effects of sporting events.

Also, the essential difference between this study and some previous studies is the multidimensionality of this study. In our study, the economic, social, cultural, political and environmental impacts of sport mega-events simultaneously considered. Furthermore, positive and negative effects were categorized and introduced in each of the dimensions mentioned above.

2. Method

As mentioned, this study was a systematic review carried out by collecting secondary information or data. The data and information used to describe and interpret the subject have been collected from the previous studies.

2.1. Search strategy

The Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar and PubMed have been thoroughly reviewed. Moreover, a manual search was conducted regarding the keywords related to sports management and sports events to make confident of information sufficiency. To more clarify, the search strategy is annexed in more detail at the end of the article.

2.2. Selection criteria and document inclusion

One of the most significant components in the systematic review studies is selecting reliable and valid criteria to include more comprehensive and rich documents. Some agreed inclusion criteria were applied in the present study as follows: a) documents

released within 1990-2019, b) documents focused on exploring sports mega-events and their effects, c) documents reported in English or finally represented in English, d) full-text documents with a reasonably scientific structure, e) documents published in the indexed scientific viable journals. Accordingly, unscientific reports, unreliable documents and evidence have been excluded from the body of this systematic review.

2.3. Document selection and evaluation

Two independent evaluators reviewed all the documents retrieved and recovered from databases. Then, the perceived discrepancies between those two evaluators were referred to a third party to avoid any bias during the research process (Edwards et al., 2002; Gianola et al., 2013; Goldkuhle et al., 2018; Zeng et al., 2018). Generally, selecting the intended documents has been conducted according to the primary research purpose and intuitive judgment.

2.4. Extracting data

Based on the study objectives, the data extraction form was predesigned. The main components of the data collection form included: authors' names, title, journal, publication year, objectives, study type, case of study, time and geographical domain, population or participants, data collection and analysis methods, as well as related findings and resources used. It is highly worth noting that the present article is a segment of a more comprehensive study, so it is only considered as a part of that study, and it was purposely focused on the effects of the mega-events on the host community. This study was proposed to explore the effects caused by the sports mega-events mentioned in studies spanned from 1990 to 2019. Therefore, 823 studies had been first found out through the primary search. Then, 326 and 457 were respectively removed under redundancy and irrelevance. Thus, 40 documents would be finally analyzed using intuitive judgment based on the research proposed objectives. These documents are annexed in [Appendix 1](#).

2.5. Analysis of results

According to inconsistency observed in the collected data and impossibility in achieving a specific reliable classification, qualitative explicit content analysis was chosen to analyze findings. Qualitative research with implicit contents was impossible and unsuccessful to accomplish the intended goals of this study. Hence, both positive and negative effects of hosting major sporting events were identified, and they were then categorized. To better understand the impacts of mega-events, the positive and negative impacts have been separately drawn and identified using the online WordArt software¹. This method is an attractive arrangement of randomly positioned words, where the most important words are more significant than the others. In this study, comments with more frequency in literature would be intentionally displayed larger. In order to be more explicit, the negative and positive effects caused by hosting events are well separated in

¹ <https://wordart.com/create>

the drawn figures. This means that the negative and positive impacts are marked in red and blue, respectively.

3. Results

According to the systematic review conducted, the most published studies in the recent three decades have been related to economic and social effects. Subsequently regarded, Word Claude's online tools were used to display better and easily quicker understand the Sports Mega-event consequences. In our opinion, such tools are applied to display the textual data visually, and they show words embedded in a text as word clouds. Hence, frequencies are indicated by graph sizes in the figures. The more frequency emerges, the larger the graph is displayed, and the smaller the frequency occurs, the smaller the graph is indicated. As mentioned earlier, the adverse effects are marked in red, and the positive results are done in blue.

3.1. Economic effects

Different studies explored the economic effects of the sports mega-events and reported such events to have positive and negative outcomes for the host communities. However, our review indicated that the host communities, on the one hand, were positively affected by creating employment, increasing investment, improving infrastructure, promoting tourism, increasing GDP and reconstructing the urban. Of these positive effects, creating jobs and increasing investments have been identified as the most remarkable ones (Figure 1). On the other hand, these events would have unavoidable adverse effects, including rising event costs, rising prices and inflation. Therefore, countries seeking to host such significant events must simultaneously consider these negative and positive economic effects. A cost-benefit analysis by policy-makers should be conducted to determine whether the economic benefits of the event outweigh its costs.

3.2. Social effects

The results obtained from this systematic review revealed that several studies mentioned the social effects of sports mega-events, in detail can be observed in Figure 2. As followed, the events are of positive impacts, including increased pride and honour, increased event social support, felt happiness, integration nationally, increased sense of security and cohesion, and integrated socially. It needs to be noticed that increased pride and honour and increased event support have been deemed the most evident positive social effects. Moreover, such events have adverse social outcomes such as congested traffic, increased crime, disrupted public and legal discipline, increased crowd congestion. Also, increased living costs and noise pollution were considered the most repeated negative impacts of congested traffic and high crimes.



Figure 1. Economic impacts of sports mega-events.



Figure 2. Social impacts of sports mega-events.

3.3. Cultural effects

In this section, sports mega-events effects on the cultural impacts are presented. The previous scholars provided us with this related concrete information (as observed in Figure 3). Considering those studies, positive cultural effects, including promoting cultural exchanges, enhancing intercultural interaction, revitalizing traditions, helping

cultures being perceived, and promoting global culture, can be highly prioritized. Cultural effects, such as economic and social ones, can reflect a negative aspect. In other words, they will have some adverse effects, such as increased racial and gender inequalities, by which women's social security may be endangered in some way. Therefore, the host communities will be inevitably involved with their future irreparable consequences unmentioned or clarified in the literature.



Figure 3. Cultural impacts of sports mega-events.

3.4. Political effects

A series of political consequences have been identified by reviewing the most related articles on the sports mega-events. All of which are mentioned in Figure 4. As observed in figure 4, some positive political outcomes such as national identity and patriotism, political attention, international cooperation, and international affinity are considered the most frequent political effects. Furthermore, the sports mega-events have adverse effects, including the possibility of bribery and corruption. So, the interested sports mega-event organizers and applicants should not ignore these effects and other negative ones.

3.5. Environmental effects

By considering sports mega-events, environmental effects reported in previous studies which presented in Figure 5. In this figure, the positive and negative environmental impacts are respectively emphasized with blue and red colours. As indicated, traffic congestion is considered the most frequent negative effect in virtue of the environment. It is followed by the pollution growth and waste rate increase as the most frequent following adverse effects on the environment. Green technology promotion is deemed the most frequent positive environmental effect. As traffic congestion and pollution increase have

been respectively weighed three and two times the green technology and waste increase, it can be concluded that the main concern for the host community is traffic congestion and pollution increase. In general, the results of our systematic review show that the negative environmental impacts mentioned in the articles of recent decades have been very significant compared to the positive effects.



Figure 4. Political impacts of sports mega-events.



Figure 5. Environmental impacts of sports mega-events.

3.6. Strengths, weaknesses, and research gaps

Having evaluated the findings, we need to look at the positive and negative effects caused by the targeted events. Figure 6 provides an overview of the various impacts of hosting

significant events mentioned in the literature. Repeated results in previous research have been highlighted as blue, and those that have received less attention have been shown as red. As Figure 6 indicates, the scholars' socio-economic and tourism effects affected by the sports mega-effects have been increasingly emphasised. This fact reveals that positive results are more exciting and considered by scholars and host communities. On the one side, various studies have implied positive and negative effects in physical, hygiene, image, media and legacy effects of events in the journals during recent years.

On the other hand, some negative and positive effects are inevitably caused by these events that researchers should seriously focus on. Some positive effects perceived as seemingly significant but received less attention are volunteer-related, spatial, recreational, and leisure-related positive ones. Also, some adverse effects have been neglected, such as sexual, mental, financial, transportation, and infrastructure-driven. These mentioned above, positive and negative effects have been identified as the literature gaps.



Figure 6. Impacts of sports mega-events at a glance.

4. Managerial implications; Executive recommendations to Policy-makers and Applicants for Sports Mega-Event Hosting:

A) Given the high traffic congestion caused by the sports mega-events, the urban management organizations are suggested to consider the integrated land-use design. Also, they are recommended to reduce traffic congestion and pollution in the central areas of the host cities by constructing playgrounds, recreation centres, and recreation centres in low-crowded areas, urban roads and public transport.

B) According to the high levels of job creation and investment growth, policy-makers and applicants of sports mega-event hosting are recommended to optimize spending domestic and foreign investments so that the right effective businesses will be consequently created. Tourism-related infrastructures must be expanded to attract future and post-event tourists to develop the right productive businesses to return those tourists

and attract new ones.

C) Given the possibly high crime incidents and legal disruptions caused by the sports mega-events, the security units and, in particular, the host country's judicial authorities are recommended to be timely determined in the law enforcement and commitment as facing criminal cases.

D) Due to the high pollution (air and noise) in the sports mega-events, the environmental protection managers and executives are suggested to modify travel patterns in the host cities, for example, the type of personal vehicles used. In this regard, they must try to change, institutionalize and internalize the culture of using public transport (e.g., railways, subway and urban trains) and walking culture among the host residents. These management actions must be planned from years before the year of the event.

E) Considering the importance of national identity, patriotism, and increased political attention to host countries, the foreign ministry officials are suggested to pay particular attention to disseminating political goals and demonstrating the country's national power through these events as a kind of media.

F) To energy-saving and drop event costs, the policy-makers and applicants of sports mega-events are suggested to use renewable energy technologies at sports venues, village games and recreational areas. Also, they are recommended to use solar energy in busy areas such as subway entrances and exits, hotels, stadiums and sports venues, and apply electric flooring that converts the kinetic energy of walking into electricity.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Various authors have explored the effects of sports events, especially mega-events, as their research interests during recent years. Each of the authors has dealt with some specific aspects of such developments. Hence, the results of this study could lead us to the following themes:

- 1- Reviewing negative or positive cultural, political, social, economic, and environmental effects caused by the sports mega-events on the host communities,
- 2- Identifying the existing gaps in the previous studies,
- 3- Collecting, screening and identifying previous conducted research strengths and weaknesses, and providing the following scholars with new strategies.

Economic effects are one of the essential variables that many previous studies have paid particular attention. Given the economic competition among countries, this is not far from the expectation. As with these same effects caused by sports mega-event, a large number of studies have been done. These studies showed different and significant economic outcomes of such sports events. The present findings indicate that the sports mega-events can provide the host communities with many job opportunities before, during and after these events. This positive effect has been emphasized by other authors (Bob & Swart, 2009; Gursoy et al., 2011; Hotchkiss et al., 2003; Ryan, 2003). Also, mega-events are accompanied by many national and international investments, can consequently cause job creation and economic growth being made for the host countries (Malfas et al., 2004). Considering the nature of such events and people's high interests in them, they seem

potentially able to attract significant numbers of visitors and tourists, ultimately lead to increased tourism and its related positive economic effects (Brent Ritchie, 1984). In other words, a successful host in this regard can help tourism increase (Lee et al., 2014). Additionally, these events help urban reconstruction (Bob & Swart, 2009; French & Disher, 1997; Gratton et al., 2005; Gursoy et al., 2011), and infrastructure improvement being made in the host countries (Bob & Swart, 2009; Gursoy et al., 2011; Swart & Bob, 2004; Wu et al., 2016). On the other side, due to increased costs related to these sports events, some issues, including inflation (Yoon et al., 2001), increased prices (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011), increased taxes (Bob & Swart, 2009; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Lorde et al., 2011) and debts (Wu et al., 2016) may occur.

Kim et al. (2006) state that the events' social effects are significant as the economic ones. For instance, sports mega-events can help national pride and integrity to be increased (Brent Ritchie & Aitken, 1984; Waite, 2003). As national pride increased, national rationale and patriotism are subsequently enhanced. It is consequently hoped that the ruling political system on the society begins to be progressive and sustainable more than before (Kersting, 2007). On the other hand, these events necessarily have resulted in both positive and negative effects. Authors mentioned adverse outcomes such as crime (Barker et al., 2001), traffic congestion (Gursoy et al., 2011), population overcrowding (Dyer et al., 2007), disorder and noise (French & Disher, 1997; Gursoy et al., 2011) vandalism, increased prostitution, and other crimes (Gursoy et al., 2011; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). These outcomes can lead to creating social dissatisfaction and tensions.

The sports mega-events can provide the host communities with a lot of cultural benefits. The findings of this study revealed that these events bring higher cultural exchanges to the host communities (Karadakis et al., 2010; Shipway & Brown, 2007), make different cultures closer together, and encourage the communities to exchange various beliefs and attitudes. Thereby, cultural exchanges are also enhanced through sharing cultural insights (Konstantaki, 2009). These events have benefits, including fostering and feeding local values and traditions (Kim et al., 2006) and making and promoting reputation (Lee et al., 2014). On the other hand, the negative cultural consequences of these events should not be ignored or overlooked. These events can result in cultural commercialization (Cohen, 1988), such as mass prostitution (Dyer et al., 2007; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011) and traditional negative values for families (Kousis, 1989).

As for the political outcomes, findings showed that sports mega-events, on the one hand, have positive benefits, including increasing political attention (Caiazza & Audretsch, 2015) and improving inter-countries political diplomacy (Ishac, 2018). Also, they can enhance a politician image (Caiazza & Audretsch, 2015; Malfas et al., 2004). Therefore, such benefits can improve political and general diplomacy and demonstrate the countries' political power. On the other hand, they convey adverse effects such as bribery and corruption (Bob & Swart, 2009; Lorde et al., 2011). Therefore, these scandals and bribery result in heavy fines and penalties but irreparable damages to the host country's international reputation and organizing committee of the games. Also, the findings

obtained from this systematic review implied that increasing national identity and patriotism and growing political attention are considered the most frequent political components of the intended events. Therefore, macro-economists and foreign affairs policy-makers are recommended to pay special attention to the potentials rooted in such a field to promote political goals and national strengths.

The review of previous studies on the effects of hosting sports mega-events has shown that environmental impacts have become essential in studies over the past decade. In other words, two decades before, few studies have addressed this critical issue. Findings related to environmental effects demonstrate that sports mega-events provide the host residents with positive benefits, including recycling policies, pollution control (Allen et al., 2010) and ecological awareness promotion (Kim et al., 2006). On the other hand, increases in visitors and traffic have negative consequences such as traffic congestion, increased climate pollution and environmental damages (Gursoy et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2006; Prayag et al., 2013). It is undeniable that these consequences can simultaneously disrupt the social life of host residents. These negative impacts will threaten the host communities not only during the venue but also in the aftermath. Although the international sports organizations, including the International Olympic Committee, frequently emphasize sustainable developments in the sport, some significant conflicts are highly feeling between the adverse environmental effects of sports mega-events and those policies. Therefore, it is better to reformulate the ecological policies of events and communicate them to the event organizers. These systematic review findings showed that traffic congestion and increased pollution are deemed the most frequently occurred environmental effects. The event organizers, especially environmental managers involved in planning, are encouraged to pay thorough attention to environmental components considering environment-friendly technologies.

As mentioned, this study is one of few systematic review studies that simultaneously integrate and examines the economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental impacts of mega-sporting events on the host communities. In recent years, the number of studies on sports mega-events has dramatically increased. Therefore, the economic findings of this study suggest that the sports mega-events have many consequences, including employment creation, increased investment, increased prices, improved infrastructure, increased tourism and urban reconstruction for the host communities. Other impacts of such events may include social influences, tourism, heritage, image, media and health, each of which has desirable and undesirable consequences for the hosts. In other words, this study provides policy-makers and event planners with a complete summary of the studies conducted in the past three decades, which is a valuable and credible source to realize the related decision-making processes.

6. Limitations and suggestions

It should be noted that one of the present study aims was to identify gaps in the past researches. Thus, considering the current systematic review, the sexual, psychological, commercial, volunteer, financial, transportation, spatial, recreational, and infrastructural impacts of the sports mega-events have been a result of this identified as the research gaps of previous studies. In recent years, the mentioned effects have received little attention from authors, and they should be considered more.

Each researcher inevitably faces a series of constraints that affect the data collection or analysis of findings. Authors have some limitations, including lack of access to the literature and research abstracts published in conferences, congresses, organizational reports.

The choice of the 1990–2019 time period and the study language (purely English) were primarily based on a personal decision that could deprive us of other critical research in different languages or periods. Given the lack of access to summaries of organizational studies, reports and first-hand sources, future researchers are recommended to deal with the present study limitations in a separate study. Furthermore, future scholars are suggested in another (more) systematic study to include pre-1990 research and documents conducted in other languages.

Disclosure statement and funding

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest. The present study received no financial support from any organization or institution.

Acknowledgements

This article is taken from a thesis titled "Systematic Review of studies on the effects of the Sports Mega-Events" with the Doc. Number "P 691/300" at Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran. Therefore, the researchers have been undertaken to appreciate the faculty of Physical Education and Sports Sciences of Kharazmi University for their support.

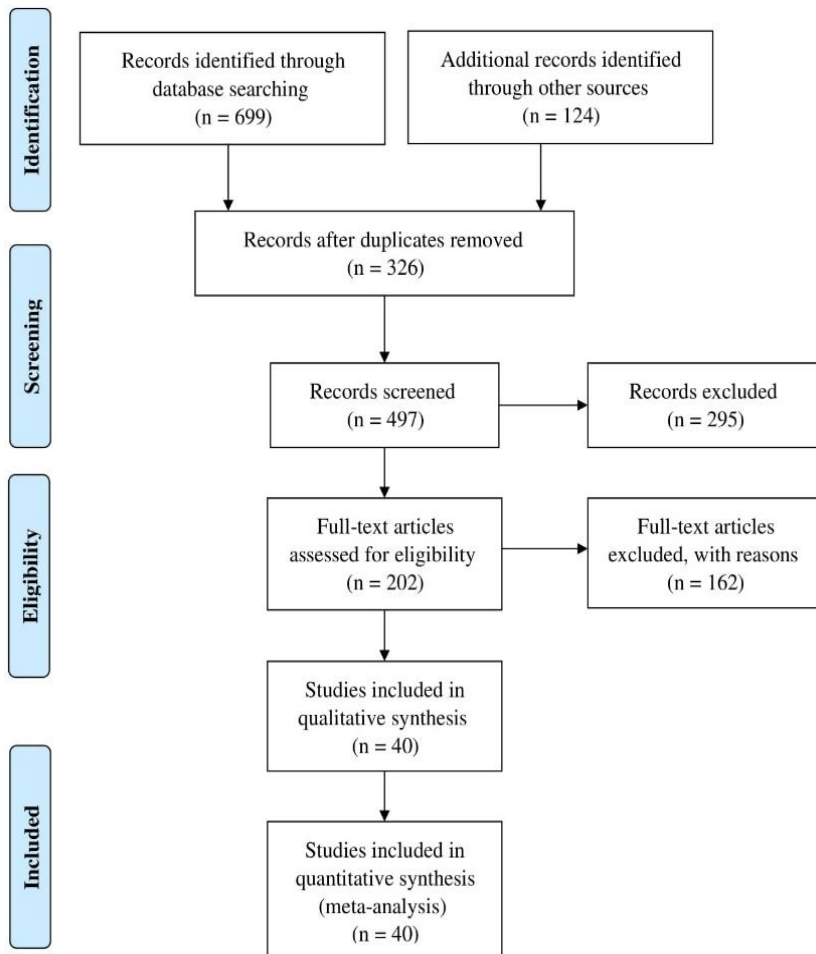
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Appendix 1. Prisma 2009 flow diagram.



نشریه کسب‌وکار در ورزش


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شناسه دیجیتال: 10.22051/SBJ.2021.36618.1001



تأثیرات رویدادهای ورزشی مگا بر جوامع میزبان: مرور نظام‌مند مطالعات سه دهه اخیر

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کلیدواژه

تأثیرات میزبانی
رویدادهای ورزشی مگا
مدیریت رویداد

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصیل

چکیده

هدف: این مطالعه با هدف بررسی نظام‌مند مطالعات در مورد چگونگی اثرپذیری جوامع میزبان از رویدادهای ورزشی بزرگ انجام شده و منجر به شناسایی نقاط قوت و ضعف ادبیات شناسایی خلأهای موجود در این زمینه و ارائه استراتژی‌ها و پیامدهای جدید برای محققان بعدی شده است.

روش: به‌منظور گردآوری اطلاعات، پایگاه داده‌های Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science و PubMed به‌طور کامل مورد بررسی قرار گرفته و برای اطمینان از صحت بررسی‌ها از روش کفایت جستجوی دستی در مهم‌ترین منابع و اسناد انجام شده است. درواقع، بررسی و استخراج داده‌ها بر اساس یک پروتکل از پیش تعیین شده و سپس اسناد و داده‌های انتخاب شده مورد تحلیل قرار گرفته‌اند.

یافته‌ها: نتایج نشان داد که تأثیرات رویدادهای ورزشی بزرگ بر جوامع میزبان را می‌توان در دو گروه اثرات مثبت و منفی دسته‌بندی کرد. با استناد به یافته‌ها، بیشتر مطالعات به بررسی موضوعاتی از جمله تأثیرات اقتصادی-اجتماعی، گردشگری، میراث، تصویر، رسانه‌ها، بهداشت، تأثیرات فرهنگی و زیست‌محیطی پرداخته‌اند. از موارد دیگر می‌توان به تأثیر مسائل روانی، فضای، تجاری، داوطلبانه، مالی و تفریحی که به‌ندرت مورد توجه قرار گرفته‌اند، اشاره نمود.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: این مطالعه خلاصه‌ای کامل از مطالعات انجام شده در سه دهه گذشته را در اختیار سیاست‌گذاران و برنامه‌ریزان رویداد قرار می‌دهد، که یک منبع ارزشمند و معتبر برای درک فرایندهای تصمیم‌گیری مرتبط است. با مرور اسناد، نکاتی از اثرات برگزاری رویدادهای بزرگ روشن شد که قبلاً کمتر مورد توجه قرار گرفته بودند.

تاریخ دریافت: ۱۴۰۰/۰۴/۱۸

تاریخ پذیرش: ۱۴۰۰/۰۵/۱۱