

The Youth Olympic Games: a new strategic platform for the promotion of sport among the youth

International Research – to – Practice Conference
SOL'16

Presented by : Ryan Brathwaite
September 20. 2016



Introduction

- Sport is one of the most important leisure fields in modern times and has an incomparable influence on the daily lives of billions of people (Markovits & Rensmann, 2010)
- Sport has the unique potential to empower, motivate and inspire (UN, 2012)
- The aim of the Olympic movement is to be associated with;
 - youth
 - health
 - sportsmanship
 - peace
 - education
 - enjoyment
- ideals encapsulated in the Olympic Charter
- The Olympic Games - the world's greatest sporting event

Introduction

- Concerns have arisen in the over declining interest in the Olympic Games
- The youth of today face a number of challenges that limit their ability to engage in organized sport, including new technologies, the environment, and escalating costs for sport.
- Across the entirety of the Sochi Winter Games, coverage in the 18-49 age group viewership netted a record low rating compared to other Olympic Games of 5.5 or just over 21 million viewers in this crucial demographic group (Patten, 2014).

Introduction

- Prompted the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to bolster the Olympic brand and to increase engagement of a younger audience
- Capturing the next generation's interest and attention in the sporting world has become vital for the Olympic brand

Introduction

- The XIII Olympic Congress declared that “youth and athletes are equally at the heart of the Olympic Movement.”
- IOC President Jacques Rogge commented that; “We will find new ways to share the Olympic values with the world’s youth and get them involved in sport.
- New flagship event created - The Youth Olympic Games

The Concept

- The YOG is the first new global Olympic Competition since the introduction of the Winter Olympic Games in 1924 (Houlihan, Hanstad & Parent, 2014).
- The YOG are seen to be closer to the Olympic ideals than the Olympic Games (Hanstad, Parent and Kristiansen, 2013)
- The YOG called for the participation of the world's top young athletes in a Games with equal emphasis on sports, culture and education.

The Concept

- Designed to create a true community among the youth of the world while learning and sharing experiences.
- Youth Olympic Games should not be seen as mini-Olympic Games.
- the YOG are the largest multisport international event for young athletes.

The Concept

- Reach youth communities throughout the world to promote Olympic values
- Raise awareness among young people of sport and sport practice
- Act as a platform for initiatives within the Olympic movement and be an event of the highest international standards for young people

Vision

- The vision of the YOG became one of not simply sporting competition, but also of education, and of “engaging and inspiring young people around the world to participate in sports and adopt the Olympic values” (IOC, 2007).



Initiatives

- Cultural & Education Program (CEP)
- YOG Sports Program (CP)
 - Mixed- gender events
 - Mixed- NOC events
 - New Sporting Formats & Sports
- Expansion of the Host Cities

Cultural & Education Program (CEP)

- CEP was to acquaint athletes with Olympism and its values in a fun and festive spirit and to raise awareness of important issues
- Promotes the concept of “ Learn and Share”
- Designed with interactive and innovative workshops and forums, artistic activities and events, celebrations of World cultures and Games.
- Built upon 5 themes;
 - Olympism
 - Athlete Career
 - Well- Being and Healthy Lifestyle
 - Social Responsibility
 - Expression

Cultural and Education Program (CEP)

- Strategic dimension-
 - the IOC turned to its “deep core,” namely to the Olympic philosophy. And this philosophy is rarely contested by the public (Ivan, 2014)
 - the IOC anticipated that the YOG, through its education and cultural program, will encourage youth participants to become “sport ambassadors” who will raise awareness about the benefits of organized physical activities in their home community and country.
 - The CEP was given equal worth as sporting competition and all athletes are encouraged to attend. For the IOC it was though they were breaking new ground and returning to its roots.
 - Intercultural and exchange programs such as the Twinning school program, Chat with Champions, Discovery activity

YOG Sport Program (CP)

- Attempt to equip the YOG with “their own unique identity,”
- The IOC decided that the event’s CP would consist of the same 26 sports that will be included in the London 2012 Olympics with fewer disciplines and events
- Required innovative and significant modifications.
 - Subowo, an IOC member from Indonesia, commented: “This should foster cooperation and interaction between athletes from various countries” (2010, p. 153)
- IOC challenged the different international federations to adopt a more flexible and creative approach in their events for the games.
 - 3x3 basketball
 - Ice hockey skills challenge

YOG Sport Program (CP)

- Strategic Dimension;
 - Integration of youth- relevant sports and disciplines
 - Making urban culture part of the cultural program.
 - This strategy seems to make the program more amenable to young athletes
 - Keeps the Olympic Games relevant for the younger generations.
- Innovative concepts designed as an additional attraction for young people -
 - Test trend sports (x- sports; roller skating, rock climbing etc.)
 - Modifications to equipment and sporting events



YOG Sport Program (CP)

- Mixed Gender Relays
- Mixed NOC relays
 - Adds a completely new element to the sporting competition
 - Prove very popular with the athletes.
 - Captured the imagination of athletes and spectators .



Expansion of Host Cities

- Expansion of the Host Cities
 - Bring the YOG to cities that cannot organise the Olympic Games
 - Make the YOG more accessible and affordable for small- and medium-sized cities by replacing the current candidature process with a competitive dialogue approach.

Conclusion

- The YOG highlights different sports and provide an efficient platform to motivate young people to “get active” and adhere to the Olympic spirit.
- Each edition of the YOG will also leave a consistent legacy for the youth of the host country
- The value of the event’s educational potential is enhanced by developing a well-defined, structured, and visible CEP.



Conclusion

- The YOG hold tremendous promise in adding a vibrant new component to the Olympic movement.
- The YOG were equipped with a distinctive character because of the significance given to their program of cultural and educational activities as much as for their innovations
- the YOG represents a new step towards the systematic distribution of elite sport into the child population.
- The host city will have a great opportunity to present itself to the world during the YOG as the Olympic Youth Capital,
- Shaping its image as a youth-friendly city that offers a multitude of attractive places and events.

Thank you

