



Assessing the impact of sporting mega-events on the social and physical capital of communities in host cities: the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games experience

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This paper uses the 2018 Commonwealth Games held in Gold Coast, Australia to examine the institutions created to govern sport mega-events and the effect of those institutions on the physical and social capital of host communities. The authors look specifically at the renovation of the Broadbeach Lawn Bowls Club (BLBC), which served as a venue for the Games. The authors applied the Institutional Grammar to 17 reports, action plans, and guidelines to understand the norms, rules, and strategies that governed the Games. They also conducted interviews to capture the impact of the renovations and the Games more broadly on the Gold Coast community.

KEY FINDINGS

- The Institutional Grammar can be used to highlight the relationship between institutions (norms, rules, and strategies) and the development of social and physical capital.
- The Institutional Grammar can help in identifying capital gains to communities from major events.

The Grammar of the Games

After coding the 17 governing documents according to the IG, the authors sorted the norms, rules, and strategies into four categories: physical capital (e.g., equipment, infrastructure, etc.), bridging social capital (linkages that connect people across social groups), bonding social capital (linkages that reinforce social groups), and linking social capital (relationships within social hierarchies). This allowed the authors to identify how the institutions created to facilitate the Commonwealth Games contributed to the development of specific types of community capital.

Institutions and Capital

The interviews identified several ways in which the renovation of the BLBC contributed to the development of physical and social capital in the Gold Coast, including bolstering the local economy, beautification, increasing tourism, and transforming the club into a community space. The interviews also referenced specific rules, norms, and strategies that facilitated these outcomes. This illustrates how the IG can be used to capture the physical and social capital gains associated with a mega-event like the Commonwealth Games.

For more information, please see Falla, M., Prior, J., & Jacobs, B. (2022). Assessing the impact of sporting mega-events on the social and physical capital of communities in host cities: the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games experience. *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance*, (26), 5-27. <https://doi.org/10.5130/cjlg.vi26.7683>

This Research Case represents an interpretation of the original scholarship which was reviewed and approved by the original author(s).