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**Surveying the Literature and the People:
The Economic Impact of Sports Teams and Civic Pride**

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Abstract: Public funds to build sports stadiums are commonly justified by the perceived economic impacts and civic pride they create for the community. Since the 1980s, there have been many studies looking at the economic impact and civic pride created by professional sports teams. Most of the literature supports the idea that economic impacts are not created, but there are mixed results on the magnitude of civic pride. Overall, most of the economic literature suggests that the benefits created by sports teams or events do not outweigh the cost of public subsidies provided. We further the research by reviewing the economic impact and civic pride literature and matching it to survey results on the Super Bowl and Winter Olympics to see if economic research has informed public opinion. We find that the survey results match the findings in the literature suggesting that economics profession has indeed informed public opinion.

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I. Introduction

Public funding is commonly used to subsidize stadium construction and support sporting events. For instance, in the last 20 years over 100 sports facilities have opened in the United States with most of them receiving direct public funding. Sports team owners justify public funding with two reasons. The first reason owners suggest is that sports teams generate a local economic impact through the creation of jobs and by increasing local incomes. The second reason is that sports teams provide civic pride and intangible benefits to the host community.

Economists have analyzed both these stated reasons. When it comes to the economic impact of sports teams, one of the most studied topics in the sports world; economists have consistently found that sports stadiums do not create a local economic impact. This contradicts the politicians' economic impact estimates, primarily because of the misapplication of economic impact in the studies (see Crompton, 1995). When it comes to intangible benefits of civic pride, the results have been mixed. Using various techniques, economists find that sport teams do provide public good benefits but generally the benefits provided do not justify full funding of sports teams.

In our study, we first provide a literature review of both the economic impact and the intangible benefits of sports teams to provide insights to what the economics profession has found on the justification for public funding. We then match a survey of the literature to a poll of people across America to see if the citizens polling responses match what the literature finds in the data. In general, we find that people do not know or soon forget who host the Super Bowl or the Olympics. Also almost all respondents do not plan to visit cities or countries that host the Super Bowl or Olympics. We do find,

however, that people believe that having a professional sports team in a city increases the perceived image of that city and hosting an Olympics increases the perceived image of the host county. Our results suggest that economic research may have informed public opinion.

In the next section, we provide a review of the literature on economic impact, both for host cities with a professional sports franchise and for mega-event hosts. In section three, we discuss the civic pride literature of having a professional sports franchise in one's city or hosting a mega-event. Section four provides details on the polling method and results of public opinion. We conclude in last section by discussing if the results of economic research have informed public opinion.

II. Economic Impact

The economic impact of sports has been studied in two main ways: through local economic impact and through the impact of mega-events. These areas of study are both summarized, separately, below.

The Economic Impact of having a local professional sports team

The impact of having a professional sports franchise in an economy has been widely studied. Baade and Dye (1988, 1990) look at the impact a franchise has on retail sales and aggregate income within a given Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). Their 1988 paper finds some support for the link of economic activity between major league sports and manufacturing activity. In their 1990 study, they find that a small fraction of cases see manufacturing activity increase with a new or renovated stadium. They conclude, however, that measurable economic benefits are not large enough to justify stadium subsidies. Baade (1996) looks at a professional sports team's ability to create

jobs, again failing to find a positive correlation. Zimbalist and Noll (1997) find that sports teams and facilities are not a source of local economic growth and employment and the net subsidy exceeds the financial benefit of a new stadium. Baade and Sanderson (1997) find nine cities with a significant impact from the presence of a professional sports team. Interestingly, of the nine significant cities, five were positive and four were negative.

Coates and Humphreys (2003) measure the impact on many different sectors of the economy finding a small positive, and significant, effect in one sector: amusement and recreation. They do, however, find an offsetting decrease in earnings and employment in the other sectors suggesting a substitution effect between sectors. Their results support the idea that franchises do not create employment and income, they just cause a shift in consumption from one sector to another. The results of finding no economic impact are confirmed at the more local level by Jasina and Rotthoff (2008) who use county level data rather than the larger MSA areas. Coates and Depken (2009) look at four-midsized cities in Texas with university that plays football in the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) of NCAA Division and do not find any evidence of support for the public use of stadiums.

There is one study that finds a positive economic impact and claims this justifies the use of public funds of stadiums: Agha (2013). Agha looks at minor league stadiums and finds that these stadiums, which tend to be in smaller communities, do indeed create a positive economic impact.

The Economic Impact of hosting a mega-event

Although there has been little or no evidence of an economic impact of having a sports team in a community, there is an argument that mega-events, such as the Super

Bowl, Olympics, and World Cup, have a positive impact on the economy hosting the event. Large events are expected to increase tourism, both current and future, as well as general spending in the area. These events, however, may not have a positive impact if there is crowding out effect where people avoid the area because of the large event or other (non-sports) sectors of the economy shut-down because the event is occurring. It is also possible that a large portion of the monies spent during the event do not stay local once spent, such as hotel profits that go back to the corporate headquarters rather than staying in the location the money was spent.

Coates and Matheson (2009) find, from a panel of American cities from 1993-2005, that mega-events generally exhibit little impact on rental prices on a given city as a whole. In addition, when an impact is found, it is just as likely to reduce rental prices as increase them. Allmers and Maennig (2009) analyze the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup in France (1998), in Germany (2006), and in South Africa (2010) and find that the World Cups held in France and Germany have no evidence of creating positive impacts on tourism, employment, and income. They do speculate, however, that the potential benefits of the South Africa World Cup may have a different impact given the developing aspects of the country. These results are consistent with Baade and Matheson (2004), who did not find any positive economic effects for the World Cup held in the United States in 1994. Hagn and Maennig (2008a, 2008b) analyze the 1974 and 2006 World Cup in Germany finding no positive economic impacts.

Szymanski (2002) analyzes the world's 20 largest economies over a 30 year period and find that growth in countries involved in the World Cup is significantly lower. Ritchie and Smith (1991) find that the worldwide name recognition of Calgary, after

hosting the 1988 Winter Olympic, was positive but short-lived. In addition, Tieglund (1999) found that 40% of the full-serviced hotels in town went bankrupt after the 1994 Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer.

Overall, the results of the economic impact studies suggest that sport teams or mega-events either have a small or no effect on the local economy. Yet politicians and team owners still use the economic impact argument to justify public funds for sport arenas and events. In the next section we discuss the civic goods benefits derived from sports teams and events.

III. Civic Pride

Additional studies have attempted to estimate the intangible benefits or civic pride benefits provided to cities hosting a sports team. Examples of intangible, nonuse benefits, include the benefits an individual derive from the ability to watch a local game on television, read about it in the newspaper, or talk about it with friends and coworkers, or the pride generated from being in a 'major league' city. These benefits are often considered important, but are difficult to value. Economists drawing on the environmental literature have primarily used two techniques to value the public goods benefits. The first technique is the stated preference technique using primarily the contingent valuation method. The second technique is the revealed preference technique that uses existing markets such as the housing or labor market to analyze differences in prices may reveal the benefits created by a sports teams.

The Civic Pride of having a local team

One of the first applications of the contingent valuation method to valuing public good amenities was Johnson and Whitehead (2000) that focused on both a minor league

baseball team and a new arena for the University of Kentucky basketball team in Lexington, Kentucky. Their analysis finds that the measured benefits of both projects do not provide justifications for public funding. Johnson, Groothuis, and Whitehead (2001) find that while the Pittsburgh Penguins generate substantial civic pride, the value of these public goods falls far short of the cost of the new arena. Groothuis, Johnson, and Whitehead (2004) using the same data set suggest that even if a vast majority of residents receive civic pride benefits from sports teams in Pittsburg only a minority support public funding for building new sports arenas.

Owen (2006), using a contingent valuation study of both Michigan and Minnesota residents, suggests that although the aggregate willingness to pay is less than the typical stadium funding, they are still large enough to be considered for public support. Johnson, Mondello, and Whitehead (2007) provide a contingent valuation study of the Jacksonville Jaguars in the NFL and find that the overall benefits to the community are \$36.5 million, which is still less than the funds the city provided to keep the Jaguars in Jacksonville. Fenn and Croker (2009), analyzing the public goods generated by the Minnesota Vikings of the NFL, find that the benefits derived to the community warranted the stadium subsidy given to keep the Vikings in Minnesota.

Whitehead et al. (2013), using a combination of both revealed preference, contingent valuation, and stated preference, travel cost, find that the residents of Alberta Canada derive both significant use and nonuse benefits from the Calgary Flames of the NHL; up to 82 million Canadian dollars a year. Whitehead et al. (2013) do suggest, however, that some of the benefits can be captured in ticket pricing. Carlino and Coulson (2004) also use the revealed preference technique to measure the benefits of sports teams

using the hedonic technique. They find that increase in quality-to-life benefits captured in increased housing cost justify public spending on NFL sports teams. Coates, Humphreys, and Zimbalist (2006) reanalyze their data with various specifications and find that their results are not robust suggesting that and should not be used to justify public subsidies of sports teams.

The Civic Pride of hosting a mega-event

Kavetsos and Szymanski (2008) find that hosting the Olympics, World Cup, or European Championships increases the resident of the European countries happiness. Studying over the 30 year period they find significant and positive effects from the World Cup. Dohmen et al. (2006) also finds that individual perceptions of economic prospects, both at the personal level and economy-wide level, are affected by soccer outcomes. Walton, Longo, and Dawson (2008) use the contingent valuation technique to measure the benefits of hosting the Olympics in London and their results suggest that there are positive intangible effects associated with the event and residents outside of London are willing to pay toward the Olympic funding. In addition, Atkinson et al. (2008) find that respondents from the cities of London, Manchester, and Glasgow are willing to pay £22, £12 and £11 per year (for 10 years) respectively for the 2012 Olympics. They find that the WTP for intangible impacts is in the region of £2 billion.

Overall the results of the intangible benefits literature on sports teams and events suggest that public goods do exist and there is a benefit to the community. Most studies, however, find that the benefits of the team, facility, or mega-event are significantly smaller than the public funds provided. Yet, once again, politicians and team owners still use the concept of civic pride to justify public funds for sport arenas and events.

III. Polling

One area that has been under studied is how economic research informs public opinion. Economic research suggests that public funds provided for sports teams, facilities, and events are greater than the benefits to the community. Yet public funds continued to be used to finance sports facilities and events. To analyze what people think, we developed questions for a national poll on sports: one survey on opinions about the Super Bowl and one about the Winter Olympics.

The Stillman School of Business, at Seton Hall University, runs the Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted by The Sharkey Institute, which opened in 2006. Polls are conducted by telephone among adults nationwide and numbers are dialed from samples of both standard land-line and cell phones.¹ Our data on people's opinion of the Super Bowl was collected from September 30 – October 3, 2013 (before the Super Bowl), has 947 phone call respondents where 43.6% were male and 56.4% were female. Our data on people's opinion of the Olympics was collected from February 24 - 26, 2014 (after the Winter Olympics), has 780 phone call respondents where 43.9 percent were males and 56.1 were female. The responses came from 10,000 random numbers dialed from across the United States, with a 9.47% response rate for the Super Bowl and a 7.8% response rate for the Winter Olympics.

During both polls the respondents were also asked if they were sports fans: "How closely do you follow sports?" Very Closely, Closely, Not Closely, and Not at all. All 947 and 780 responded to this question for the Super Bowl and Olympics, respectively.

¹ <http://www.shu.edu/academics/business/sports-polling/index.cfm> "The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. The error for subgroups may be higher. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls."

These results are presented in Table 1A for the Super Bowl and 1B for the Winter Olympics.

Table 1A: Results to the question "How closely do you follow sports?"							
Super Bowl		Gender		Age			
	All	Male	Female	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
Very Closely	16.7	26.7	7.6	13.3	16.5	22.9	13.5
Closely	29.1	31.3	27.1	27	29	25.3	34.6
Not Closely	22.9	18.3	27.1	22.8	20.2	23	24.9
Not at all	31.2	23.7	38.2	36.9	34.3	28.9	27.1

Table 1B: Results to the question "How closely do you follow sports?"							
Olympics		Gender		Age			
	All	Male	Female	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
Very Closely	22.9	30.0	14.9	28.5	20.9	20.2	18.3
Closely	33.9	35.5	32.4	33.3	38.1	36.0	30.6
Not Closely	29.5	23.7	34.9	28.0	22.5	29.7	37.7
Not at all	14.5	10.8	17.8	10.3	18.5	14.1	13.5

One point of interest is that more respondents self identified themselves as sports fan after the Olympics then before the Super Bowl. Possibly the Olympics has a greater amount of attention because of the large number of different events that appeal to a wide variety of fans and the fact that it happens once every four years. For instance when asked: "What sport would you say you enjoyed the most?" 26.6% of males said hockey and 52.2% of females said figure skating while 29.3% of youth 18-29 enjoyed snowboarding and 44.2% of older adults over 60 enjoyed figure skating.

Of those who do follow sports, excluding the 'not at all' group from above, the follow-up question asked of the Super Bowl sample "Which would you say you are more interested in?" The answers choices were between Baseball and the NFL; the results broken down in Table 2.

Table 2: Results to the question "Which would you say you are more interested in?"							
		Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
All							
Baseball	30.2	31.4	28.8	23.5	30.1	32.3	34.1
NFL	59.6	59.4	59.9	71.8	65.3	54.7	51.8
Don't Know/refuse to answer	10.2	9.2	11.3	4.7	4.5	13	14.2

To gain an understanding on how people view both the arguments of economic impact and civic pride, the following five questions were asked in the Super Bowl questionnaire:

- “Do you know where this season’s Super Bowl is going to be held?”
- “Do you know where the last Super Bowl was held?”
- “When a city hosts the Super Bowl does your interest in that city increase, decrease or remain the same?”
- “Would the fact that a city has hosted a Super Bowl make you want to visit after the event?”
- “Do you think professional sports teams improve the image of their host city?”

And the following six questions were asked in the Winter Olympic questionnaire:

- “Do you know where this year’s Winter Olympics is going to be held?”
- “Do you know where the 2010 Winter Olympics were held?”
- When a country hosts the Olympics does your interest in that country increase, decrease or remain the same?
- “Do you think hosting an Olympics improves the image of the host country?”
- Would the fact that a country hosted the Olympics make you want to visit that country after the event?
- All things considered, was the decision to hold the 2014 Winter Olympics in Russia a good or bad decision?

Within each of these questions, we report the overall responses as well as the responses broken down by if they follow sports very closely, somewhat closely, not closely, or not at all:

Table 3A: Results to the question "Do you know where this season's Super Bowl is going to be held?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Yes	21.5	41.3	27.9	16.9	8.3
Table 3B: Results to the question "Do you know where this year's Winter Olympics is going to be held?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Yes	86.8	96.0	86.2	89.5	69.0

Most people do not know where they next Super Bowl is going to be held but they do know where the Winter Olympics were held. (The Super Bowl was held in the Meadowlands; New York Giants/Jets Stadium which is located in northern New Jersey and the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia). Of those people who very closely follow sports, only 41.3% could name this year's Super Bowl host while 96.0% could name the host of the Winter Olympics. These results suggest that using a sporting event to put one city in the spot light does not always occur unless it is a major event such as the Olympics. When it comes to the Super Bowl, people tend to be unaware or pay little attention to the city hosting the event. The Winter Olympics, on the other hand, is such a major event that nearly 70% of people who do not follow still know where the Winter Olympics are held.

Table 4A: Results to the question "Do you know where the last Super Bowl was held?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Yes	22.7	36.1	27.9	22	11.3
Table 4B: Results to the question "Do you know where the 2010 Winter Olympics were held?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Yes	33.8	49.5	35.9	25.8	11.3

We followed up by asking if they knew where last year's Super Bowl was held and where the last Winter Olympics in 2010 were held. The last Super Bowl was in The Superdome in New Orleans and the 2010 Winter Olympics was held in Vancouver, Canada. We find that the majority of people do not remember who hosted the last Super Bowl or the last Winter Olympics, suggesting that the host city does not receive benefits from exposure that last over time. In fact less than half of individuals who self identify as following sports very closely remember where either the last Super Bowl or the last Winter Olympics were held.

Table 5A: Results to the question "When a city hosts the Super Bowl does your interest in that city increase, decrease or remain the same?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Increase	22.8	30.1	26.8	26.7	12.3
Decrease	2.1	0	3	2.8	1.9
Remain the same	75.1	69.9	70.2	70.4	85.8

Table 5B: Results to the question "When a country hosts the Olympics does your interest in that country increase, decrease or remain the same?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Increase	34.1	47.2	35.7	30.6	17.3
Decrease	1.6	2.2	2.4	0.4	1.2
Remain the same	64.3	50.6	61.9	69.0	81.5

In Table 5A we asked if the hosting of a Super Bowl causes your interest in that city to increase, decrease, or remain the same. Most people say that hosting a Super Bowl does not change their opinion of that city. We find the same results for the Winter Olympics, Table 5B. Even when we focus only on the respondents who self identify as following sports very closely we find that less than half report that the event increases their interest in the city. Most of the respondents report that the event does not change their interest in the city one way or the other.

Table 6A: Results to the question "Would the fact that a city has hosted a Super Bowl make you want to visit after the event?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Yes	17.5	30.1	23.8	16.7	5.3
No	67.6	62.9	67.2	70.3	68.5
Don't know/refuse to answer	14.9	7	9	13	26.2

Table 6B: Results to the question "Would the fact that a country hosted the Olympics make you want to visit that country after the event"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Yes	23.6	38.2	23.9	15.5	16.7
No	67.4	55.1	67.5	79.7	61.0
Don't know/refuse to answer	9.0	6.7	8.6	4.7	22.2

We find that there may be some residual economic impact. At least some people say they are more likely to visit a city after it has hosted a Super Bowl (17.5%, Table 6A) and more likely to want to visit a country after an Olympics is held (23.6%, Table 6B). Of course we do not know if these people will actually travel, but our results are suggestive that the event might increase some tourism.

Table 7A: Results to the question "Do you think professional sports teams improve the image of their host city?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Yes	60.9	74.4	73.4	56.2	45.5
No	24.3	19.4	16.7	30.4	29.7
Don't know/refuse to answer	14.7	6.2	9.9	13.4	24.8

Table 7B: Results to the question "Do you think hosting an Olympics improves the image of the host country?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Yes	62.9	75.5	65.7	59.7	43.3
No	23.5	18.5	21.2	28.8	25.9
Don't know/refuse to answer	13.6	5.9	13.2	11.4	30.7

This question focuses on the possible civic pride having a professional sports team generates (Table 7A and 7B). We find that 60.9% of respondents believe that having a professional sports team improves the image of a city while 62.9% of respondents believe hosting an Olympics improves the image of a host country. Even of those people that do not follow sports at all, 45.5% and 43.3% of them still believe that having a professional sports team increases the image of a city or hosting an Olympics increases the image of a country, respectively.

Table 8: Results to the question "All things considered, was the decision to hold the 2014 Winter Olympics in Russia a good or bad decision?"					
		Follow Sports...			
	All	Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Not Closely	Not at all
Good	48.2	59.5	57.6	38.6	28.5
Bad	25.7	29.3	21.7	30.3	19.9
Don't know/refuse to answer	26.1	11.1	20.7	31.1	51.6

Given all this information 48.2% of respondents believe hosting the Winter Olympics in Russia was a good idea. When focusing on how close a respondent follows sports, we find that the majority of respondents who follow sports (very closely or somewhat closely) believe it is a good idea. However, a clear minority of individuals who do not follow sports (not closely or not at all) believe it is a good idea. Although we do not know the criteria individuals use to decide on why it is or is not a good idea, we find that half the respondents are skeptical about the value of hosting the Olympics.

IV. Conclusion

The economics literature supports the idea that a local economic impact is not created by having a professional sports team or hosting a major event. Our survey's results are consistent with the economic literature findings on the effects of mega-events such as the Super Bowl or the Winter Olympics. The knowledge and expected impact from hosting the Super Bowl or Olympics are not beneficial to a local area.

There are both short term and long term effects of hosting these major events. The short term impact is what happens as the event occurs, the long term effects occur as the events elevate the host city into the worldwide spotlight. Some of the economic impact from a mega-event is not just those who travel there for the event, but those that will travel to the city after the event is held (because they now know how great that city is). In our polling we find that only 21.5% of the people knew where the next Super Bowl was being held (Met Life Stadium, northern New Jersey/New York) and 22.7% knew where the last one was held (The Superdome, New Orleans). Of those that follow sports closely, only 41.3% could name the upcoming Super Bowl and only 36.1% could name the previous Super Bowl.

However, those results differ for the Winter Olympics. 86.8% of respondents know where the Winter Olympics were held, but only 33.8% knew where the last Winter Olympics were held. Of those that follow sports closely, 96% knew where the Winter Olympics were just held, but only 49.5% could name the previous Winter Olympics. Given the poll for the Winter Olympics was done days after the closing ceremony, whereas the Super Bowl poll was done months before the event date; this provides evidence that the notoriety of hosting a mega-event is very short-lived.

When asked if hosting the event increases your interest in the host city, only 22.8% and 34.1%, for the Super Bowl and Winter Olympics respectively, say yes. When asked if hosting a mega-event makes you want to visit that city after the game, 67.6% and 67.4% said no for the Super Bowl and Winter Olympics, respectively. However, 60.9% of people surveyed believe that a professional sports team improves the image of a city, which is consistent with the civic pride literature. This results is similar for the Winter Olympics, where 62.9% of respondents believe that hosting an Olympics improves the image of the host country. These results suggest that individuals do feel civic pride from having a sports team or hosting a mega-event

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