

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF THE 27TH WINTER UNIVERSIADE AS A DYNAMIC SUPPLY ELEMENT AT A TOURISM DESTINATION

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Abstract

Organized events are considered to be a dynamic supply element in tourism. The bigger and more significant the event is the more the importance for tourism development in a given territory increases. Slovakia has been the hosting country for the international events in the last couple of years organizing the Ice Hockey World Championship (2011); the FIS Alpine Junior World Ski Championships (2014); and it was a co-host country of the 27th World Winter Universiade in 2015 which is the second greatest sport event following the Winter Olympic Games.

The research was focusing on the University students' perception of the World Winter Universiade. The main aim of the paper was to determine the Slovak university students' awareness of the 27th Winter Universiade 2015 as a dynamic supply element at a tourism destination. The necessary research data were obtained by utilization of the questioning technique conducted by an electronic questionnaire. The representative sample consisted of 409 respondents, the university students.

The research resulted into the finding that approximately one half of the university students are aware of the Universiade and a higher level of awareness has been observed by individuals who practice free time sport activities. A smaller number of students were informed that this event was hosted by Slovakia and Spain and that the event was held in Slovakia for the third time. These results were caused also by insufficient activities of the universities. The role of Universiade as a promotion tool with consequential increase of the visit rate was seen pessimistically. This attitude could be connected with the unfavorable perception of the home country as a tourist destination in general. Therefore, it is necessary to focus more intensively on young people as a target group in the promotion of Slovakia and its tourism supply in the future including the events.

Key words: Event. Slovakia. Universiade. University Students.

Introduction

Interest in the organized events such as space-time deliberately created events that simplify, facilitate and summarize authentic experience has a long history. However, they became more intense as a response to the search of a local, social identity in the global environment at the end of the 20th century. Organized events are significantly influencing the development of the hosting territory. The events are able to initiate the traveling and the changes in the visitors temporary stays while staying out of home; they are able to affect the length of the visitors stay at the destination; contribute to the increased incomes of the destination; initiate the infrastructural development; and create new products. Therefore, we consider the events to be a tool of a dynamic tourism development.

Many domestic and foreign authors have been dedicated to the research of the tourism events topic, e.g. Ritchie, Beliveau (1974), Crompton, McKay (1997), Formica, Uysal (1998), Lee (2000), Gúčík (2001), Kim, Chalip (2004), Kmeco (2005), Funk, Bruun (2007), Fuzáková Dvorožňáková (2009), Crowther (2010), Brida et al. (2012, 2014), Getz (2012),

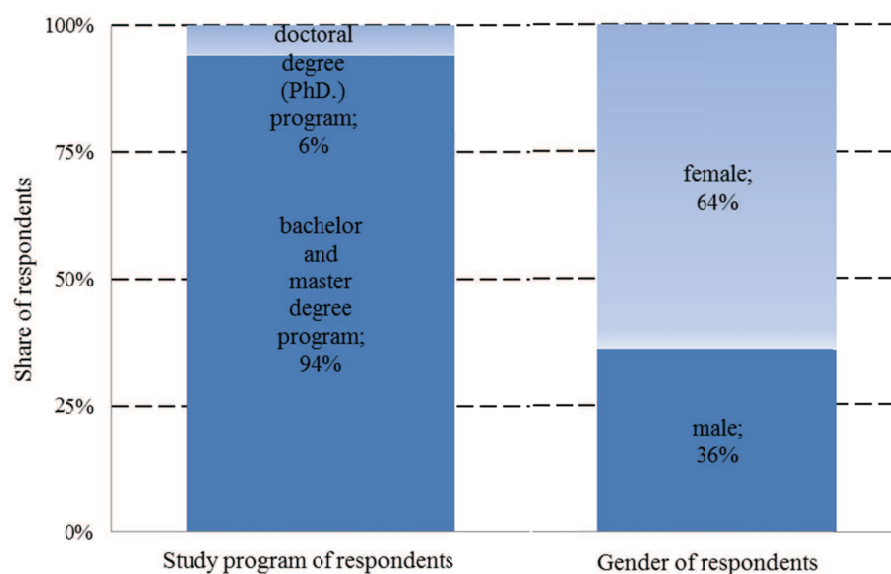
Coghlan, Filo (2013), Šebová, Džupka (2013), Šimočková (2013), Kozłowska (2014), Absalyamov (2015), Bagautdinova et al. (2015) and others. They were focusing mainly on planning, organization and marketing of the events as well as on the assessment of the economic and non-economic impacts on the tourism destination resulting from the events. In order to attract the visitors to the destination, the motivation of the participation on the events organized outside of the usual individuals' stays has been studied and the target visitors groups have been compared. The interest in an organized event has been focused on a particular event.

In contrast to traditional models analyzing demand in the event tourism, there are several differences in article's research focus. The article explores the awareness of the 27th Winter Universiade which is the only second international event to the Winter Olympic Games. It focuses particularly on the awareness of the University students as a specific market segment. The Winter Universiade 2015 host country was Spain (city of Granada). Disciplines in cross-country skiing, nordic combines, ski jumping and biathlon were staged in Slovakia (Strbske Pleso, Osrbli) due to unsuitable conditions in the host country.

The objective of the paper was to determine the Slovak university students' awareness of the Winter Universiade 2015 as the dynamic supply element at a tourism destination. The Universiade is considered to be the most important student event. For this reason the research sample consist of university students. The research is based on the analysis of primary data collected with the survey in February and May 2015. Random sample of 409 Slovak university students was questioned with questionnaire in electronic form.

Pearson's chi-square goodness-of-fit test was calculated to determine representative sample of a normal population. The statistical program PASW SPSS was used to determine whether the distribution of university students in study degree and gender follows known distribution at the significance level of $\alpha=0,05$. The test confirmed that the research sample follows the structure of students studying on bachelor, master and doctoral degree programs in Slovakia ($p\text{-value}=0,714 > \alpha$). The sample is representative also with respect to the gender of individuals ($p\text{-value}=0,760 > \alpha$) (Graph 1).

Graph 1. Structure of respondents based on study program and gender



Source: Own processing, 2015

Results

Available statistical data (Časové rady, www.uips.sk) are not designed to verify the sample representativeness with respect to other characteristics (e.g. age of the students). Collected data were processed using selected mathematical and statistical methods with the program PASW SPSS. Data testing estimated the reliability of 95 % confidence intervals; i.e. the significance level of $\alpha=0,05$ was set.

The first step in the investigation was to determine the questioned respondents' knowledge of Universiade as the second greatest global sport event. Despite the fact that the Universiade is an event organized particularly for students, only 47,7 % of respondents were aware of its international importance. Testing showed that we can be 95 % confident that between 43 % and 53 % of university students are aware of Universiade (Table 1).

Tab. 1 Statistical inference from the sample to the population of university students

Indicators		Statistic	Std. Error
Mean		,48	,025
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	,43	
	Upper Bound	,53	
5% Trimmed Mean		,47	
Median		,00	
Variance		,250	
Std. Deviation		,500	
Minimum		0	
Maximum		1	
Range		1	
Interquartile Range		1	
Skewness		,093	,121
Kurtosis		-2,001	,241

Source: PASW SPSS, 2015.

The single factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) did not determine the relationship between awareness of the event and the university study degree ($p\text{-value}=0,679>\alpha$), gender ($p\text{-value}=0,421>\alpha$), age of respondents ($p\text{-value}=0,806>\alpha$) and the professional practice in sport ($p\text{-value}=0,485>\alpha$).

On the other hand, the relationship between the awareness of Universiade as the second greatest winter sport event and the frequency of students' sport activities was determined by the single factor analysis of variance ($p\text{-value}=0,001<\alpha$).

Tab. 2 ANOVA results (relationship between the awareness of Universiade and the intensity of free time sport activities)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4,074	3	1,358	5,614	,001
Within Groups	97,956	405	,242		
Total	102,029	408			

Source: PASW SPSS, 2015

The highest level of awareness was observed by students who often practice free time sport activities, on the other hand, the lowest level of the awareness was observed by students who

do not sport at all (Table 3). Therefore, it can be concluded that the sport enthusiasts are better informed about the Universiade.

Tab. 3. Awareness of the event in relation to the frequency of free time sport activities

The frequency of free time sport activities	Awareness of event		
	no (in %)	yes (in %)	sum (abs.)
never	68,18	31,82	22
rarely	56,18	43,82	89
occasionally	60,13	39,87	153
often	39,31	60,69	145
Sum (abs.)	214	195	409

Source: Own processing based on PASW SPSS outputs, 2015

Only 26,4 % of respondents were aware that the 27th Winter Universiade started in Slovakia (Strbske Pleso and Osrblie) and continued in Spain (Granada) (number of informed students is between 22 % and 31 % with 95 % confidence). Almost one third (32,8 %) of respondents did not know about the event at all (between 28 % and 37 % of students with 95 % confidence); about one third (37,2 %) of respondents had information, that Universiade took place in Slovakia (between 32 % and 42 % of students with 95 % confidence); 3,7 % of respondents had information that Universiade was held only in Spain (between 2 % and 5 % of students with 95 % of confidence). Possibly, the students did not received comprehensive information about the event. It could be caused by the lack of interest in the event or by insufficient presentation and interpretation of information.

The relationship between the students' awareness of the place where 27th Winter Universiade was held and certain variables (respondents' characteristics) was analyzed. The results of the single factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) determined the relationship between the awareness and the gender ($p\text{-value}=0,001<\alpha$, $F=9,793$), professional practice in sport ($p\text{-value}=0,014<\alpha$, $F=6,045$); and between the awareness and the frequency of students' free-time sport activities ($p\text{-value}=0,000<\alpha$, $F=9,414$).

Concerning the character of disciplines men were informed better (36 % of men knew the place where the Universiade

was held), as well as professional sportsmen (56,25 % of them knew that the Universiade took place in Slovakia and Spain) and students who frequently practice free-time sport activities (40,69 %). The level of awareness is seen as being dependent on the personal exposure to sport. The relationship between the awareness and other characteristics was not confirmed ($p\text{-value}>\alpha$).

Only 11,5 % of respondents knew that Universiade was held in Slovakia in 1987, 1999 and 2015 (between 8 % and 15 % of Slovak university students with 95 % of confidence). This results could indicate that students lack an understanding of own country's history or that they do not feel the national pride. Statistical test determined the relationship between the knowledge of how many times Universiade took place in Slovakia and the gender of respondents ($p\text{-value}=0,001<\alpha$, $F=6,461$) and relationship between this knowledge and students' professional practice in sport ($p\text{-value}=0,022<\alpha$, $F=5,317$). More detailed information had men (16,33 % of them knew about previous Universiades held in Slovakia) in comparison to women (only 8,78 % of them knew about this fact). Better informed were also professional sportsmen (31,25 % knew mentioned fact) in comparison to students without professional practice in sport (10,69 % knew about this fact).

The sources, from which the students had received the first information about Universiade, were surveyed. Friedman test determined the statistical significant difference ($p\text{-value}=0,000$)

between the indicated sources of information. The most often mentioned information sources were later determined by Wilcoxon signed ranks test (Table 4). (1) Internet, TV and family and relatives were found to be the most frequently mentioned sources from which students received the first information

about Universiade. (2) Less frequently students learned about the event at the university or from press (newspapers, magazines), radio, in sporting club or in tourist information center located near the place where the Universiade was held or from other sources.

Tab. 4 Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

	TV - internet	relatives - TV	university-relatives	other sources - university	press - other sources	radio - press	sporting club - radio	tourist information center - sporting club
Z	-,154	-,801	-5,630	-1,257	-,426	-,229	-1,387	-,816
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,877	,423	,000	,209	,670	,819	,166	,414

Source: PASW SPSS, 2015

There is 95 % confidence that between 23 % and 34 % of university students who knew about Universiade received the first information from internet. This could indicate properly focused marketing communication as was mentioned by authors Marcekova and Malachovsky (2015). Between 23 % and 33 % of students received the information from TV; between 20 % and 30 % of students knew about the event from their social environment (friends and relatives); between 4 % and 9 % of students learned about the event at their home university; between 2 % and 6 % of students used other sources; between 1 % and 5 % of students heard about Universiade from radio; between 0 % and 3 % of students got information in sporting club; between 0 % and 2 % of students noticed the Universiade organization in tourist information center located close to the place where the event was held. Results are inferred with 95 % confidence.

Universities where the students study are supposed to play crucial role in information dissemination. This potential was not sufficiently utilized as it was shown in the research results.

The relationship between the used source of information and other characteristics was not confirmed ($p\text{-value} > \alpha$).

The 27th Winter Universiade 2015 held in Slovakia was attended only by 10 % of respondents; 8,8 % of students were passive attendees and 1,2 % were active participants (sportsmen in Universiade competitions). Between 6 % and 12 % of university students supported Universiade in audience as passive attendees and between 0 % and 2 % of students supported Universiade through active involvement in disciplines. Results are inferred with 95 % confidence.

Positive aspects of Universiade organization expressed by event attendees were as following: obliging volunteers, involvement of large number of sponsors, strengthened transport and supply of catering services. Negative aspects pointed out by attendees were problems in program organization, parking, missing accessibility (information sign posting) and ski lift and cable cars out of service during the event.

Lack of information about the event (identified in the research) was the main reason for not attending the Universiade (Table 5).

Tab. 5 Reasons for not attending the Universiade

Reasons for not attending the event	Share of respondents in %	Share of university students in % Statistical inference from the sample to the population of university students
lack of information about event	35,57	31-41
lack of time	29,97	25-35
other preferences	16,25	12-20
other reason	12,89	9-16
financial constraints	4,48	2-7
bad accessibility of the place where event was held	0,84	0-2

Source: Own processing, 2015

Those results are even more interesting regarding to the inferred relationship between the event attendance and the awareness of Universiade as the second greatest international winter sport event ($p\text{-value}=0,001 < \alpha$, $F=11,761$), and the relationship between the event attendance and the knowledge of the places where the 27th Winter Universiade was held ($p\text{-value}=0,000$, $F=10,234$). It can be inferred with 95 % confi-

dence that between 31 % and 41 % of Slovak university students, who did not attend the Universiade, lack the information about the event. Between 25 % and 35 % of students did not have time to attend the event; between 12 % and 20 % of students preferred other activities; between 6 % and 16 % of students had other reason not to attend the event; between 2 % and 7 % of students had financial constraints not to attend

the event and between 0 % and 2 % of students did not attend the event because of bad accessibility of places where the Universiade was held (inferred with 95 % confidence). The lack of information, busyness and the lack of interest are seen to be the main reasons of not attending the Universiade. It is necessary to mention that complementary activities attractive for young people accompanying the event were missing.

It was surveyed whether the respondents were watching live streams of competitions taken place in Strbske Pleso and Osrblie in 2015 (whether they were interested in the event). Only one quarter of respondents (25,70 %) stated that they watched live stream of Universiade (between 21 % and 30 % of university students inferred with 95 % confidence). A range of factors affecting the students' interest in watching Universiade live stream was determined by the single factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) as following:

- event attendance (p-value=0,000, F=8,362); live streams were mostly watched by students who attended the Universiade as an audience at least for one day;
- decisive reason not to attend the event (p-value=0,000, F=13,411); live streams were mostly watched by individuals who did not attend the Universiade due to the lack of time;
- the main source of information about the event (p-value=0,001, F=3,518); live streams were attractive for individuals who had learned about the event from the internet and TV;
- the frequency of free time sport activities (p-value=0,000, F=8,499); live streams were mostly watched by students who often practice free time sport activities;
- professional practice in sport (p-value=0,004, F=8,284); live streams were mostly watched by professional sportsmen;
- students' study degree (p-value=0,016, F=5,836); live streams were more watched by the students of bachelor and master degree than by students on doctoral studies.

It was surveyed whether the respondents were watching Universiade news in media (whether they were interested in the event this way). The majority of respondents was interested in Universiade news (53,10 % of respondents, between 48 % and 58 % of students inferred with 95 % confidence) mostly on TV (25,20 % of respondents; between 21 % and 29 % of students inferred with 95 % confidence) and on the internet (22,7 % of respondents, between 19 % and 27 % of students inferred with 95 % confidence). Information in press (2,9 % of respondents;

between 1 % and 5 % of students inferred with 95 % confidence) and on radio (2,2 % of respondents; between 1 % and 4 % of students inferred with 95 % confidence) was sought less intensively.

Single factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) determined a range of factors influencing watching of news in media, primarily:

- factor of event attendance (p-value=0,000, F=14,100); Universiade news were watched mostly by individuals who did not attend the event;
- reason not to attend the event (p-value=0,000, F=13,787); Universiade news were watched mostly by students who did not attend the Universiade due to the lack of time and financial constraints. Information was sought mainly on TV and on the internet;
- the frequency of free time sport activities (p-value=0,000, F=6,568); Universiade news were mostly sought by students who often practice free time sport activities;
- live streams watching (p-value=0,000, F=39,518); Universiade news were sought mostly by individuals interested in live stream of Universiade discipline;
- source of the first information about the Universiade (p-value=0,001, F=3,330); the Universiade news were watched less by students who knew about the event from social environment (from friends and relatives);
- motivation to attend the event (p-value=0,003, F=9,358); Universiade news were mostly watched by students whose primary motivation to visit the tourism destination was the event attendance;
- gender of students (p-value=0,007, F=7,341); in news were more interested men than women (concerning the character of disciplines).

Crucial focus of the research was to determine the effect of Universiade on promotion of Slovakia perceived by university students. The majority of students (62,8 %) was convinced that this event was not influential. It means that Universiade was not able to draw attention to Slovakia and it did not contribute to the promotion of the country according to the results.

Only 9,4 % of respondents considered Universiade to be an event able to contribute to promotion of the country. Other respondents (27,9 %) inclined to the opinion that Universiade was slightly influential.

Tab. 6 Students' attitudes toward Universiade ability to draw attention to Slovakia and its contribution to country promotion

Universiade contribution to the promotion of the country and its ability to draw attention to the country (strength of influence)	Share of respondents in %	Cumulative share of respondents in %	Share of university students in % (Statistical inference from the sample to the population of university students)
The event was certainly influential	3,10	3,10	1-5
The event was influential	6,30	9,40	4-9
The event was slightly influential	27,90	37,20	23-32
The event was not influential	31,50	68,80	27-36
The event was not influential at all	31,30	100,00	27-36

Source: Own processing based on PASW SPSS outputs, 2015

Single factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) determined the relationship between perceived Universiade's ability to draw attention to Slovakia and the students' interest in watching Universiade news in media (p-value=0,007, F=3,611).

Students who sought news about Universiade in press created the biggest group of respondents being convinced that Universiade positively contributed to the promotion of Slovakia and in this way it influenced the future visitation of the country (16,67 % of them supposed that event was influential). On the other hand, students who had information about event from radio did not see any contribution of Universiade to the promotion of the country (no one respondent of this group supposed that event was influential and 77,78 % of respondents in this group saw this event as not influential).

However, in spite of the fact that the attitude of the students is rather pessimistic, there is still a chance of different development. Comprehensive study of economic, social and environmental aspects of Summer Universiade 2013 in Kazan (Russia) (Bagautdinova et al., 2015) showed the contribution of such event to higher occupancy rate of hospitality facilities (while the prices were higher than before the event). The event affected visitation and contributed to increased incomes in hospitality in short-term as well as long-term perspective. Moreover, there was a significant increase in the number of international events taken place in this destination after the Universiade and this possibly evoked multiplier effect in the promotion of the territory.

Conclusion

Organized events are considered to be a dynamic supply element in tourism. Global events attractive for large number of visitors, media, sponsors and other stakeholders gain in importance in tourism development. Slovakia was a co-host country of the 27th World Winter Universiade (World University Games) in 2015 which is the second greatest sport event. The

objective of the paper was to determine the Slovak university students' awareness of this event.

Analysis of primary data showed that approximately one half of university students was aware of Universiade (between 43 % and 43 % of students). More informed were individuals who practice free time sport activities. A smaller number of students was aware that the 27th Winter Universiade started in Slovakia (Strbske Pleso and Osrblie) and continued in Spain (Granada) (between 22 % and 31 % of students). About one tenth of respondents knew that Slovakia was the host country for Universiade for the third time (between 8 % and 15 % of Slovak university). Internet, TV and family and relatives were found to be the most frequently used sources from which students received the first information about Universiade. University institution did not play any role in information dissemination. Live streams of certain disciplines from Strbske Pleso and Osrblie were watched by approximately one quarter of university students. More than one half of students was interested in Universiade news.

The role of the Universiade as a promotion tool with consequential increase of the visit rate was seen pessimistically in spite of the fact that previous research indicated positive impacts of this kind of event on the territory. This attitude could be connected with the unfavorable perception of the home country as an attractive tourist destination in general. Therefore, it is necessary to focus more intensively on young people as a target group in the promotion of Slovakia and its tourism supply in the future as suggest Čuka and Bernatík (2014), including the case of the events.

Research results showed passive attitude of Slovak university students towards the Winter Universiade 2015. Nevertheless, students' participation in the event (10 % of students) contributed to the increase of the territory visitation and to the increase in tourism incomes (in catering, transport and other services); in this way it influenced the short-term tourism development in destination.

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