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For a number of years, economists have questioned the aggregate economic value of mega sporting events, arguing that fiduciary benefits rarely materialize for host cities and/or nations. In response, governments have made stronger claims about social impacts derived from such events [e.g., Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, Olympic Games, etc.]. Applying social identity and social capital theories, we examined the influence of national identity on social capital and tested whether the 2010 FIFA World Cup positively influenced the national identity of South African residents. Residents ($N = 3769$) from five World Cup host cities in South Africa were sampled before and after the event, using a pre-experimental design consisting of a one-group pretest–posttest protocol (O–X–O). The results demonstrated that: (1) national identity was a statistically significant (albeit modest) predictor of social capital, and (2) the World Cup minimally influenced the varying components of resident national identity, both negative and positive.

Keywords: social identity; social capital; mega sporting event

1. Introduction

Over the last several decades, hosting mega sport events [e.g., Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, Olympic Games, etc.] has become highly competitive and very complex undertakings (Shoval, 2002). Despite the lofty financial costs for the host, many governments perceive mega-events as valuable conduits for increased nationalism due to the attention they garner (Burgan & Mules, 1992). This attention is also thought to have spillover (i.e., economic and social) effects for the host (Preuss, 2004). However, economists have questioned the aggregate economic value of mega sporting events (e.g., Baade & Matheson, 2002; Crompton, 1995), and a consensus is lacking with regard to the accrued benefits to the host city and/or nation.

Proponents tend to be optimistic about the tangible economic as well as the intangible image-related returns, yet opponents quickly emphasize the undesirable

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public debt and pejorative social costs associated with hosting (e.g., Baade & Matheson, 2002; Crompton, 1995). Additionally, most event valuation discussions have been limited to operational costs and have failed to include other costs associated with infrastructure and facility construction (Preuss, 2004). Once the event concludes, these structures (in many cases) offer little utility, fiduciary impact, or economic spark to the surrounding regions (Boukas, Ziakas, & Boustras, 2011). The presence of these 'white elephants' has made it increasingly difficult for politicians to tout the economic benefits from hosting the Olympic Games in particular.

In response, governments have made stronger claims about the social impacts derived from mega sport events. Specifically, the capacity of sport to enhance social identity at the community-level has been examined. For example, Heere et al. (2011) discussed the interplay between university, city, state, and team identity in a college context. The results of this study offered empirical support for the idea that sport can influence how individuals identify with certain communities. Such community identification is measured through social identity, which stems from certain values and emotional attachment associated with memberships in groups (Tajfel, 1981). Such groupings can range from geographic (e.g., city, state, nation, etc.), to demographic (e.g., ethnic, gender, age, etc.) and membership organizations (e.g., religion, work, education, etc.). The influence of sport on social identity, particularly in a national context, has received attention (e.g., Hargreaves & Ferrando, 1997; Houlihan, 1997; Kersting, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011). For example, South African President Jacob Zuma was quoted days before the World Cup of 2010 as saying, '[…] the explosion of national pride is a priceless benefit of the World Cup tournament. It's clear that millions of our people look upon this tournament with hope, pride and sense of belonging' (Bell, 2010). While pride may not directly equate to national identity (Huddy & Khatib, 2007), President Zuma nevertheless alluded to it as part of national identity and as a source for social identity – indicated by his 'sense of belonging' comment (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). These statements illustrate the perceived political importance of mega sport events as instruments to enhance national identity.

One of the most notable illustrations of how sport might enhance national identity was witnessed in South Africa, when former President Nelson Mandela used the 1995 Rugby World Cup as an instrument to bridge the social and political gap between the Afrikan, Black, and Colored populations. Traditionally, South African rugby was viewed as a symbol of Afrikaner oppression and Mandela's act of embracing the national rugby team (i.e., Springbok) was seen as a symbolic gesture of reconciliation (Van Der Merwe, 2007). Popularized in the film 'Invictus,' Mandela attended the final match proudly wearing a Springbok jersey. This act was a catalyst that assisted the former President to gain Afrikaner support and bridge political unity within South Africa; thereby creating a sense of national identity in the new 'Rainbow Nation' (Höglund & Sundberg 2008; Labuschagne, 2008; Nauright, 1997).

The South African case underpins the perception that during a mega sport event a heightened sense of social identity could be experienced (Chalip, 2006; Tomlinson & Young, 2006). For example, O'Brien and Chalip (2007) noted that a temporal 'liminoid' state, where the event is viewed as extraordinary or special can manifest as part of the event experience, which can raise awareness for the host community (O'Brien & Chalip, 2007). Yet, the relationship between mega events and

national identity has been largely based on anecdotal examples. For instance, Chalip (2006) argued that social identity quickly subsides after the event has concluded. His argument was supported by longitudinal data from the 2006 World Cup that indicated that while national pride in Germany significantly increased during the event (approximately 7%), this number dropped to 1% following the event (Allbus, 2006 as cited in Kersting, 2007). This begs the question that if a sense of national identity is indeed temporal, what is the overall value to the host nation? In instances such as the forgoing, national identity has been defined as an outcome rather than a means to an intended outcome. In addition, there is a little empirical evidence that a heightened sense of national identity provides positive (and moreover, lasting) outcomes for a nation. For this to occur, an increased sense of identity should lead to enhanced attitudes and/or increased involvement with society. As such, the concept of social capital could be regarded as a potential indicator of how national identity could materialize. Social capital measures the relationship between an individual and a community and is regarded as a precursor for the willingness of the individual to invest in their community (Woolcock, 2001, 2002).

For example, one of the expressed goals of hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup was to emulate Mandela's use of the 1995 Rugby tournament to advance the nation building mantra. However, Cornelissen (2008) noted that foreign policy objectives were among the more germane foci for the event. Despite this, South African scholars acknowledged a need to focus internally, by enhancing the sense of community experienced within the nation (Labuschagne, 2008; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011). One measure of connectedness that has received increased global attention, including its application in Africa, is social capital (Narayan & Cassidy, 2001). The concept and empirical evaluation of social capital was used in this study since it represents a long-term outcome potentially fostered by heightened national identity resulting from the FIFA World Cup (Misener & Mason, 2006).

Irrespective of the value of sport to increase national identity and potentially drive social capital, there is a flaw in the reasoning that an increased sense of national identity results from mega event hosting. A case in point is that support for the Springbok team during the 1995 Rugby World Cup was confused with support for organizing the event. Mandela's efforts to foster social unity only focused on the performance of the national team, not the event itself. It remains unclear whether social cohesion could have been achieved without the national team ultimately winning the tournament. Hargreaves and Ferrando (1997) supported this assertion noting that for the Barcelona Olympic Summer Games if '[...] gold medal success not occurred, the latent animosities between Catalonia and the rest of Spain might have broken out and resulted in a very different kind of ambience' (p. 74). This quote buttresses the importance of team success as a driver for national identity, in lieu of simply organizing and hosting an event.

In the summer of 2010, South Africa hosted the FIFA World Cup and, contrary to 1995, the country did not have the opportunity to capitalize on the success of their national team (i.e., Bafana Bafana). Without the confounding effect of success, this event provided a unique opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of hosting a mega sport event to enhance national identity. The South African example is a particularly salient one to explore national identity because of the multi-faceted racial, ethnic, and tribal groupings that comprise the country's population (Price, 1997), and divisions based on race and ethnicity still loom as one of the largest national challenges

(Labuschagne, 2008). In light of this issue, and the enormous financial investments that mega sport events require, examining the World Cup's influence on the national identity of South Africans makes an important contribution to the literature.

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, we examine national identity as a means to a society-wide (i.e., sociological) outcome, rather than as a psychological outcome in itself. The assumption is that an increase in national identity does not necessarily provide societal benefits, unless it translates into more direct attitudes toward society. National identity is a psychometric form of social identity, embedded in each individual (Ashmore et al., 2004). One could identify strongly with a nation, yet to what extent that translates to a beneficial societal value (e.g., community involvement or openness to diversity) remains unclear. To this end, we explore the influence of national identity on social capital in South Africa, following a similar discussion on this relationship in Ghana and Uganda by Narayan and Cassidy (2001). Pending on the potential influence of national identity on social capital, we examine whether hosting the FIFA World Cup increased South African national identity. Implicit to this assessment is a thorough understanding of national identity as a form of social identity and a formative source of social capital.

2. Literature review

2.1. Social identity theory

Identity comprises two primary components. First, individuals possess a personal (i.e., self) identity, which by comparing and contrasting certain personal characteristics enable individuals to separate themselves from others (e.g., Goldberg, 1992). Second, individuals possess a social identity derived from their associations with referent groups (Ashmore et al., 2004). Membership in these groups enables assimilation with 'like' individuals, as well as differentiation from those not sharing similar characteristics. Defined as '[. . .] that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from knowledge of his membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership' (Tajfel 1981, p. 255); social identity has been associated with physical and psychological well-being (Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zimmerman, 2003), academic achievement (Deaux et al., 2007; Eccles & Barber, 1999), interpersonal relationships (Ashmore et al., 2004), organizational commitment (Hogg & Terry, 2001), and civic engagement (Ashmore et al., 2004).

Each individual in society identifies with multiple groups in their lifetime, ranging from demographic categories (e.g., gender, race, age, education, etc.) and membership organizations (e.g., religion, political affiliation, universities, sports teams, etc.), to more specific social roles assumed within these settings (e.g., sister, parent, worker, friend, etc. (Deaux, Reid, Mizrahi, & Ethier, 1995). While some group identities are central to an individual's daily life (e.g., vocation, gender, etc.), others are more abstract and symbolic (e.g., nation, state, religion, etc.). These abstract social identities need constant reproduction in order to remind us that we are part of these particular groups (Billig, 1995). In the context of national identity, sport events, traditions, and rituals (such as raising a flag or singing a national anthem) play an instrumental role within this reproduction process and help individuals identify and engage with groups through interpersonal relationships

(Ashmore et al., 2004; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Additionally, sport teams and events provide outlets to experience belongingness to a larger group (e.g., nation). Sport is generally viewed as a powerful instrument for symbolism, providing a number of salient cues for individuals to connect with. Similar to research in other contexts, sport team social identity yields positive psychological benefits that allow people to connect with others in non-threatening ways (e.g., Dimmock, Grove, & Eklund, 2005; Heere & James, 2007a).

2.2. National identity: multi-dimensional perspectives

A variety of scholars have regarded national identity as a form of social identity (e.g., Billig, 1995; Gibson & Gouws, 2000; Huddy, 2001; Huddy & Khatib, 2007; Mummendey, Klink, & Brown, 2001; Transue, 2007). Our presence within a nation encompasses physical, legal, social, and emotional elements and is often so familiar to us, that we hardly notice it. As a consequence, it needs continual 'flagging' (Billig, 1995), a reminder that we are indeed part of an overall nation. Social identity theorists refer to this process as making an identity 'salient.'

Since social identity means different things to people, social psychologists have begun to explore the different processes assumed to comprise a social identity. For example, multi-dimensional models for social identity have been proposed (see Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999; Heere et al., 2011; Leach et al., 2008; Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, Halevy, & Eidelson, 2008), which has led to a consensus with respect to the multi-dimensionality of social identity (Ashmore et al., 2004). The social psychology work stands in contrast to the current work in political science, which has examined national identity through various one-dimensional constructs such as nationalism, national pride, and patriotism (Mummendey, Klink, & Brown, 2001).

For the current research, the multi-dimensional view of social identity allows for the integration of political constructs such as national pride (De Figueiredo & Elkins, 2003) and involvement (Terry & Hogg, 1996), since these constructs are reflected in similar constructs within social identity such as private evaluation, sense of interdependence with the group, and behavioral involvement (Heere et al., 2011). Yet, adopting a multi-dimensional view of social identity, instead of relying on more generic political science measures of nationalism (Huddy & Khatib, 2007; International Social Survey Programme: National Identity, 1995; Smith & Jarkko, 1998), allows scholars to explain more variance in hypothesized outcomes. This is especially important within the political science nexus and sport management discourse since national events (e.g., national holiday, political upheaval, sport events, etc.) influence specific dimensions of social identity, while leaving others unchanged. In particular, a multi-dimensional view of social identity is essential when attempting to predict the influence of other multi-dimensional constructs such as social capital.

2.3. Social capital

While social identity is a psychometric characteristic within individuals, it has been postulated that a strong social identity can lead to societal outcomes such as social capital (Narayan & Cassidy, 2001). Social capital is seen as an essential part of each

community, as it is this perceived capital that facilitates coordinated actions, reduces transaction costs between community members, and enables communities to be more effective in pursuit of their collective interests (Putnam, 2000). Various definitions of social capital exist, which (in the aggregate) indicate that the concept has both the power to unite and divide (Glanville & Bienenstock, 2009). Coleman (1988, 1990) suggested that relationship development, trust, and reciprocity can be harnessed to overcome disadvantages. Moreover, the author suggested that social capital is an important part of developing human capital (e.g., knowledge, skills, etc.), which promotes social mobility for the disadvantaged. Putnam (1995, 2000) posited social capital as a sense of collective identity built by participation in community-based groups. Although Putnam has been critiqued for his positive (and some say naive) conceptualization of the construct (Blackshaw & Long, 2005), the assertion that social capital is generated by, and has the ability to sustain, cohesion has gained the attention of governments and development agencies such as the World Bank (Narayan & Cassidy, 2001).

Huddy and Khatib (2007) suggested that social identification (e.g., nation, city, school, etc.) is followed by a willingness to act upon that identity, which results in social capital formation and community member benefits (Seippel, 2006). However, awareness of social capital is essential for understanding how social development manifests at the community level (Fukuyama, 2001). Thus, through the processes of 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital (Gittell & Vidal, 1998, p. 10), the strongest ties can be formed (Putnam, 2000). Such ties are often related to social roles, knowledge flow, problem solving (Ahuja, 2000; Granovetter, 1985), and relationships between individuals and organizations based on obligations and trust tend to foster complimentary resources such as support and knowledge transfer. As a result, these elements have the potential to yield social cohesion (Van Der Merwe 2000; Woolcock, 2001).

For the multiracial/ethnic society of South Africa, density is particularly important because it clarifies situations when different ethnic or racial groups interact, and whether or not they are becoming more dispersed or distant. The construct of density is dynamic, which is regulated by the forces of bonding and bridging. Whereas bonding refers to the social ties between group members, bridging refers to the social ties between social groups (Putnam, 2000). Both forces are central to social capital creation and the excess of one can have pejorative consequences on the other. For example, strong bonding can lead to conformity, exclusion of outsiders, anti-social activities, and the discouragement of members' involvement with other social groups, which reduces bridging possibilities. On the other hand, excess bridging leads to a lack of bonding, which leads to loneliness, isolation, and depression (Putnam, 2000). In the context of South Africa, apartheid (i.e., segregation enforced by the White South African government between 1948 and 1994) was marked by a complete lack of bridging. This created situations where the White populations' knowledge of ethnic minorities was extremely low and, therefore, easily manipulated (Adam, 2002; Worden, 2012).

During the years leading to political reconciliation, the strategy of the African National Congress (ANC) was to create bridges between racial and ethnic groups to assuage the White population's fear of ethnic minorities. Southall (2003) maintained that the '[…] national liberation struggle as waged by the ANC revolved around the construction of an ideology and practice of non-racialism' (p. 34). Since that time,

opportunities to bridge in the post-apartheid South Africa have increased, which bolsters the second characteristic of social capital – trust and reciprocity. Both concepts carry implications when considering people's willingness to invest in social relations (Glanville & Bienenstock, 2009). For example, an individual must trust that a particular favor will be returned and believe that the ability to reciprocate actually exists. This reciprocal relationship, however, is related to the level of resources present within the community, and individual access to resources provides the necessary motivation to invest in future social relations.

As the foregoing reviews of national identity and social capital demonstrate, both constructs are complex and often difficult to measure. And linking these two concepts requires valid and reliable instrumentation to holistically and comprehensively capture both constructs. Based on the study purpose and the review of the extant literature, two research questions were formulated to guide the empirical testing:

Research Question 1: Does the strength of national identity influence perceived social capital among South African residents as a result of hosting the World Cup?

Research Question 2: Can a mega sport event (i.e., FIFA World Cup) increase national identity among residents of a host nation?

3. Method

3.1. Study design

While the first research question could be examined through a cross-sectional multivariate regression analysis, we also conducted a quasi-experiment to test the second research question. Because of the magnitude of the FIFA World Cup, and its global media coverage, it was not possible to use a control group for the event manipulation. Therefore, a one-group pretest–posttest protocol (O–X–O) was employed. However, considering high unemployment rates and lack of communication modes (e.g., personal computers, home telephones, cell phones, etc.) available to South Africans, the logistics of capturing the same respondents in both the pre- and post-tests was deemed too difficult. Thus, a trend design was performed where two large South African resident samples completed the pre- and post-event questionnaires. This method corresponds with similarly valid resident studies on perceptions of mega events in the tourism literature (see Gursoy, Chi, Ai, & Chen, 2011). The first data collection commenced three months prior (March 2010) to the event, and the second was performed eight months (March 2011) after the event. The research team monitored the South African news to ensure no extraneous factors that could have caused a change in national identity or social capital occurred in the months leading up to the questionnaire deployment.

3.2. Instrumentation

3.2.1. National identity

In line with the multi-dimensional view of social identity, items used to measure the national identity of South Africans were adopted from the Group Identity Scale developed by Heere and James (2007b). The scale comprised six dimensions which

Table 1. Constructs and sample questionnaire items.

Construct	Sample item
Group identity[a,c]	
Private evaluation	I am proud to think of myself as part of my [*nation*].
Public evaluation	Overall, people hold a favorable opinion my [*nation*].
Interconnection to self	When someone criticizes my [*nation*], it feels like a personal insult.
Sense of interdependence	Being associated with my [*nation*] is important to my self-image.
Behavioral involvement	Changes impacting my [*nation*] will change my life.
Social capital[b,c]	
Collective action	Do you regularly attend local community events?
Trust and safety	Does your local area have a reputation for being a safe place?
Social connections	Have you visited a neighbor in the past week?
Tolerance of diversity	I enjoy living among people of different lifestyles?
Value of life	Do you value the society in which you live?

[a]1 'strongly disagree' to 7 'strongly agree.'
[b]1 'no, not at all' to 5 'yes, often/definitely.'
[c]*Group identity*: All identity constructs consisted of three items: social capital: $CA = 5$ items, $TS = 5$ items, $SoC = 5$ items, $TD = 3$ items, $VL = 3$ items.

explain how individuals identify with social groups (see Table 1). First, private evaluation captures how individuals feel about their membership in a group and overlaps with the one-dimensional view of national pride. Second, public evaluation refers to the perception of how outsiders feel about their group. This construct is similarly related to the concept of group status, and is most likely to increase since the World Cup was presented as a way to show to the world that 'South Africa has arrived' (Allafrica, 2010). Most likely, South Africans would feel that the successful hosting of the tournament would increase their world status, thereby increasing public evaluation scores. Third, interconnection of self with the group captures the extent to which an individual aligns with the group in general, and thinks of the group as part of him or herself, in particular. Fourth, sense of interdependence measures the extent to which an individual believes their own well-being is affected by the well-being of the group. Fifth, behavioral involvement captures the extent to which individuals are involved in activities related to the group. Finally, cognitive awareness explores what an individual perceives to know about a particular organization. Since its development, the instrument has been validated in a variety of countries and contexts and has been used to explain how people identify with teams, cities, universities, states, religions, and nations (e.g., Heere et al., 2011; Heere, James, Yoshida, & Scremin, 2011).

3.2.2. Social capital

To assess social capital at the community level, the scale developed by Onyx and Bullen (2000) was used as a starting point for this research. Onyx and Bullen proposed, tested, and validated (in an Australian setting) eight dimensions of social capital: (1) local community participation, (2) pro-activity in a social context, (3)

feelings of trust and safety, (4) neighborhood connections, (5) family and friend connections, (6) tolerance of diversity, (7) value of life, and (8) work connections. However, because varying forms of social capital are society-specific, adapting the instrumentation to specific contexts is a necessary component of valid measurement. As such, additional work related to social capital in developing nations was used to review the scale dimensions (e.g., Narayan & Cassidy, 2001; Thuy, Dwivedi, Rossi, Alavalapati, & Thapa, 2011) and careful consideration was given whether those constructs were relevant to South African residents and their living conditions. Ultimately, very few modifications were made to the original scale. While Onyx and Bullen (2000) proposed three separate dimensions to 'connections,' we collapsed those into one overall connection dimension. Additionally, we collapsed community participation and pro-activity into one overall 'collective action' dimension. Hence, five social capital dimensions, judged to be most relevant to the South African context (i.e., and used in similar research), were adapted for this study: (1) collective action (i.e., community participation), (2) trust and safety (i.e., trustworthiness and helpfulness), (3) social connections (i.e., friends, family, and community support), (4) tolerance of diversity (i.e., fairness and respect of others), and (5) value of life (i.e., personal value in the community). Cronbach's alpha scores for each of the five dimensions was above 0.8, suggesting that each of the dimensions still possessed internal consistency (Lance, Butts, & Michels, 2006). The final section of the questionnaire contained demographic items (e.g., age, race, gender, length of residency, income, etc.). All constructs and sample items are located in Table 1.

3.2.3. Data collection

Data collection was conducted among residents of five of the nine cities hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup (i.e., Johannesburg, Nelspruit, Polokwane, Pretoria, and Rustenburg). These cities represent the match locations in the northern region of the nation and are comprising predominately Black and Colored South African residents. In order to reach the target sample of $n = 400$ responses for each site, a trained team of 28 fieldworkers and five field coordinators administered the questionnaires at several major areas located throughout each respective city (e.g., match viewing locations, central business districts, shopping centers, public recreation areas, parks, restaurants, etc.). In addition to the high traffic areas, the data collection team also entered selected township areas (e.g., Alexandra, Mamelodi, Kasalami, etc.) to encapsulate a representative sample of the given city. The general method of spatial location sampling was used in high traffic areas for each city in an attempt to intercept a representative sample of city residents. If a site had multiple entry and exit points, the field workers rotated to include all possible entries and exits.

A stratified random sample of residents by age, gender, area of the city, and race was identified. At each respective location, every fifth person or group was targeted and one adult from each travel party was intercepted (alternating male and female) and asked to complete a questionnaire. A screening question was posed to each potential respondent to assess if they were a resident of the respective city. If so, the individual was requested to complete the questionnaire, which took approximately 20 minutes. In the event the respondent was unable to read or write, the fieldworker assisted by using an oral interview method (Nyaupane & Thapa, 2004;

Singleton & Straits, 2002). Data collection began in the late morning and continued until the late afternoon at each respective location. Due to incomplete responses and missing data points, $n = 1749$ were retained for testing in the pre-test and $n = 2020$ in the post-test ($N = 3769$). Table 2 provides a demographic comparison for both pre- and post-event samples. Both samples were compared to the South African census data (Statistics South Africa, 2010) and were judged to represent the South African population; yet female, Colored, and more highly educated respondents were slightly under-represented.

3.2.4. Sample

The pre-test sample comprises $n = 1749$ residents with a mean age of 29.69 years ($SD = 8.90$). Over half were male ($n = 999$) and 42% were female ($n = 739$). The majority identified their race as Black ($n = 1449$; 82%), followed by White ($n = 178$; 10%). Education levels ranged from secondary school ($n = 650$; 37%), a diploma ($n = 449$; 25%) to an honors degree ($n = 53$; 3%). The post-test sample comprises $n = 2020$ with a mean age of 30.11 years ($SD = 9.41$). Just over 50% were male ($n = 1087$) and 45% were female ($n = 903$). Nearly 80% were Black ($n = 1599$) and 12% were White ($n = 237$). Education levels were similar to the pre-test sample

Table 2. Demographic information for pre- and post-event respondents.

Sample characteristic	Pre-event ($n = 1749$)	Post-event ($n = 2020$)	SA census data[a]
Age	29.69 ($SD = 8.90$)	30.11 ($SD = 9.41$)	32.60
Years at current residence	15.49 ($SD = 11.68$)	13.23 ($SD = 10.39$)	–[b]
Persons in household	4.42 ($SD = 2.18$)	4.89 ($SD = 2.20$)	–[b]
Gender			
Male	999 (57%)	1087 (54%)	23,868,700 (48%)
Female	739 (42%)	903 (45%)	25,451,800 (51%)
Race			
Black	1449 (82%)	1599 (79%)	39,136,200 (79.3%)
White	178 (10%)	237 (12%)	4,472,100 (9%)
colored	78 (4%)	71 (4%)	4,433,100 (9%)
Asian	24 (1%)	32 (2%)	1,279,100 (2.6%)
Education			
Secondary	650 (37%)	663 (33%)	217,357 (39.4%)
Diploma	449 (25%)	617 (31%)	109,697 (32.8%)
Certificate	260 (15%)	283 (14%)	131,035 (39.1%)
Degree	192 (11%)	274 (13.5%)	93,356 (27.9%)
Honors	53 (3%)	47 (2%)	–[b]
Data collection cities			
Johannesburg	373	438	1,480,530
Nelspruit	347	282	94,714
Polokwane	315	362	148,950
Pretoria	349	526	1,104,479
Rustenburg	365	412	104,537

Note: SD values in parentheses. All column values do not equal the total N due to missing data in each category. Due to a high number of incomplete responses, income data were not reported.
[a]Census data acquired from http://www.statssa.gov.za/.
[b]These data could not be located in the SA census.

with 33% reporting a secondary education ($n = 663$) and 2% had earned an honor's degree ($n = 47$).

3.2.5. Analytic technique

Two separate analyses were performed based on the research questions. First, to examine the influence of national identity on social capital, multivariate regression analysis with the pre-event data was performed. This analysis demonstrated the variance in social capital explained by national identity. Further, the analysis showed which identity constructs significantly influenced a particular dimension of social capital. Second, a 2 (pre–post) $\times 7$ (national identity, race, gender) multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) procedure was performed to assess whether the World Cup influenced national identity level among respondents. Tests of between-subject effects determined the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The number of respondents for pre- and post-event varied slightly because of the patterns of missing data. Consequently, Pillai–Bartlett trace was used because this omnibus test is the most robust to violations of assumptions when group sizes are relatively equal. Since large samples can lead into the Type I error (i.e., false positives), the recommendation of Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2005) was followed. The authors suggested examining the effect sizes for practical significance. Cohen (1988) noted that a value of $\eta^2 = 0.01$ is a small effect, a value of $\eta^2 = 0.06$ is a moderate effect, and a value of $\eta^2 = 0.14$ is considered a large effect.

4. Results

4.1. RQ1: influence of national identity on social capital

Before conducting the main analyses, preliminary data checks confirmed no serious violations of normality or linearity. However, a visual inspection of the histograms showed a negatively skewed distribution of the data (i.e., more higher than lower values). According to West, Finch, and Curran (1995), skewness values should not exceed 2 and kurtosis values should not exceed 7. While the left tail was longer in the data distribution, the skewness and kurtosis values for each variable were still in the appropriate range. Durbin–Watson statistics ranged from 1.234 to 2.127 informing us that the assumption of independent errors in the regression model was met. Following the preliminary tests, item and construct diagnostics were calculated, the results of which are displayed in Tables 3 and 4.

A significant coefficient for the overall multivariate regression model ($\beta = 0.432$, $p < 0.001$) indicated the model's robustness. With regards to the specific influences, national identity significantly predicted all the social capital dimensions – *collective action*, *trust and safety*, *tolerance of diversity*, *social connections*, and *value of life* (see Table 5). The results show that while national identity warrants inclusion in the social capital discussion, the constructs' ability to provide practical explanations to changes in social capital are minimal. To probe the results further, the R^2 values helped explain variation among the social capital dimensions. In the aggregate, national identity explained approximately 11% of the variance for each of the social capital dimensions. For two dimensions (i.e., *trust and safety*, *tolerance of diversity*), all five national identity dimensions were significant. Conversely, for the other

Table 3. Pre-event descriptive statistics for the study constructs national identity and social capital.

Construct	α	M (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Private evaluation[ID]	0.77	6.01 (1.12)	1.00										
2. Public evaluation[ID]	0.71	5.23 (1.32)	0.453*	1.00									
3. Interconnection with[ID]	0.76	5.67 (1.33)	0.556*	0.536*	1.00								
4. Sense of interdependence[ID]	0.78	5.68 (1.29)	0.458*	0.444*	0.638*	1.00							
5. Behavioral involvement[ID]	0.78	5.25 (1.48)	0.351*	0.512*	0.555*	0.504*	1.00						
6. Cognitive awareness[ID]	0.74	5.39 (1.27)	0.408*	0.502*	0.551*	0.512*	0.583*	1.00					
7. Collective action[SC]	0.90	2.87 (1.24)	0.092*	0.154*	0.161*	0.160*	0.263*	0.181*	1.00				
8. Trust and safety[SC]	0.75	3.09 (1.01)	0.154*	0.299*	0.222*	0.189*	0.218*	0.168*	0.438*	1.00			
9. Social connections[SC]	0.75	3.66 (.947)	0.199*	0.249*	0.268*	0.237*	0.216*	0.199*	0.316*	0.537*	1.00		
10. Tolerance of diversity[SC]	0.70	3.92 (.902)	0.252*	0.228*	0.255*	0.251*	0.154*	0.172*	0.194*	0.372*	0.498*	1.00	
11. Value of life[SC]	0.76	3.65 (1.00)	0.220*	0.281*	0.258*	0.232*	0.234*	0.177*	0.247*	0.442*	0.480*	0.595*	1.00

Note: *$p < 0.001$.

Table 4.   Post-event descriptive statistics for the study constructs national identity and social capital.

Construct	α	M (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Private evaluation[(ID)]	0.84	6.17 (0.976)	1.00										
2. Public evaluation[(ID)]	0.80	5.49 (1.24)	0.469*	1.00									
3. Interconnection with group[(ID)]	0.79	5.64 (1.25)	0.590*	0.522*	1.00								
4. Sense of interdependence[(ID)]	0.86	5.46 (1.40)	0.443*	0.415*	0.637*	1.00							
5. Behavioral involvement[(ID)]	0.83	5.16 (1.51)	0.403*	0.503*	0.585*	0.509*	1.00						
6. Cognitive awareness[(ID)]	0.73	5.40 (1.27)	0.215*	0.198*	0.175*	0.142*	0.220*	1.00					
7. Collective action[(SC)]	0.91	2.87 (1.24)	0.157*	0.278*	0.241*	0.222*	0.347*	0.085*	1.00				
8. Trust and safety[(SC)]	0.75	3.09 (1.01)	0.169*	0.309*	0.249*	0.217*	0.273*	0.089*	0.494*	1.00			
9. Social connections[(SC)]	0.76	3.54 (1.08)	0.200*	0.248*	0.269*	0.227*	0.262*	0.100*	0.372*	0.546*	1.00		
10. Tolerance of diversity[(SC)]	0.82	3.92 (0.902)	0.258*	0.178*	0.243*	0.255*	0.168*	0.092*	0.244*	0.337*	0.409*	1.00	
11. Value of life[(SC)]	0.71	3.65 (1.00)	0.222*	0.250*	0.295*	0.277*	0.253*	0.127*	0.317*	0.469*	0.456*	0.527*	1.00

Note: *$p < 0.001$.

Table 5. Multivariate multiple regression results for the influence of national identity on social capital.

National identity	Social capital				
	Collective action ($R^2 = 0.110$)	Trust and safety ($R^2 = 0.112$)	Tolerance of diversity ($R^2 = 0.113$)	Social connections ($R^2 = 0.106$)	Value of life ($R^2 = 0.107$)
Public evaluation	0.068***	0.098***	0.042*	0.053**	0.095***
Private evaluation	−0.027	−0.045*	0.011***	0.053*	0.011
Sense of interconnection	0.066**	0.087***	0.091***	0.092***	0.107***
Interdependence of self	0.062**	0.080***	0.122***	0.055***	0.011***
Behavioral involvement	0.192***	0.157***	−0.064**	0.163***	0.067*
Cognitive awareness	0.068***	0.069***	0.070***	0.009	0.061*

Note: Values are standardized β's: *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

dimensions all but one identity dimension significantly influenced social capital. *Private evaluation* was not a significant predictor for either *collective action* or *value of life,* and *cognitive awareness* did not explain any variance in *social connections.*

4.2. RQ2: the effect of the World Cup on national identity

For the MANCOVA, since the difference between pre- and post-event group size was less than the ratio of 1:1.5, no attenuation meaures to achieve multivariate normality were required. In addition, based on the *Central Limit Theorem* (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) the sample distribution of variables had at least 20 degrees of freedom, further confirming normality. The MANCOVA procedure for national identity indicated that the interaction effect (pre–post × NAT ID) was significant (Pillai's Trace = 0.040, $F = 21.787$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 4\%$). According to Cohen (1988), the effect size was small indicating that national identity was only marginally influenced by the event, and each of the separate national identity dimensions responded differently to the experimental manipulation of the event. To control for this, the demographic covariates of race and gender which influenced the results were tested. While five statistically significant differences were found for both race and gender, the ability of the variables to explain practical significance was again not achieved (see Table 6). Both *private* and *public evaluation* increased significantly after the FIFA World Cup, while *interconnection with the group* and *cognitive awareness* remained unchanged. *Sense of interdependence* and *behavioral involvement* both decreased following the World Cup (Table 7).

5. Discussion

Despite scant empirical evidence for its value, both politicians and scholars have attached much importance to the idea of national identity (Waitt, 2003). In particular, government officials have anecdotally assumed that a mega sport event will positively influence how residents identify with their nation, and consequently,

Table 6. Multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) for pre–post $\times$ NAT ID $\times$ covariates.

Source	Dependent variable	F-Value	p-Value	η^2
Race	Public evaluation	23.170	0.000	0.008
	Private evaluation	0.002	0.962	0.000
	Sense of interconnection	0.409	0.522	0.000
	Interdependence of self	28.060	0.000	0.009
	Behavioral involvement	4.883	0.027	0.002
	Cognitive awareness	7.410	0.007	0.003
Gender	Public evaluation	29.109	0.000	0.010
	Private evaluation	0.011	0.916	0.000
	Sense of interconnection	3.031	0.082	0.001
	Interdependence of self	15.329	0.000	0.005
	Behavioral involvement	21.753	0.000	0.007
	Cognitive awareness	1.001	0.317	0.000

Note. $\eta^2 = 0.01$ (small effect), $\eta^2 = 0.06$ (moderate effect), and $\eta^2 = 0.14$ (large effect).

Table 7. Multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) for pre–post $\times$ national identity.

National identity	Pre-event Mean	Post-event Mean	Pre $\rightarrow$ Post p-Value	Pre $\rightarrow$ Post F-Value	Pre $\rightarrow$ Post[a] η^2
Public evaluation	6.02	6.17	0.000$^+$	32.122	0.010
Private evaluation	5.21	5.49	0.000$^+$	16.687	0.005
Interconnection with group	5.66	5.64	0.484	0.489	*ns*
Sense of interdependence	5.65	5.46	0.000$^-$	19.735	0.006
Behavioral involvement	5.20	5.16	0.045$^-$	12.908	0.001
Cognitive awareness	5.38	5.40	0.896	0.017	*ns*

Note: $^+$indicates a positive and significant change. $^-$indicates a negative and significant change.
[a]$\eta^2 = 0.01$ (small effect), $\eta^2 = 0.06$ (moderate effect), and $\eta^2 = 0.14$ (large effect).

the perception of social capital within their nation. Because mega sport events are often national in scope and international in stage, the politicians have claimed that national identity should increase, along with social capital outcomes (Hargreaves & Ferrando, 1997; Houlihan, 1997). Thus far, however, little empirical support has been forwarded in support of these hypothesized effects. This study sheds new light on the value of national identity by relating it to social capital. The results contained herein demonstrate that although national identity significantly influenced social capital, this influence was marginal since $\sim$10–11% of the variance was explained among the social capital dimensions. Previous research found evidence of a positive and significant relationship between national identity and voter turnout, while another study found a negative influence on tax support, indicating a complex relationship between social identity and social capital (see Huddy & Khatib, 2007; Transue, 2007). The results of this study confirm that a complex relationship between national identity and social capital exists. Specifically, even if national identity had been positively influenced by hosting the World Cup, there would have been little trickledown effect on social capital.

The results also confirm that the focus of government on national identity as a means to increase unity might be ineffective and only marginally influential with regards to safety, community action, and value of life. Of particular note was that measuring national identity multi-dimensionally revealed that one's *private evaluation* was the least explanatory of social capital variance, and was statistically insignificant in the case of *collective action* and *value of life*. These results show that although people might be content with their group, it does not necessarily translate into urgency to act on behalf of the group or get involved with group functions. If this is truly the case, evoking a sense of pride, which overlaps with the overall notion of private evaluation among residents (Ashmore et al., 2004), might be counter-productive to social capital formation. This illustrates the political utility of using mega sport events to increase residents' nation pride might be futile since it results in little effect on social capital.

The influence of the World Cup on South African national identity places further doubt on the value of mega events to create unity. Based on the results, the World Cup did little to bolster national identity in South Africa. Of the six identity dimensions, only *private* and *public evaluation* increased between the pre- and post-event testing, while the others remained the same or even marginally decreased. These findings show that while South Africans feel more positive about their nation and believe other nations look upon them more favorably, this positive evaluation was not accompanied by a stronger relationship between the individual and the overall South African group. As well, eight months after the event, residents did not feel more interconnected with or aware of their nation. It should be noted that immediately following the World Cup, a period of political unrest was witnessed in the nation, which included public demonstrations and worker strikes. While this unrest was independent of the World Cup, it could indicate a pejorative ripple effect from the event, which has been known to occur in nations that host large scale events. Ritchie (1999) proposed that populations experience anti-climax effects, due to the lack of tangible mega event outcomes that were promised to emerge. Legacy research measuring resident attitudes captured several months after the event show decreases in perceived event-related benefits and a general sense of disappointment that the anticipated economic benefits had not materialized (Chalip, 2006; Kim, Gurosy, & Lee, 2006). Similarly, Waitt (2003) speculated whether an increase in feelings of pride, community spirit, and increased Australianess among Sydney residents during the 2000 Olympic Summer Games would have lasted following the event.

Another set of results showed that *behavioral involvement* and *sense of interdependence* significantly decreased following the event. Irrespective of this significant relationship, we are nevertheless cautious in attaching value to this finding. In retrospect, the pre-event sample may have been influenced by the preparation and excitement leading up to the event. As the FIFA World Cup requires a substantial amount of preparation time, the respondents might have been temporarily more involved in their respective communities, thereby yielding artificially inflated *behavioral involvement* and *sense of interdependence* scores. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2011) reflected on the mood in South Africa before and during the event. The author noted that while some residents questioned the benefits of the World Cup, there was a sense of excitement and patriotism in South Africa, which was enhanced by public gatherings called 'Football Fridays.'

As such, the post-event scores might not necessarily indicate a significant decrease but rather a return to the baseline for the residents. This result warrants further testing (i.e., perhaps at future World Cup sites) to see precisely how long this heightened involvement was maintained and what that ultimately means for social capital formation. In sum, the examination of these constructs signals that mega sport events might positively affect how people evaluate their nation, yet minimally impact the psychological relationship between the individuals and the group, and does not alter behavior toward the group.

The analyses in this study lead to several points with important implications for understanding national identity and social capital. For example, because of the significant (albeit minor) influence of national identity on social capital, government policies and initiatives that seek to increase national identity, and consequently social capital, should be critically evaluated. Hosting a mega sport event provides a significant case in point for this assertion. Over the last several decades, mega sport events have been regarded as powerful governmental instruments to increase national identity and social cohesion among residents of a host nation. As such, billions of dollars are typically earmarked to successfully bid for and host these events (Preuss, 2004; Shoval, 2002). The results presented herein illustrate the mild folly in this assertion.

As this study was the first to evaluate the influence of a mega sport event on national identity and social capital through a pre-post event design, the findings should be interpreted carefully and future research is warranted to validate the South African results. While Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2011) described the sentiment in South Africa as '[. . .] an invigorated national spirit and patriotism' (p. 285), the author noted that the outbreaks of xenophobia and public sector strikes immediately following the World Cup may have dampened the Pan Africanist spirit engendered by the tournament. Yet, overwhelmingly, the author remained optimistic about the '[. . .] emotional gains' (p. 292) of hosting the event. That said, however, our findings do not support this 'emotional gain' hypothesis, which is largely anecdotal. As Ritchie (1999), Chalip (2006), and others have noted, it is likely that seven months after the event the heightened emotions noted in the lead up to and during the World Cup had dissipated. Of course, without a control group, we cannot isolate any of these intervening variables and as such, we acknowledge that certain events may have impacted our results in unknown ways. Ultimately, our research questions rest on the idea that the World Cup caused changes to national identity and social capital, which is certainly a confident assumption when considering the magnitude of the tournament. In terms of delimitations, the logistics of data collection in a developing country necessitated the use of a trend study (i.e., different respondents) rather than a panel study. Based on this, we can only assume the respondents had similar values and attitudes at both data collection points and that any change is an outcome of the World Cup, rather than sub-sample differences. However, working with two large samples in a field experiment of this type, which when compared pre and post and to the South African census data are similar, we are confident that our sample demographics are representative of the wider South African population. Finally, we were wholly dependent on the cooperation of a South Africa University for data collection. As such, we were limited to the Northern World Cup host cities. While this might be seen a shortcoming of the study, it is reasonable to assume that the population in these cities responded similarly to the event. No data were collected

from those residents outside the World Cup host cities. However, these populations might even have been more negative about the event, as they did not receive a direct exposure to the event itself.

6. Conclusion

In the context of South Africa, the government invested over US $6.4 billion to prepare and host the FIFA World Cup, and there have been mixed reports about the value and return on investment (Daily Market, 2010). Our results provide empirical evidence to fuel the growing skepticism about the ability of mega sporting events to generate long-term social benefits (Chalip, 2006). Especially if we consider the opportunity costs associated with such an event. According to Cottle (2010) South Africa could have built 476,180 reconstruction and development houses for 2.4 million South Africans. In light of this and the fact that 69% of South Africans live in poverty (Cottle, 2010) makes it difficult to justify the investment in the World Cup. We are not suggesting, however, that the World Cup was entirely without value. Since this was the first tournament hosted by an African nation with significant poverty, health, and safety issues (Lepp & Gibson, 2011), the international prestige gained through successfully delivering the event should not be underestimated. The increased public evaluation (and indirectly, private evaluation) among South African residents provided evidence of this importance. Future research should address the influence of these events on the international relations of the nation, both politically and economically.

From a national perspective, relating the impact of the World Cup on national identity, the event had a marginal effect on South African residents. The findings suggest that from a social perspective, governments should more critically evaluate their potential investment in large-scale mega sport events. Alternatively, governments should seek other instruments, perhaps with a national rather than international flavor, that could increase both national identity and social capital at a much lower economic cost. Heere et al. (2012) suggested that in 2002, the relationship between Japan and South Korea did not improve because of the co-hosting of the World Cup 2002, but because of the success of the Korean football team. In that particular situation, it appeared that a successful performance of a sport team was a much stronger catalyst for social change than the organization of an event. Similar, it might be that the increased unity among South African residents after the 1995 Rugby World Cup (Van Der Merwe, 2007) was not caused by organizing the event, but by the victory of the South African rugby team. This would be in line with the work of Hargreaves and Ferrando (1997) regarding the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. Based on these examples, governments who seek to increase national identity through sport might be well advised to invest in the success of their teams, rather than hosting an extremely expensive one-time event.

In sum, while the conditions in South Africa may have been favorable for FIFA to demonstrate if the event could impart social change and enhanced national identity, the results illustrate that the conditions might also be barriers that are not easily overcome through sport. Labuschagne (2008) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2011) noted that even the sense of unity garnered from the 1995 Rugby World Cup Springbok performance only lasted about two years since the racial and economic divisions in South Africa were too deep. It will be interesting to see if similar findings

are associated with the 2016 FIFA World Cup in Brazil, which is another emerging economy with similarly poor economic and social conditions.

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