

## **Unveiling the unseen: Exploring limited awareness of the Buenos Aires 2018 Youth Olympic Games from a sport social work perspective**

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Sport social work, a burgeoning field at the intersection of sports and social work, plays a crucial role in addressing various challenges within the sports community and promoting athlete well-being. Within this context, this study aims to investigate the level of awareness and engagement with the Buenos Aires 2018 Youth Olympic Games (YOG) among local residents and explores its implications for sport social work practice. In this study, a cross-sectional survey was administered to 140 adult residents of Buenos Aires during the 2018 YOG. The survey instrument consisted of a questionnaire that captured extensive demographic information, assessed YOG awareness and consumption, and gauged respondents' familiarity with and consumption of the Olympic Games. The study revealed several significant findings. Significant gender-based disparities emerged in the intention to attend Youth Olympic Games (YOG) events, with males ( $M = 4.10$ ) exhibiting a stronger inclination compared to females ( $M = 3.15$ ) ( $p = .020$ ). Furthermore, participants lacking prior youth sport engagement demonstrated higher awareness of the YOG and expressed a greater intent to attend. A noteworthy difference in YOG event attendance emerged concerning respondents' athletic backgrounds, with recreational athletes ( $M = 4.39$ ) displaying a heightened likelihood of attending events in person compared to competitive athletes ( $M = 2.76$ ) ( $p = .003$ ). Within the realm of sport social work, this study illuminates the multifaceted challenges faced by the YOG in attaining local public awareness and active engagement. It underscores the essential role of sport social workers as key agents poised to confront these challenges through strategic interventions and dedicated advocacy efforts. Moreover, it emphasizes the significance of cultivating robust community partnerships, aimed not only at fostering athlete well-being but also enhancing overall community functioning.