FACTORS PREDICTING COMMUNITY SUPPORT: THE CASE OF A SOUTH AFRICAN ARTS FESTIVAL

I. LOOTS
Socio-Economic impacts of Tourism, School for Business Management, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus
ingemari.loots@nwu.ac.za

SURIA ELLIS
PhD, Statistical Consultation Services, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus
10188908@nwu.ac.za

ELMARIE SLABBERT
PhD Tourism Management, Socio-Economic impacts of Tourism, School for Business Management
North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus
elmarie.slabbert@nwu.ac.za

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ABSTRACT

Events are one of the fastest growing tourism attractions in South Africa. This has various implications for the role players involved in hosting the event, especially the community. It is important to obtain the support and loyalty of residents so that potential conflicts can be avoided. However, residents are not always involved in the planning and management of the event, which raises questions about the real benefits they receive. It is therefore the aim of this research to determine the factors predicting community support in the case of a South African arts festival. A survey was done in 2007 at the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival (KKNK), which is one of the largest arts festivals in the country. A stratified random sampling procedure was followed in the community of Oudtshoorn, and 279 questionnaires were completed by residents. Structural equation modelling was done, based on the study of Gursoy and Kendall (2006), to explore the factors and identify its influence on support for the event. It was found that community attachment, costs and benefits perceived were the most important factors predicting community support for the festival, which differs from the results of previous studies. In the case of this study, ecocentric attitudes and issues of community concern did not influence the level of community support the event was given.

KEYWORDS

Community Support, Arts Festivals, Residents, Social Impact, Major Event, Mega Event.

RESUMO

Os eventos são uma das atrações turísticas que mais crescem na África do Sul. Isto tem várias implicações para os envolvidos na organização do evento, especialmente a comunidade. É importante obter o apoio e lealdade dos moradores para que os conflitos potenciais possam ser evitados. No entanto, os moradores não estão sempre envolvidos no planeamento e gestão do evento, o que levanta questões sobre os benefícios reais que recebem. É, portanto, o objetivo desta pesquisa determinar os fatores preditores do apoio da comunidade, no caso de um festival de artes sul-africano. Um inquérito foi aplicado em 2007, no Festival Nacional de Artes Klein Karoo (KKNK), que é um dos maiores no país. Um processo de amostragem aleatória estratificada foi seguido na comunidade de Oudtshoorn, e os questionários foram respondidos por 279 habitantes. Foi feita uma modelagem de equações estruturais com base no estudo de Gursoy e Kendall (2006), para explorar os fatores e identificar a sua influência sobre o apoio ao evento. Verificou-se que a ligação à comunidade assim como os custos e benefícios percebidos foram os fatores mais importantes prevendo o apoio da comunidade para o festival, o que difere dos resultados de estudos anteriores. No caso deste estudo, as atitudes ecocêntrica e questões de preocupação da comunidade não influenciaram o nível de apoio da comunidade ao evento.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Apoio da Comunidade, Festivais de Arte, Moradores, Impacto Social, Mega Eventos.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

In recent years the growth of festivals and events in numbers, diversity and popularity has been enormous (Crompton & McKay, 1997: 429; Getz, 1997: 22). Numerous communities developed or have been actively developing new festivals and events as leisure and cultural pursuits (such as the KKNK) for residents, as well as for economic and community development benefits (Getz, 1993: 585). Events are likely to stimulate both positive and negative impacts in several spheres: economic, tourism/commercial, physical, socio-cultural, psychological, and political (Delamere, 2001: 25, Gursoy & Kendall, 2006: 608). On a positive note, festivals and special events play a significant role in the lives of communities because they provide important activities and spending outlets for locals and visitors, as well as enhance the image of local communities (Getz, 1993: 587).Delamere (2001: 26) points out that festivals possess the ability to shape the image of a community; therefore the relationship between the festival and its host community bears closer scrutiny. As already indicated in 1993, the success of festivals and special events is more dependent upon the enthusiasm of the local community and event organisers than upon unique, natural or built attractions (Getz, 1993: 583). Many events are likely to have long-term positive consequences, such as economic benefits in the form of tax revenues, job opportunities and additional sources of income. Events may also have a lasting effect on tourism regarding the local community, providing opportunities for increased national and international publicity as well as recognition. Improvement of quality of life may occur, and positive impacts may also be the reason for attracting a large amount of attention to the locality (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006: 608; Haley, Snaith & Miller, 2005: 649).

On a negative note, Saayman (2000: 135) mentioned that stereotyping of the host and guest; xenophobia; social pollution; commodification and exploitation of culture and traditional ways of life; threats to traditional family life in host communities; prostitution and conflicts can influence the support of the host community regarding tourism. Gursoy and Kendall (2006: 609) stated that price inflation and increases in local taxes to finance the facilities required to host the event may have a negative impact on the host community. Traffic congestion, increased crime, damage to the image of the host community, poor facilities, vandalism, traffic problems, noise and pollution may also be negative impacts (Haley et al., 2005: 649).

Since community involvement in planning is a relatively recent phenomenon, it is to be expected that research regarding the support of local communities for hosting these events is quite limited (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006: 604). Delamere (2001: 25) also emphasises the fact that relatively few studies have approached the identification of resident attitudes based upon existing social-psychological models of attitudes, with a view to understand the underlying values and beliefs upon which the attitudes are based. This is especially the case in South Africa.

With this in mind, various theories have been developed, focusing on the impact of tourism development on host communities. However, applicable to this study is the social exchange theory which posits that residents are likely to support events as long as they believe the expected benefits of development will exceed the expected costs (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006: 608). It is also stated that social exchange theory ideas are implied in research as it is assumed that individuals are likely to participate in an exchange if they believe they are likely to gain benefits without incurring unacceptable costs.

Gursoy and Kendall (2006: 603) stated that community support for festivals is affected directly and/or indirectly by the following aspects: the level of community concern, ecocentric values, community attachment, perceived benefits, and perceived costs. This is supported by the social exchange theory according to which the potential costs and benefits influence the stakeholder perceptions of the event. The greater the potential benefits of the event, the more positive the community will be and vice versa. However, perceptions of residents regarding impacts are not mutually exclusive. A change in perceptions of one type of impact is likely to influence the perceptions of other types of impacts. This suggests that if people perceive benefits to be more important than costs, the perceptions of benefits are likely to

influence the perceptions of costs (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006: 610).

According to McCool and Martin (1994: 29), community attachment can be defined as the extent and pattern of social participation and integration with the community, and sentiment or affect towards the community, and it has been found that attachment influences perceptions of impacts. However, previous studies reported mixed results regarding the influence of community attachment. Um and Crompton (1987), as cited by Gursoy and Kendall (2006: 610), suggest a negative relationship between community attachment and the perceived impacts. Gursoy and Kendall (2006: 610) argue that 'attached' residents are likely to form positive perceptions of the economic and social impacts. It has also been found that community attachment has a significant influence on perceived concerns. The community will be more attached to a specific event if there is a positive connotation linked to the event. Researchers have measured community attachment in several ways and in past research have used length of residence as a measure of community attachment (McCool & Martin, 1994: 30; Fredline & Faulkner, 2000: 764).

Gursoy and Kendall (2006: 610) mentioned community concern as another factor likely to influence support. These concerns include the environment, schools, crime, recreation, culture, economic development, and roads/transport in the community. These factors have been found to influence perceptions of the potential costs and benefits and their support for venue development.

Ecocentrism can be defined as an individual's orientation to sound environmental practices. Studies show that the level of ecocentric attitudes significantly affects host community reaction and their perceptions of impacts. A negative relationship between ecocentric attitudes and perceived impact factors and a non-significant relationship between support and ecocentric values was reported. It has been argued that the positive relationship between ecocentric values and support is most likely attributable to the type of development used to measure support (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006: 611; Gursoy, Jurowski & Uysal, 2001: 95).

As already indicated in the social exchange theory, it is assumed that individuals are likely to participate in an exchange if they believe they are likely to gain benefits without incurring unacceptable costs (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006: 606; Haley et al., 2005: 649; Andereck, Valentine, Knopf & Vogt, 2005: 1058). Various studies have been done focusing on local residents' support for tourism development (Garrod & Fyall, 1998; Gursoy, Jurowski & Uysal, 2001; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Jurowski, Uysal & Williams, 1997; Chen, 2001).

However, most of these studies have been conducted internationally and focused on permanent tourism products and not temporary products such as festivals. With South Africa being a culturally diverse country and events being presented in communities with different cultural groups, the importance of this study is highlighted. Support for the festival can decrease if all groups are not included and catered for during the festival. The community is needed in the development of the festival, and with the general decrease in ticket sales of this festival during the last few years, the support of the community becomes even more important (Erasmus, Slabbert, Saayman, Saayman & Oberholzer, 2010:2, 70). Identification of the factors influencing community support can assist the festival planners in the planning and marketing strategies of the festival as local support and involvement are likely to increase the longevity of positive impacts on the local community.

2. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative survey was done by means of a survey. The questionnaire was based on two kinds. Firstly, the social impact measuring instrument was used as originally developed by Fredline, Jago and Deery (2003). It was designed using statements from previous event and tourism literature as well as additional information from social capital literature. However, given the nature and structure of the festival, the questionnaire was slightly adapted to serve the needs of this event. The main dependent variables (residents' perceptions of the impacts of events) were measured by using a Likert scale for 45 impact statements. These statements referred to the economic, social and environmental impacts of the festival, in relation to which respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement on a 4-point Likert scale.

Secondly, support of the festival was partially based on the questionnaire developed by Gursoy and Kendall (2006) and partially on data gathered in accordance with the literature study. Support factors such as ecocentric values, community attachment, perceived benefits, perceived costs and the level of community concern were used as variables to determine the level of community support. Both the dependent and independent variables were integrated in this study. Data for community support was collected by means of a 5-point Likert-scale.

The survey was conducted at the festival (KKNK) in 2007, during the festival. A probability sampling method, namely stratified random sampling, was implemented for the total sample frame of N= 123 262 (Statistics SA, 2001). The sampling procedure was based on guidelines by Krejcie and Morgan (1970: 608) for general research activities, which recommend a sample size (*S*) of 384 for a population (*N*) of 1 000 000. Stratification is based on the main residential areas in this Municipality and includes Wesbank, South, North and Central Oudtshoorn. Krejcie and Morgan (1970: 607) also indicate that as the population increases, the sample size increases at a diminishing rate and remains relatively constant at slightly more than 380 cases. Based on the guidelines given, it was decided to distribute 380 questionnaires between the strata. The starting point was randomly selected in the strata, after which every third house was selected in the strata. If the selected respondent did not wish to participate in the survey, either the house on the right or left was selected to participate (Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins & Van Wyk, 2005: 352).

Fieldworkers from North-West University distributed the questionnaires. Two hundred and seventy nine questionnaires were collected from 2-7 April 2007 and formed part of the final data set. This is slightly less than anticipated and therefore the results are only related to the selected respondents. The data for the surveys were captured in Microsoft Excel and analysed using the Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS 15.0). The descriptive statistics focused on the demographic profile of the community, where frequencies were used to analyse the data. Structural Equation Modelling was used to explore the factors and identify their influence on support for the event. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is based on multivariate (multi-equation) regression models. According to Ko and Stewart (2002: 525), SEM is a technique for simultaneously estimating the relationships between observed and latent variables (the measurement model), and the relationships among latent variables (the structural model).

3. DISCUSSION

The discussion is twofold. Firstly the demographic profile of the respondents is discussed, followed by the structural equation modelling.

3.1. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Most of the respondents were between the ages of 56 and 66 years (27%), followed by respondents between the ages of 46 and 55 years (20%). The average age of the respondents who took part in the survey was 60 years. It was also found that 54% of the respondents were female and 46% male. Twenty six percent of the respondents were professionals, where 45% of the respondents had a diploma/degree, 31% had matric (grade 12), while 6% had a postgraduate qualification.

3.2. STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING

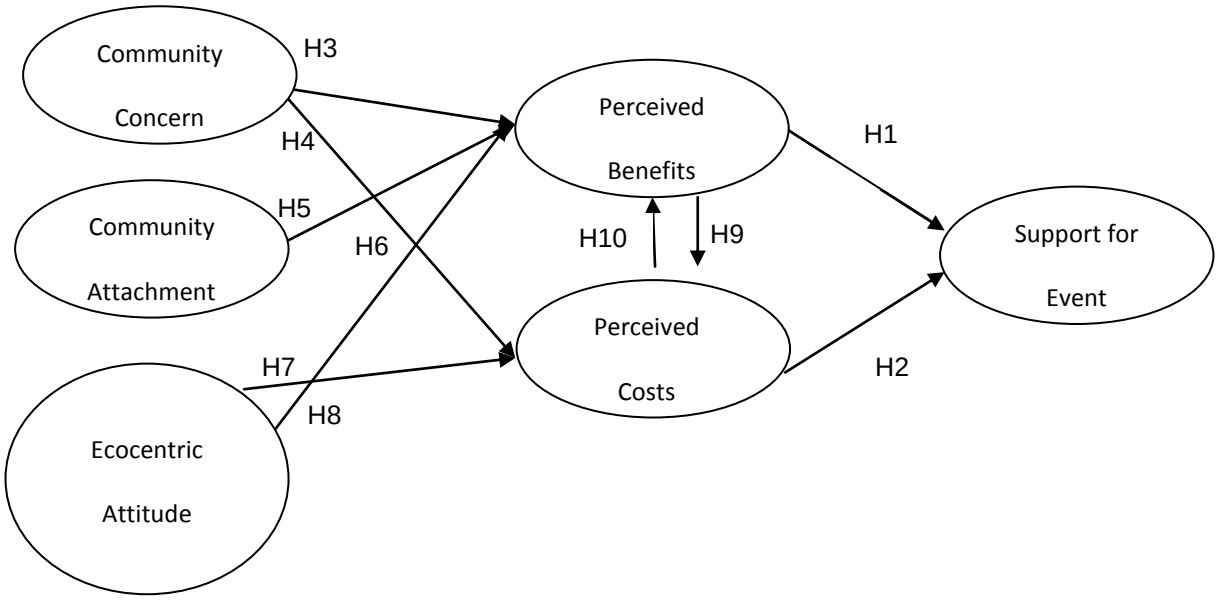
Structural equation modelling gives an indication of the causal relationships among latent variables. It also describes the causal effects and the variance that are unexplained. It is often diagrammed for better understanding. This is a form of path analysis, and the resulting figure is a path diagram (Cooper & Emory, 1995: 532). According to Foster, Barkus and Yavorsky (2006: 14), structural equation modelling is able to deal with multiple independent and dependent variables of categorical or continuous data. The goal of structural equation modelling is to select a model that best accounts for the data.

Gursoy and Kendall (2006: 607) developed a model in their study of a mega event - the 2002 Winter Olympics. This model demonstrates how factors affect the perceptions of the costs and benefits and show how variables interact, and clarifies their direct and/or indirect causal effects on a host community's attitudes and support for a hallmark event. The latent variables include community concern, community attachment, ecocentric

attitude, perceived benefits and perceived costs. Each latent variable comprises a set of observed variables. This model is to be tested for the current study to verify the factors influencing community support for a major event. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was therefore used with the aim of testing the model developed for a mega event on residents' perceptions of the impacts of the KKNK (classified as a major event) and how these perceptions affect their support. This enables the evaluation of how well the current data supports it, as is the case in this study (see Figure 1).

The conceptual model contains five components in which each construct was measured by more than three items. The sample size is 262 with 39 variables. The method used for examining the relationships between latent variables was by interpretation of the standardised coefficients for the regression paths (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001:673).

Figure 1: Model for community support



Source: Gursoy & Kendall (2006:607)

Table 1: Hypotheses for model

H1	There is a direct relationship between the perceived benefits and the support for hosting mega events
H2	There is a direct relationship between the perceived costs and the support for hosting mega events
H3	There is a direct relationship between community concern and the perceived benefits
H4	There is a direct relationship between community concern and perceived costs
H5	There is a direct relationship between community attachment and the perceived benefits
H6	There is a direct relationship between community attachment and perceived costs
H7	There is a direct relationship between the ecocentric attitudes of locals and the perceived costs
H8	There is a direct relationship between the ecocentric attitudes of locals and the perceived benefits
H9	There is a direct relationship between the perceived benefits and perceived costs
H10	There is a direct relationship between the perceived costs and perceived benefits.

Table 2: Maximum likelihood estimates – regression weights

		Standardised regression weights	Estimate	P label
H1	Support ← Benefits	.539	1.293	**.022**
H2	Support ← Costs	.142	.422	.204
H3	Benefits ← Concern	-.228	-.222	.148
H4	Costs ← Concern	.296	.233	.124
H5	Benefits ← Attachment	.625	.468	**.005**
H6	Costs ← Attachment	-.727	-.441	**.010**
H7	Costs ← Ecocentric Attitude	.120	.111	.608
H8	Benefits ← Ecocentric attitudes	.259	.298	.204
H9	Benefits ← Costs	-1.877	-2.320	<0.001
H10	Costs ← Benefits	2.398	1.940	<0.001
f27	Community concern variable	.401	1.000	
f28	Community concern variable	.624	1.521	<0.001
f29	Community concern variable	.679	1.866	<0.001
f30	Community concern variable	.542	1.359	<0.001
f31	Community concern variable	.790	2.218	<0.001
f32	Community concern variable	.840	2.383	<0.001
f33	Community concern variable	.861	2.374	<0.001
f34	Community attachment variable	.676	1.000	
f35	Community attachment variable	.543	.872	<0.001
f36	Community attachment variable	.351	.621	<0.001
f37	Ecocentric attitude variable	.716	1.000	
f38	Ecocentric attitude variable	.374	.588	.004
f39	Ecocentric attitude variable	.454	.847	.003
f1	Benefits	.503	1.000	
f2	Benefits	.590	1.277	<0.001
f3	Benefits	.597	1.161	<0.001
f4	Benefits	.677	1.232	<0.001
f7	Benefits	.671	1.242	<0.001
f9	Benefits	.687	1.316	<0.001
f10	Benefits	.783	1.528	<0.001
f12	Benefits	.712	1.235	<0.001
f13	Benefits	.777	1.462	<0.001
f15	Benefits	.639	1.188	<0.001
f16	Benefits	.613	1.279	<0.001
f19	Benefits	.699	1.338	<0.001
f20	Benefits	.539	1.209	<0.001
f5	Costs	.386	1.000	
f6	Costs	.252	.666	<0.001
f8	Costs	.506	1.571	<0.001
f11	Costs	.523	1.521	<0.001
f14	Costs	.752	2.546	<0.001
f17	Costs	.675	2.173	<0.001
f18	Costs	.729	2.230	<0.001
f21	Costs	.678	2.205	<0.001
f22	Costs	.484	1.314	<0.001
f23	Costs	.557	1.611	<0.001
f24	Costs	.803	2.499	<0.001
f25	Costs	.577	1.713	<0.001
f26	Costs	.517	1.444	<0.001
f27	Support	.289	1.000	
F28	Support	-.654	-.184	0.21

From Table 2 it is clear that the path coefficients of individual items were statistically significant. When analysing the path coefficients for the hypotheses (see Table 1), it is clear that the path coefficients for H5, H6, H1, H9 en H10 were statistically significant. H2, H3, H4, H7 and H8 were not statistically significant.

Table 3: Summary of structural model fit statistics

MEASUREMENTS	INDEX
Chi-square	1395.2
DF	768
Chi-square/DF	1.817
p-value	p<.000
CFI	.817
RMSEA [90% CI for RMSEA]	.056 [0.051; 0.060]

Reasonable support was found for the hypothesised model, Chi-square/DF=1.8, comparative fit index (CFI) = .817; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .056. According to Table 3, the fit indices of the model suggest that it was acceptable.

Specifying the structural model involves assigning relationships between one construct and another based on the proposed theoretical model. The structural relationships reflected in the complete path diagram indicate specified hypothesised structural relationships (Table 1) and complete measurement specification.

Five of the ten hypothesised paths were statistically significant at the .05 probability level. Five of the hypotheses were rejected.

4. HYPOTHESES SUPPORTED

H1 was confirmed at the 5% significance level, thereby supporting the hypothesised positive relationship between perceived benefits and support for the event. This is supported by the standardised path coefficient of .539 (p= .022). Therefore community members who perceive benefits flowing from the event tend to support the event. This is consistent with previous findings and the social exchange theory that suggests the perceived benefits positively affect the level of host community support (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002).

It is therefore important for events such as this festival to ensure that the community receives benefits from the event. Such benefits can include employment opportunities, opportunities to sell goods and food, performing at the event, and so on.

H5 was confirmed at the 5% significance level, thereby supporting the hypothesised relationship between community attachment and perceived benefits. This is supported by the standardised path coefficient of .625 (p= .005). This is consistent with previous studies done by Gursoy and Kendall (2006) as well as Deccio and Baloglu (2002). Residents who are attached to a community realise that the event is creating benefits for the host community. Residents who have been living in Oudtshoorn for several years therefore see the festival as an opportunity for development and improvement of the current status and image of the town. The social theory also suggests that perceived benefits create positive attitudes towards the event.

H6 was supported at p-value ≤ .010 significance level, showing the relationship between community attachment and perceived costs. This is also supported by the standardised path coefficient of -.727. Evidence was therefore found to support the direct negative relationship between perceived benefits and support. The level of community attachment is likely to have an effect on the evaluation of the costs. This was also found by Deccio and Baloglu (2002), however contradicted by the findings of Gursoy and Kendall (2006). Attached residents may be concerned about the costs since this event is recurring and not just a once-off event.

H9 was confirmed at the 5% significance level, thereby supporting the hypothesised relationship between costs and benefits. This is supported by the standardised path coefficient of -1.877 (p<.0001). The relationship between perceived costs and benefits is negative, indicating that if the costs of the event is realised by the community the benefits seem to be insignificant. If more emphasis is placed on costs the benefits are overlooked.

H10 was confirmed at the 5% significance level, thereby supporting the positive hypothesised relationship between benefits and costs. This is supported by the standardised path coefficient of 2.398 ($p<.0001$). The more benefits community members perceive, the more costs they are likely to perceive as well.

5. HYPOTHESES NOT SUPPORTED

H2 was not supported at p-value =.204 significance level. The perceived costs were not significant in its effect on support for the event. The insignificant impact of perceived cost was also found by Gursoy and Kendall (2006) and Deccio and Baloglu (2002).

H3 was not supported at p-value =.148 significance level, the relationship between community concern and perceived benefits. This is also supported by a low standardised path coefficient of -.228. This contradicts the findings of Gursoy and Kendall (2006), indicating that there is a significant relationship between community concern and perceived benefits.

H4 was also not supported at p-value =.124 significance level, the relationship between community concern and cost. This is also supported by a low standardised path coefficient of .296, which contradicts the findings of Gursoy and Kendall (2006) who found a significant relationship between community concern and cost. Again, the length of the event may influence this finding, as well as the fact that the festival did contribute towards development of infrastructure in Oudtshoorn and various other structural improvements.

H7 was not supported at p-value =0.608 significance level, the relationship between ecocentric attitude and perceived costs. This is also supported by a low standardised path coefficient of -.120 and contradicts the findings of Gursoy and Kendall (2006) who found a significant relationship between ecocentric attitude and perceived costs. It may be that the length of the festival (8 days) does not concern the community because they know the event will only last for a few days. They therefore approve the hosting on the short-term basis.

H8 was also not supported at p-value =.204 significance level, the relationship between ecocentric attitude and benefits. This is also supported by a low standardised path coefficient of .259, which also contradicts the findings of Gursoy and Kendall (2006), indicating that high ecocentric values are associated with high perceptions of benefits.

It can therefore be concluded that community attachment, the perceived benefits and costs influence support for a major event such as the KKNK. Residents who are attached to the community realise that the event is creating benefits for the host community. However, attached residents are also concerned about the costs created by the event. This might be due to the fact that the KKNK is a recurring event. It was also found that community members focusing on the costs created by the event tend to overlook the benefits created by the event. However, the more benefits community members perceive, the more they become aware of the costs created by the event. These findings to some extent support previous findings and to some extent differ from previous research.

6. MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS

Based on the results and findings of the research conducted at the event, the following contributions can be identified:

It is clear from this research that factors influencing community support are event specific and can be influenced by various aspects. What is applicable to one event is not necessarily of value to the next. It is therefore important that research is conducted in the community where the event is held and that these results are used to direct management strategies to improve support for the specific event.

Further, the results also indicated that costs of the event and benefits received from the event remain very important for the community as also indicated by the social exchange theory. Therefore, in order to improve community support, awareness strategies should be implemented to inform the community on possible benefits and how the costs of the event can be minimized.

No significant relationships were found between costs and support for the event, community

concern and perceived benefits, community concern and cost, ecocentric attitude and perceived costs or ecocentric attitude and benefits. This might be attributed to the length of the festival being fairly short and recurring where the community knows what to expect.

Lastly, for a major event such as KKNK community attachment serve as a factor influencing community support. It is important that the attached community members become part of the event as they are more positive towards the event. This might influence other community members to follow suit and become more involved. It is clear that community support factors for mega-events differ from community support factors for major events. This should be considered during the planning phases of these types of events.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this research was to determine factors influencing community support for major events by testing the model proposed by Gursoy and Kendall (2006). Respondents were, in general, more positive about the festival than negative. Structural modelling was used to test the model of Gursoy and Kendall (2006). This approach enabled precise modelling and can influence future decisions and marketing efforts of festival management. The results suggest that community attachment and benefits and costs perceived are the most important factors influencing community support for a major event such as KKNK. In the case of this study, ecocentric attitudes and issues of community concern did not influence the level of support the event was given. The type of event therefore has an influence on the support levels of the community. It is evident that residents' involvement and support for events have become very important in organising events and will also influence support. Residents support is important for various reasons including the following: they are asked to vote for tax increases to support infrastructure, they are directly involved in creating a significant experience for visitors and support for the event might influence the sustainability of the event (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006). It might also influence future decisions taken by the residents in hosting events. Community attachment plays a major role in support for events and this creates opportunities to involve these residents in the planning of the event and improving support for the event amongst other community members.

It is recommended that this model is expanded and tested for more permanent tourism products, different types of products and events to determine similarities and/or differences in the results. This might influence the sustainability of each product and event as more events have to rely on the support of the local community with the increase in the number of events, especially in South Africa. The model tested only certain variables that could influence support however various other variables could be included in the model and tested.

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