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## A Study on Perceived Socio-Economic Impacts of Cultural Festival on Local Residents Participation: Kafkasör Culture Tourism and Art Festival

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#### **Abstract**

Festivals and special events have increased in number worldwide due to their significant economic, social, and cultural impacts on the destination and the hosting community. The purpose of this paper is to find out how local residents perceive the socio-economic benefits of these particular festivals and to examine the residents' decision-making process when participating in the festival in their community. Using data collected from 334 local attendees of Kafkasör-Culture Tourism and Art Festival in 2016, this study examined the relationship between the socio-cultural impacts of a festival and the decision-making process of attending the festival of local residents. Factor analysis and correlation analysis were conducted in the study. The results indicate that perceived positive socio-economic impacts simultaneously increase the residents' willingness to revisit the festival. Findings also suggest that the dimension of behavioural desire and intention is the most important factor in explaining directed behaviour. Practical implications of the study results are discussed at the end of the study.

Keywords: Festival, Socio-economic impacts, Decision process, Goal-directed behaviour model.

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Festivals are important cultural events of cultural production and consumption. Indeed, festivals are events that offer opportunities to improve the quality of life, exhibit cultural heritage, promote destinations, attract tourists and provide new entertainment opportunities to local residents (Cudny, Korec & Rouba, 2012). An effective management and planning of events require a thorough understanding of residents' attitudes and perceptions towards the events. In this regard, a number of studies have investigated festival motivation, satisfaction, festival attractiveness, classification of festivals and perceived socio-economic impacts of the festivals in different places and scopes (Getz, 1991, 1993, 2015; Giritlioğlu, Olcay & Özekici, 2015; Gursoy, Kim & Uysal, 2004; Kızılırmak, 2006). Moreover, residents' attitudes, satisfaction and decision making are among the popular themes for the tourism scholars (Gursoy, Bonn & Chi, 2010; Lei & Zhao, 2012; Zhou, 2010; Zhou & Ap, 2009). As each event has its unique characteristics and scope of impacts, there is still need for further studies to investigate this phenomenon. Unfortunately, the role of the socioeconomic impacts of the local residents' decisionmaking process has not been taken into account when examining the effects of festivals. Moreover, very little is known about how the local participants perceive their expectations, values or benefits, and for that matter which festivals they participate in (Lei & Zhao, 2012). For this reason, it has been found meaningful and even necessary to investigate the factors that could encourage the participation of the local population.

Therefore, the objectives of this study are twofold. The first is to find out how local residents perceive the socio-economic benefits of the festival. The second objective is to examine the residents' decision-making process when participating in the festival in their community. Finally, the study tests the structure of the possible relations between perceived impacts and decision-making process to attend the festival.

This paper is structured as follows. A review of the event literature on impacts of events, and residents' directed behaviour is provided in the first section. Then the methodology used in the study is explained. Findings of the study are presented in the following section. And lastly, the results, discussion and implications for managers and marketers are given in the light of research findings.

#### LITERATURE

### **Impacts of Community Events**

Events can generate benefits to the hosting community. It is clear that events promote social cohesion among the community members (Deery & Jago, 2010; Erden & Yolal, 2016). These events provide a venue for cultural exchange between hosts and guests while offering recreational activities (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006; Getz, 1993). The increase in recreational facilities leads to leisure, excitement and learning opportunities to the residents (Gursoy et al., 2004; Liang, Illum & Cole, 2008), and promote the community well-being. For example, in a study on a film festival in Turkey, Yolal, Gursoy, Uysal, Kim & Karacaoğlu (2016) report that there is a significant positive relationship between the cultural/educational benefits and the subjective wellbeing of residents. As these benefits enable residents to be entertained, learn and experience new things, the event may also attract community support. Events can also be considered as an element that enhances cultural creativity (del Barrio et al., 2012). Similarly, they can create special occasions for the residents to show their attachment to their community as in the case of small community festivals in Southern India (Rao, 2001).

In a recent study by Yıldırım, Karaca & Çakıcı (2017) it is argued that extending knowledge about the culture and locality is an important factor for attendees of International Orange Blossom Festival organized in Adana, Turkey. Similarly, festivals and events function as a building block among individuals from different backgrounds by enhancing mutual understanding and tolerance (Getz, 1991, 1997). Events can also provide opportunities for participants and visitors to satisfy their higher order needs (Cushman, Veal & Zuzanek, 2005). Further, events can create new opportunities for participants to experience local culture, learning, sensory and emotional stimuli (Getz, 2015).

We cannot ignore the fact that festivals are also perceived to have negative impacts on the host community and the host city. Festivals and events may result in inflationary pressure, traffic congestion and crowd, crime and possible damages on the property (Dwyer, Mellor, Mistilis & Mules, 2000; Jeong & Faulkner, 1996). An increase in the undesired behaviours in the community can be observed as a result of participating crowds from other places. Similarly, events may result in pressure on already limited community services in hosting cities (Gursoy et al., 2004). Damages to historical and cultural resources can also be considered as negative impacts (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006). Moreover, festivals can also damage moral values of host communities (Leenders, Go & Bhansing, 2015). However, most studies claim that the benefits may be greater for the community than the negative outcomes (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006).

Organizing events require utilization of local resources, the structure and the scope of the resources may change according to the size of the events. However, larger and longer events may also endanger the scarce resources (Gursoy, Yolal, Ribeiro & Netto, 2017). As such, stakeholders may oppose to the idea of organizing a community event. It goes without saying that some residents oppose events because of their belief that expected benefits may not pay off the costs and negative impacts associated with organizing an event (Leenders et al., 2015). Some locals may also oppose events by advocating that negative influences will exceed benefits and community resources will be used for the personal benefit of a limited group (Getz, 1997). In this regard, it is important to examine the residents' perceptions and attitudes and their future support towards the events organized in their towns.

#### **Decision-Making Process of Residents**

The need to predict future behaviours has resulted in a plethora of studies aiming to understand customers' decision-making processes (Han & Ryu, 2012). Volitional components, non-volitional factors, and motivational and emotional elements have been tested as the determinants for predicting customer behaviours. The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) has been utilized for a long time by researchers in many areas. TPB predicts an individual's intention/behaviour by considering not only volitional factors (attitude and subjective norm) but also a non-volitional factor (perceived behavioural control) (Han & Ryu, 2012). The theory suggests that attitudes, subjective norms and perceptions of behavioural control are formed on the basis of beliefs (Ajzen & Madden, 1986). Tourism research has also utilized the TPB extensively to explore behaviours of people in leisure activities (Ajzen & Driver, 1991). Current studies use TPB in tourism which explore behavioural intention of festival visitors (Song et al., 2014), traveling (Sparks & Pan, 2009), visiting a theme park (Bigne et al., 2005), attendance to meetings and events (Song et al., 2012; Lee & Back, 2007), and segmenting festival visitors (Horng et al., 2013).

As an expanded version of the TPB, Perugini & Bagozzi (2001) proposed the model of goal directed behaviour (MGB) as an effort to improve capacity and to address the limitations of TPB by including motivational and emotional processes and past behaviour. As such, the model includes desire and the perceived anticipated emotional consequences of a targeted behaviour. Desire is hypothesized to mediate the influence of attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control on intention (Esposito et al., 2016). In the model, anticipated emotions are theorized as having an influence on desire. When compared with theory of planned behaviour, the model explains a significant variance in intentions and behaviours (Taylor et al., 2005). According to Han & Ryu (2012), there are several significant improvements

in the MGB. First, the model refers to the desire as the closest indicator of decisions and behaviours. Second, anticipated positive and negative emotions are included in the model. Third, the model includes past behaviour for the prediction of future human behaviour.

From a practical point of view, the model reveals that marketers need to examine the basic needs of their target customer segments, so that products and services can be tailored to satisfy demand (Erasmus et al., 2001). Consequently, several studies in tourism have employed the MGB. For example, Başoda & Aylan (2014) investigated tourists' decision-making process in re-attending a religious ceremony. Their results suggest that attitudes, subjective norms, positive-negative anticipated emotions, and perceived behavioural control positively correlated with behavioural desire. Further, it is seen that positive anticipated emotions and perceived behavioural control affected behavioural desire positively and significantly. Similarly, in a study conducted on the behavioural intention of visitors at Boryeang Mud Festival in South Korea, Song et al. (2012) report that attitude, subjective norm, and positive anticipated emotion affect desire, which, in turn, influence the behavioural intentions. However, further studies are needed to ascertain the proposed relations. Therefore, this study tests the structure of the possible relations between perceived impacts and decision-making process to attend the festival.



Figure 1. Bull fighting
Source: https://www.artvin.bel.tr/kafkasor-boga-guresleri-festivali-tanitim/

#### Study Site and The Festival

#### Artvin

Artvin, located in the eastern part of the Black Sea Region, is surrounded by Ardahan from east and south, Erzurum from south, Rize from west and Georgia from north. The city has snow-covered mountains, wooden architecture, undisturbed forests and springs, crater lakes at the summits of high mountains, Çoruh Valley and canyons, as well as many other natural

beauties. The abundant natural resources make the city a tourist destination for people seeking alternative forms of holiday experiences. Mountain climbing in Kaçkar and Karçal Mountains, trekking on highlands and mountains, sports like rafting and canoeing on Çoruh River and Barhal Stream are the activities that can be enjoyed by people having different preferences and expectations. In addition, numerous festivals and events are also held in and around Artvin (www. artvinkulturturizm.gov.tr).

#### Kafkasör Culture Tourism Art and Festival

Artvin is a festive city, a festival paradise (Koca, 2013). The Kafkasör Culture, Tourism and Art Festival

is considered to be the most important festival in the city. Kafkasör Culture, Tourism and Art Festival is an international event organized in the plateaus in Artvin, namely Kafkasör. The event offers a wide variety of activities such as folk dances, performances of bards and poets, concerts, bullfights and oil wrestling. The aim of the festival is to revitalize and enrich the cultural life in Artvin by offering leisure and entertainment opportunities to the residents. Kafkasör hosts both local and foreign participants. In order to watch the bull fighting and participate in the activities, the participants set up tents in the festival area and stay in these tents during the festival.

Although the festival is the scene of many cultural and artistic events, the main theme of the festival is bull fighting (Figure 1). It has to be reminded that bull fighting has been around for over a hundred years. Bulls from other provinces or districts are divided into categorized groups based on their weights, and fight with each other. The goal of bull fighting is to reflect the power relations that exist within the social structure through bulls. However, it is not aimed to kill the opponent, nor to take pleasure in suffering, but to overcome the opponent with a compelling force, to force the opposing side to withdraw from the arena and to accept the power of the dominant side. It is a ritual where power is shown at one point and the struggle of the mankind is depicted through the bulls (Koca, 2013).

In Artvin, the bulls need to be reconciled before setting out to the highlands. Otherwise an uncontrolled injury could be the cause of injury and death. These bullfights are organized in Artvin, which has rugged terrain so that the bulls do not hurt or hurl each other down from a cliff. In this way, it is aimed to select the strongest bull as the leader among the herd that is to be taken to the highlands. The bull fighting festival, which has been organized among the neighborhoods in the past, was first turned into an international festival in 1981 in the Kafkasör Plateau (www.kafkasor.org).

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### **Data Collection**

The questionnaire used in the study was composed of three parts and developed in Turkish. The first part had a scale of decision process developed on the basis of goal directed behaviour model, and the second part had a scale of perceived socio-economic impacts of the event. The decision-making process is explained by the goal directed behaviour model. In this study, goal directed behaviour model scale, which was adopted to Turkish by Başoda & Aylan (2014) by using the studies of Han and Ryu (2012), Kim et al., (2012), Perugini & Bagozzi (2001), Perugini & Connor (2000), Song (2010) and Song et. al, (2012), and the impacts scale from Gursoy et al., (2004) were used. The scales were widely tested and confirmed in the literature (Yolal et al., 2009). All items were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". Festival participants were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each item on the scale. The last section of the questionnaire included demographic variables.

Data were collected by a self-administered questionnaire with the study sample including local residents who attended the Kafkasör Festival in 2016. The questionnaires were randomly handed out to the potential respondents. Of the 600 delivered questionnaires, 376 were returned. However, 334 usable questionnaires were retained after the elimination of incomplete responses.

#### **RESULTS**

Table 1 shows the descriptive characteristics of attendees. The results showed that the gender distribution is quite even. Most respondents were married (55.1 percent) and had at least high school education (38.9 percent). Attendees were mostly young (72.1 percent were younger than 39 years of age).

The exploratory factor analysis of 22 items of directed behaviour items resulted in five factors with eigenvalues greater than 0.65. The Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy of 0.953 also indicated that patterns of correlation were relatively compact and yielded reliable factors. Barlett's test results indicated the appropriateness of the factor analysis (p<0.000). These factors explained 82% of the variance and were labelled as "behavioural desire and intention", "negative anticipated emotion", "attitude", "positive anticipated emotion" and "behavioural control". One item was excluded due to its loading less than 0.50. For the remaining items, none of the individual loadings were less than 0.607, and the

reliability coefficients of the delineated factors ranged from 0.956 for behavioural desire and intention to 0.796 for perceived behavioural control (Table 2). These coefficients were higher than the standard of 0.70 recommended by Nunnally (1978). Unlike previous studies (Başoda & Aylan, 2014; Perugini & Conner, 2000), behavioural desire and intention were factored under one dimension.

Table 4 reports the results of correlation analysis conducted to assess the relationship between two variables, namely goal directed behaviour and impacts. Since the data is normally distributed, a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between two variables.

**Table 1.** Demographic profile of participants (n=334)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage			
Gender					
Female	165	49.4			
Male	169	50.6			
Age					
Less than 20 years old	23	6.9			
20-29	126	37.7			
30-39	92	27.5			
40-49	58	17.4			
50 years and older	35	10.5			
Marital status					
Single	150	44.9			
Married	184	55.1			
Education level					
Elementary school	21	6.3			
Secondary school	26	7.8			
High-school	130	38.9			
Pre-bachelor's degree	52	15.6			
Undergraduate degree	98	29.3			
Graduate/Post-graduate degree	7	2.1			

The perceived socioeconomic impact items resulted in three factors which had eigenvalues greater than 1.0 (Table 3). The Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy of 0.872 also indicated that patterns of correlation were relatively compact and yielded reliable factors. Barlett's test results indicated the appropriateness of the factor analysis (p<0.000). The factors explained 69% of the variance and were labelled as "community cohesion and social benefits", "social costs" and "economic benefits". One item (increase recreation activities) was excluded due to its loading lower than 0.50. Factor loadings for the 16 items ranged from 0.592 to 0.899. The reliability alphas for the three dimensions were greater than 0.70.

The results indicated that there was a positive correlation between the two variables, r = 0.566, n = 334, p = 0.000. Overall, there was a strong, positive correlation between directed behaviour and perceptions of socio-economic impacts of the festival. Increases in the perceptions of socioeconomic impacts of the festival were correlated with an increase in rating directed behaviour.

 Table 2. Factor analysis of directed behaviour

			1	
Behaviour items	Factor	Eigen value	Variance explained	Reliability coefficient
Behavioural desire and intention		12.648	22.902	0.956
I have intention to revisit this festival in a near future	0.798			
I plan to revisit this festival in a near future	0.795			
I desire to revisit this festival in a near future	0.771			
I hope to revisit this festival	0.760			
I enjoy to revisit this festival	0.753			
I wish to revisit this festival	0.651			
Negative anticipated emotion		1.689	18.298	0.939
If I fail to revisit this festival I will feel frustrated	0.861			
If I fail to revisit this festival I will feel sad	0.854			
If I fail to revisit this festival I will feel disappointed	0.820			
If I fail to revisit this festival I will feel unhappy	0.810			
Attitude		1.305	16.612	0.910
I think that revisiting this festival will be remarkable	0.848			
I think that revisiting this festival will be beneficial	0.815			
I think that revisiting this festival will be pleasant	0.785			
I think that revisiting this festival will be attractive	0.607			
Positive anticipated emotion		0.891	12.789	0.940
If I succeed revisiting this festival I will feel happy	0.709			
If I succeed revisiting this festival I will feel glad	0.685			
If I succeed revisiting this festival I will feel delighted	0.651			
If I succeed revisiting this festival I will feel excited	0.612			
Perceived behavioural control		0.690	11.415	0.796
I have enough money to revisit this festival	0.748			
I have enough time to revisit this festival	0.743			
If I want to, it would be easy for me to revisit this festival	0.624			
Total variance explained			82.017	

**Table 3.** Factor analysis of socio-economic impacts of festival

Impact items	Factor	Eigen value	Variance explained	Reliability coefficient
Community cohesion and social benefits		6.715	39.293	0.927
Helps foster the relationship between residents and visitors	0.861			
Helps preserve the local culture	0.856			
Builds community pride	0.798			
Helps development of cultural life in the city	0.782			
Helps create cohesion in the community	0.742			
Educational-makes people aware	0.726			
Increases standard of living	0.723			
Generates revenues for civic projects	0.664			
Encourages locals to develop new facilities	0.592			
Social costs		2.508	15.459	0.829
Puts pressure on local services such as police and fire protection, utilities, roads	0.899			
Increases the crime rate	0.841			
Increases traffic congestion	0.822			
Social benefits		1.096	14.043	0.868
Increases employment opportunities	0.878			
Increases opportunities for shopping	0.858			
Total variance explained			68.79	

**Table 4.** Correlation analysis

	M	SD	MGB	Impact
MGB*	3,89	0.844	-	
Impact	3,83	0.681	0.556**	-

<sup>\*</sup> Model of Goal Directed Behavior

#### **CONCLUSION**

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of the relationship that may exist between the perceived socio-economic impacts and the decisionmaking process to attend Kafkasör Culture Tourism and Art Festival. As a special cultural event, the festival promotes sustainable tourism in the region with its cultural, historical, traditional and adventurous aspects. Findings of the study provide important contributions to the relevant literature by empirically testing the relationship between the local residents' perceptions of socio-cultural impacts of a festival and their decision to participate in festivals. Bull breeding is a passion in Artvin. Those who breed bulls pay more attention to their bulls than their children and prepare the bulls for the festival by feeding them with grape seeds, peanuts, hazelnuts, barley and similar foods (www.kafkasor. org). Women, similarly to their social lives,

show their interest in bullfighting like men, and watch the bullfights in a dedicated manner (Koca, 2013). The population of women participating in the research also confirms this. The sense of belonging, unity and pride, which belongs to their own culture and traditions, plays a role in the success of the events. It has to be reminded that festivals and special events are known as a type of alternative tourism and are important for the sustainable development of the region (Rezaei, 2017).

Since one of the objectives of festival organization is to make visitors return to such events, it is important to evaluate the perceptions of those making repeat visits (Anwar & Sohail, 2004). Hence, their decision making may be influenced by their past experiences. Festival impacts such as traffic congestion, increase in crime and undesired behaviours, degradation of the nature,

<sup>\*\*</sup>Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

crowding in social environment, and scarce resources may result in residents' unwillingness to support and attend the event. Specifically, this study provides empirical support for the magnitude and direction of the relationship between perceived socio-economic impacts and decision processes. Study findings suggest that increases in the perceptions of socioeconomic impacts of the festival result in an increase in their decisions to revisit the festival. This finding indicates that perceived positive socio-economic impacts simultaneously increase the residents' willingness to revisit the festival.

Further, negative anticipated emotions and attitudes are also important for the residents to attend the festival. This shows that people will be unhappy if they fail to attend the festival. Therefore, festival organizers need to extend the variety and the scope of the festival events to get the residents involved in the festival. Events scattered around the city, low admission fees and convenient schedules will ease the residents' attendance. Moreover, the residents' positive attitudes and anticipated emotions are important drives for the sustainability of the festival. This may be explained by the novelty and perceived socio-economic impacts of the festival. Therefore, managers and organizers should concentrate on increasing the socioeconomic impacts and fostering the residents' wellbeing by diversifying the program of the event.

Findings of the study reveal that festivals create community cohesion and social benefits such as fostering the relationship between residents and visitors, preserving local culture, building community pride, creating cohesion, generating revenues, and increasing standards of living. Moreover, the festival is perceived to increase employment opportunities and provide opportunities for shopping. These findings are consistent with the results of previous studies (Delamere et al., 2001; Gursoy et al., 2004). It is an important determinant of the festival satisfaction and loyalty of the residents which indicates that the festivals are making important contributions to the community. As such, a consistent attitude towards revisiting the festival may be created among the community members. Thus, positive attitudes are important for sustaining the festivals, and getting them traditional as suggested by Seçilmiş & Yılmazdoğan (2016).

The study has certain limitations. The primary limitation of this study is that the study is limited to a specific cultural festival organized in northern eastern part of Turkey. Moreover, the study is limited with a relatively small sample size. Findings of this study may be related only to participants of the Kafkasör Culture Tourism and Art Festival. However, findings suggest that the results are consistent with the previous studies. Therefore, future studies may include other factors such as motivation or satisfaction which have the potential to alter the magnitude of the relative significance of goal directed behaviour.

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