



Research note

Social impacts of music festivals: Does culture impact locals' attitude toward events in Serbia and Hungary?

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HIGHLIGHTS

- The FSIAS is tested in the novel framework of large-scale music festivals.
- Crosscultural examination increases reliability of the FSIAS results in large-scale music festivals contexts.
- Cultural dimensions of host communities influence their perception of the impact of festivals.

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ABSTRACT

There is growing interest among academics in examining the impacts of festivals on host communities. This paper constitutes novel research in that it applies the Festival Social Impact Attitude Scale (FSIAS) to two large-scale music festivals of Exit (Serbia) and Sziget (Hungary). Furthermore, it explores the moderating effect of Hofstede's national cultural dimensions on residents' perception of the impacts of these festivals on their communities. The study identifies the underlying dimensions of their social impacts and reveals how the cultural dimensions of the two different nations relate to resident perception of the impacts of the festivals. The results reveal a six-factorial substructure that represents two main (positive and negative) dimensions of large-scale music festivals and suggests that national culture significantly influences local perception of festival impacts on communities. The study concludes with the theoretical and practical implications of the study and advances future lines of research.

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1. Introduction

Festivals are emerging as a fast-growing sector of the tourism and leisure industry and can have a significant impact on the host communities (Getz, 2008; Jago, Chalip, Brown, Mules, & Ali, 2003; Shone & Parry, 2004; Arcodia & Whitford, 2007; Loots, Ellis, & Slabbert, 2011; Oh & Lee, 2012; Gibson & Connell, 2012; Getz, 2013, 2014; Lashua, Spracklen, & Long, 2014; Bagiran & Kurgun, 2016). Key factors behind the growth of festivals are largely due to their potential of development in terms of destination repositioning, revitalization and economic restructuring (Quinn, 2005)

and, more importantly, the potential of initiating a legacy.

There is currently a consensus that festivals can have positive and/or negative impacts on their host communities (Arcodia & Whitford, 2007; Bull & Lovell, 2007; Fredline, Jago, & Deery, 2003; Kim & Lee, 2006; Lee & Han, 1999; Ntloko & Swart, 2008; Turco, Swart, Bob, & Moodley, 2003). The literature generally groups festival impacts into economic, environmental, socio-cultural and political categories (Arcodia & Whitford, 2007). More importantly is how local communities perceive these impacts as they may influence their acceptance, involvement and support in organizing a festival. Dwyer, Mellor, Mistilis, and Mules (2000) highlight that the success of a festival is not only measured in terms of economic contributions, but also in terms of the positive and negative impacts of the festival's physical, political, and social environment. While the economic impact is undisputed, the social repercussions may have an even more profound effect upon local

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communities (Delamere, 1999; Fredline et al., 2003).

The growing number of practitioners and academics are placing attention on the importance of the social impacts of festivals has resulted in an increase of empirical research on this domain in recent years (Hede, 2007; Getz, 2011; Arcodia & Whitford, 2007; Small, 2007; Loots et al., 2011; Mair & Whitford, 2013; Getz & Page, 2016; Bagiran & Kurgun, 2016). However, in many countries, especially in emerging societies such as Serbia and Hungary, festival social impact remains under-researched. Residents' perception toward the impacts and the amount of perceived control a community has over them play a crucial role in community acceptance or rejection (Delamere, 1999). Therefore, it is vital for the destination practitioners and festival managers to acknowledge the host community's attitude toward these impacts in an attempt to maximize the benefits and minimize negative sentiments (Small & Edwards, 2003).

In addition, local attitude and support toward the impact of festivals may depend on national cultural values. Singh, Fassott, Zhao, and Boughton (2006) note that individual's attitudes are guided by the cultural values of their society. Cultural values are the forces that shape attitude, affect preferences and guide actions toward acceptance or rejection of certain products or services (De Mooij, 1998). It is widely recognized that cultural norms and values bear influence over many dimensions of human behavior having an effect on perception and attitude (Correia, Kozak, & Ferradeira, 2011; Figuez, Rodriguez, Castaneda, Sabiote, & Buhalis, 2012; Hsu, Woodside, & Marshall, 2013). However, there is no evidence advanced among previous research on how national cultural values moderate individual perception of the social impacts of festivals and if it varies between nations.

The aim of this study is to carry out a cross-cultural analysis of the social impacts of two large-scale music festivals Exit (Serbia) and Sziget (Hungary) perceived by the residents of Novi Sad and Budapest, host destinations, using the Festival Social Impact Attitude Scale (FSIAS). Specifically, this study identifies the underlying dimensions of social impacts of the two festivals and reveals, following Hofstede's cultural dimensions, how perceptions of impact differ from country to country. Hence, the present cross-cultural research represents an original contribution explaining the influence of Hofstede's national cultural dimensions in both Serbia and Hungary's host communities' individual perception of the social impacts of the two large-scale music festivals. These neighboring countries are ideal, for several reasons, for conducting cross-cultural research on the social impacts of festivals. First of all, both countries have similar political and economic settings - post communist countries that experienced a transition to a market based economy (Csizmadia, 2008; Stankov & Dragičević, 2015). Secondly, both music festivals emerged in a time of political unrest. Thirdly, the two festivals take place annually in the same period of the year in the summer and attract similar performers and festivalgoers.

The research of Delamere (2001) and Delamere, Wankel, and Hinch (2001), authors of the FSIAS scale, inspired this study. Delamere et al. (2001) initially generated a list of the social benefits and costs of community festivals and tested them on convenience samples of students from the Universities of Malaspina and Alberta in Canada. The items were then purified using Cronbach's alpha test and item to-total correlations were applied to assess reliability. Furthermore, factor analysis assessed the dimensionality of the scale and further purified the measurement. Two main factors emerge: social benefits (21 items) and social costs (26 items). The scale was subsequently tested on the Cloverdale community of Edmonton, Alberta (Canada), and the Edmonton Folk Music Festival in 2001. This resulted in a further refining of the 47 items in the pre-test, decreasing the final scale to 25 items. This final scale highlights

two key dimensions regarding social impacts of community festivals: benefits and costs (Delamere, 2001).

Delamere (2001) and Rollins and Delamere (2007) expressed the need to further validate the FSIAS in different festival types, settings and communities (cities/towns and urban/rural areas). In this context, the present study is significant as it uses the FSIAS in a novel manner as it centers on two large-scale urban music festivals, differing from its original application to small-scale rural community festivals. Finally, the study is presumably the first to combine FSIAS and Hofstede's cultural dimensions in a cross-cultural analysis of two nations (Serbia and Hungary).

2. Literature review

2.1. The social impacts of events on the local community

Social impacts, according to Park (2007), corresponds to the positive or negative changes in social and cultural conditions which directly or indirectly result from an activity, project, or the program hosted by a community. On a positive note, festivals can generate an increase in revenues and job opportunities for locals (Dwyer et al., 2000), add life to a city and offer residents renewed pride (Richards & Wilson, 2004; Van den Berg, 2012). Gursoy, Kim, and Uysal (2004) add the potential of festivals to reinforce social and cultural identity and help build social cohesion within a community. Furthermore, Getz (2011) notes that festivals can extend the tourist season, enhance and create destination image, foster culture, arts, heritage and nature conservation, and community development. Arcodia and Whitford (2007) assert that festivals raise awareness and encourage a more effective use of community resources and expertise, and provide opportunities for training and development in a variety of skills for locals, hence contributing to their well-being. Festivals therefore have a positive impact on a community's quality of life by providing an opportunity to escape from daily routines and to socialize with family and friends within the larger community (Earls, 1993).

There are, nonetheless, a number of negative impacts of festivals: changes in community values and patterns, environmental damage and litter, higher prices of basic services, resident exodus, interruption of normal business, noise and crowds, unsafe sexual behaviors, use of alcohol and drugs, conflicts with festivalgoers, xenophobia, commodification and exploitation of culture and traditional ways of life, etc. (Arcodia & Whitford, 2007; Dwyer et al., 2000; Reid, 2007; Saayman, 2000). Deery and Jago (2010) highlight that anti-social behavior is very common at events such as music festivals due to alcohol and drugs abuse resulting in drunken, rowdy and delinquent behavior. These negatives aspects can potentially threaten local positive attitude of the impact of hosting an event. More importantly, this negative attitude can seriously damage the image of an event and reduce community support. Yet, on the whole, Arcodia and Whitford (2007) assert that festivals are primarily a social phenomena with the potential of providing a number of predominantly positive social impacts.

According to Deery and Jago (2010), community oriented research on the social impacts of events predominantly focus on: 1) the development of measurement scales to record the social impact of events on host communities, 2) testing the scales in host communities, and 3) comparison of the impacts before and after hosting an event. Yet few studies have compared the social impacts of events between countries or regions that host music programs such as Exit and Sziget. Deery and Jago (2010) add that examining the social impacts of events on communities is important for numerous reasons, and these effects, whether positive or negative, can potentially affect the everyday life of a community in a greater way than other forms of tourism.

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