


Chapter 3

The Engagement of Community and Volunteers in a Small-Scale Sport Event and the Impact on Sustainable Tourism

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ABSTRACT

This work aims to investigate the key role of local community through volunteerism experience in small-scale sport events and the impact that the community engagement in small sport events can have on the local destination in terms of sustainable tourism. To do this analysis, the authors take into consideration the triple bottom line approach. Given the interdisciplinary character of sustainability, the chapter investigates the relation between small sport events and community, underlining two main aspects: the strategic role of volunteers in terms of community capabilities and the impact that small sport events have on local community in terms of social cohesion and local identity. Small-scale sport events, indeed, strengthen the sense of community and tradition, thus attracting visitors. In the last section of the chapter, an interesting case study and a series of sustainable tourism indicators are illustrated.

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INTRODUCTION

Sport can be considered a physical activity organized through the participation of different actors that interact with each other to reach a common objective, such as the victory of a competition. Most of sports are collective activities where different athletes interact. Sport activities are organized through some rules that are commonly shared and roles attributed to each player. Sport is represented by a community of stakeholders such as players, coaches, attendances that share the same mission, objective and rules.

The organization of a sport event is supported by the cooperation of several stakeholders and in the specific case of a small-scale sport event a key role is played by the local community and a network of volunteers that provide own capacities and skills to help managers to organize efficient and successful event organizations.

Today volunteerism is considered a new segment market of the tourism and leisure sectors. Millions of travellers take part to many voluntary programmes around the world visiting developing countries (Guttentag, 2009). According to Save Children (2018), voluntourism is one of the fastest-growing travel trends, with 1.6 million people volunteering overseas each year and an expenditure of \$2.6 billion is estimated annually.

Although the voluntourism in developing countries has a strong impact in the tourism sector, volunteerism related to the event industry has also an effect on local community in terms of sustainable tourism, indeed the participation of local volunteers in sport event represent a factor of attractiveness for tourists to visit a destination.

Volunteers represent a relevant resource for the local tourism and for the event organization. A correct management of volunteers is needed to manage a sport event organization in the best efficient way. Especially in small scale sport events (S-SSE) where the event organizers need to interact with local community and to create a strong mutual relationship between event organization and volunteers.

The main scope of this chapter is to underline the relationship between the event organization and the local volunteers as well as to study how a S-SSE can affect the development of local community in terms of sustainable tourism and the contribution of the community to the implementation of the event.

Sport Event Typology And The Planning Process In A Community

Several authors offer an overview regarding the different typology of sport events, most of them pay attention to mega events and only few of them try to give a definition of small events. Previous authors (Gratton, Nigel Dobson & Simon Shibli, 2000) offer a classification identifying four main categories: 1) Mega Events as Olympic

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