Chapter 4
Small–Scale Sport Events and Local Community Perceptions

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ABSTRACT

With issues related to overtourism and, more specifically, tourismphobia, the impacts of any tourism-related activities are being scrutinised. Events falling under this category are therefore being scrutinised. Community events having been hailed to contribute to bridge the gap between locals and visitors, this chapter is going to look at small scale events and, more specifically, community sport event in Winchester (UK). Research carried by Seraphin et al. provided evidence that locals are overall very supportive of events going on in the city. That said, the research did not look at types of events, but events overall. This chapter is therefore going to provide a close up on a specific type of event in Winchester. The results of the findings of small-scale sport events in Winchester will be compared to the findings of Seraphin et al. that are an overall analysis of the Winchester context with regards to events.

INTRODUCTION

For a very long time, the purpose of the tourism industry has been geared toward growth. The theory of development punctuated on the needs of adopting tourism as a fertile and growing industry. But with the emergence of issues such as overtourism and tourismphobia, practitioners and academia are suggesting degrowth and a

better focus on experience (quality) as opposed to quantity (Favre, 2017; Milano, Novelli & Cheer, 2019). With a business view, Visser (2015) to some extent support the current shift of paradigm in the tourism industry when he suggested that sustainability will come from a change of paradigm in management, but also explicitly suggested that size of businesses have an impact of their sustainability. As for the event industry, Seraphin, Gowreesunkar, Zaman and Bourliataux (2019), argued that local community events (which are in general small events) have a strong potential in terms of quality experience, and equally important (as a result of their size), can bridge the gap between locals and visitors. This chapter is going to focus on community sport events, in other terms on small sport events, in order to address the following objectives: (a) Discuss sustainability from an event management point of view (b) identify, engage and discuss current research on children in the tourism, hospitality and event industry (c) and finally, discuss the (non) engagement of children in the sustainability discourse and actions. So doing, this chapter is going to use Winchester (destination) and *Winchester Criterium and Cyclefest* (event) as case studies. From a structural point of view, this chapter is structured around three main sections. The first section is providing a background to the study. The second section is the case study. Finally, section three, discusses the results drawn from the case studies. From a methodological point, this conceptual based chapter is adopting a deductive approach.

INTRODUCTION TO EVENTS AND EVENT TOURISM

The sociological knowledge historically overlooked the importance of sports to enhance the collective legitimacy of the status quo for the society to keep united. In some respect, the founding parents of sociology thought in the anomie and the social ties as the main forces of society. Leisure and play received marginal attention within the constellations of social science. One of the pioneering voices in focusing his attention on this matter was Alfred Weber. From Weber onwards, who primarily focused on leisure as a social force that revitalizes the psychological frustrations, some scholars interrogated furtherly on the role of sports in society (Aitchison 1999). In a landmark book, which is entitled *Quest for Excitement: sports and leisure in the civilizing process,* Eric Dunning & Norbert Elias (1986) not only continued Alfred´s efforts to place "play" in the foreground but explained brilliantly how the civilizing process needs from the alternation of moment of war and conflict with peace-time. The social imaginary believes strongly that warfare is a social malady resulted from dictatorship and the political intolerance. Dunning and Elias amply show how peace and war are inextricably intertwined. Like wars which often mobilize efforts and resources against an external enemy, sports are emotionally based on

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