

THE 14TH ANNUAL SPORTS AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL: AN EVALUATION OF AN INDIGENOUS SPORTING EVENT

Lisa Ruhanen

University of Queensland

Michelle Whitford

University of Queensland

Char-lee McLennan

University of Queensland

ABSTRACT

Traditional indigenous tourism has become an area of interest for both governments and academics (Harrison, 1996; Briednehan & Wickens, 2004). Festivals and events are one way of showcasing indigenous culture and generating positive socio-economic benefits for indigenous communities and regional economies. One highly regarded and anticipated national sport festival on the Australian events calendar is Brisbane's Annual Sports and Cultural Festival. The festival is a unique indigenous 'culture controlled' (Butler & Hinch, 1996) event that has been developed and operated by an Indigenous Australian event management organisation. It has the potential to be expanded into one of the world's most prestigious and well-known indigenous events that could increase awareness of indigenous tourism and attract more tourists to Australia.

The purpose of this paper is to report on an evaluation undertaken on behalf of the organisers of the 14th Annual Sports and Cultural Festival. The results of the evaluation revealed that the sports festival plays a central socio-cultural role in the Brisbane region and provides opportunity for community celebration, cultural rejuvenation, indigenous entrepreneurship, tourist activity and economic gains for the Brisbane region. Attendance at the festival has increased economic and social capital by providing the community with specific opportunities for accessing and developing community resources, improving social cohesiveness and providing a focus for celebration.

Keywords: indigenous tourism, sport, festival, event, culture

INTRODUCTION

World-wide, there is a small but growing interest in traditional indigenous tourism which has increased the number of studies concerned with the area (Harrison, 1996; Briednehan & Wickens, 2004). Indigenous tourism, particularly in Australia, has come into the focus of both Federal and State government for, among other things, the numerous social and economic benefits it can provide to indigenous communities and regional economies. Festivals are one avenue of showcasing indigenous culture and creating awareness and interest in indigenous tourism. One highly regarded and anticipated national sport event on the Australian calendar is Brisbane's Annual Sports and Cultural Festival.

This festival is primarily a touch football tournament, but over the course of its fourteen year existence it has matured into a major Australian event, now attracting an ever increasing number of local, inter and intra state and international participants and spectators who not only compete but enjoy the cultural performances held throughout the duration of the three day event. While this festival is unique because it is a 'culture controlled' (Butler & Hinch, 1996) sports

event developed and operated by an Indigenous Australian not-for-profit event management organisation, in general, sports events are an established and common leisure activity among Australians generating numerous positive impacts for host regions (Briednehan & Wickens, 2004). The purpose of this paper then, is to present the outcomes of an evaluation of Brisbane's 14th Annual Sports and Cultural Festival which was undertaken in partnership with the organisers and with funding from the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. The paper discusses the literature surrounding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism including the benefits and negatives of utilising tourism as a way to promote indigenous culture. The paper then outlines the methodology employed to evaluate the 14th Annual Sports and Cultural Festival, discusses the results of the study and finally presents some conclusions and recommendations to enhance the future development of the festival.

BACKGROUND

Although Indigenous peoples have inhabited Australia for more than 40,000 years, gaining rights as citizens of Australia has been a long process for Indigenous Australians. In fact it was not until 1967 that Indigenous Australians were officially recognised as citizens (van den Berg, 2002). Further, it was not until 1992 that Eddie Mabo won a Native Title case which recognised his claim to ancestral lands (Bachelard, 1997). As a result of the Mabo case, many Indigenous Australians can now increasingly utilise their land to boost incomes via royalties from uranium mining and tourism activity, among others (Mercer, 1994; Pitcher, van Oosterzee & Palmer, 1999; van Den Berg, Collard, Harben & Byrne, 2005).

As the world's oldest living culture, Indigenous peoples of Australia have constantly adapted to the changing environment (Frankel & Janke, 1998). Although in contemporary Australia many Indigenous peoples have adopted a variety of elements of Western culture, traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage continue to thrive through, among other things, mediums such

as art, storytelling, dance, community gatherings (van Den Berg, *et al.*, 2005) and tourism.

INDIGENOUS TOURISM AND THE CULTURAL PRODUCT

Indigenous tourism can be defined by the motivation of the tourist, who is generally seeking a direct experience that involves an authentic and intimate contact with other people from a different cultural background (Hall & Weiler, 1992; Harron & Weiler, 1992). Zeppel (1999) defines Aboriginal tourism as 'Aboriginal people; Aboriginal spirituality or the dreaming; Aboriginal bushcraft skills; Aboriginal cultural practices; and Aboriginal artefacts' (1999, pg. 124). Therefore, Australian Indigenous tourism can focus on cultural aspects of traditional indigenous life (van Den Berg, *et al.*, 2005) however, it can also "encompass all tourism activities that involve Australian indigenous people and are sensitive to indigenous culture" (Tourism Queensland, 2004, p. 5).

Although the Northern Territory in the 1970s was one of the first regions in Australia to recognize indigenous tourism as a growing area of interest for the tourist (Schmiechen, 2006), it is only since the publication of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Industry Strategy in 1997 that Australian Indigenous culture has been increasingly promoted as a tourism commodity (Zeppel, 1999) and become an integral part of Australia's tourism industry (Moore & Herron, 1997). While many tourists actively seek to experience traditional indigenous cultures (Harrison, 1996; Briednehan & Wickens, 2004), Pitcher, *et al.* (1999) suggests that there is a gap between the image and reality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indigenous peoples are often stereotyped and perceived as 'savages' and this misconception is mainly due to the simplification of culture through marketing, media and product development (Walle, 1996; Zeppel, 1998). Although there is little dispute that marketing should avoid stereotyping indigenous peoples (Ryan & Huyton, 2000; van Den Berg, *et al.*, 2005), Ryan & Huyton (2000) and Cohen (1995) maintain that such stereotyping can be beneficial as

it protects traditional culture. Arguably, host cultures are generally able to define the difference between the reality of their own lives and that of the tourist experience thus reducing the potential of negative impacts from tourism. Such negative impacts can also be reduced not only through increased visitor education about indigenous history, customs and culture but also through the increased education of indigenous people on the benefits of tourism (Notzke, 1999).

For instance, while indigenous tourism is diverse, it is generally the production of arts and crafts that is the core product of indigenous tourism in Australia (Office of National Tourism, 1999; South Australian Tourism Commission, 1998). Indeed, the Northern Territory Tourist Commission (2008) notes that most consumers interested in indigenous culture want to observe indigenous art and painting plus learn about indigenous belief systems and their relationship to the land. Therefore, indigenous culture and the cultural product is a vital component of indigenous tourism. A cultural product can be buildings, sites, monuments, Aboriginal sites and culture, art and craft workshops and studios, festivals, fairs and markets, performing arts and concerts, museums, art galleries, movies, cinemas and the everyday life of people (Foo, 1998). Tourism products, including festivals (e.g., Annual Sports and Cultural Festival) which have been developed and controlled successfully by indigenous people with a focus on promoting indigenous culture are deemed 'culture controlled' (Butler & Hinch, 2007). Such control undoubtedly provides Indigenous Australians with a means to reclaim heritage, increase economic independence and preserve indigenous culture (van Den Berg, *et al.*, 2005). Additionally, culture controlled products are less likely to experience negative impacts such as loss of authenticity, commoditisation and an increasingly market determined product (Ryan & Huyton, 2000).

A loss of authenticity can occur when commodification and simplification occurs, often to fit with a marketing context or theme (Moscardo & Pearce, 1999). Tourists are generally seeking to experience peoples' 'real lives' and can become frustrated when the experience is not authentic, despite it being portrayed as such by

advertising. Authenticity is judged or valued by the observer and thus close interaction with hosts can allow tourists to change their understanding of the culture and perception of authenticity (Moscardo & Pearce, 1999; Wang, 1999; Cohen, 1988).

Closely related to issues pertaining to authenticity of indigenous tourism product are the costs of indigenous tourism which include misrepresentation and commodification. Commodification is where cultural items or activities are evaluated in terms of their monetary value; thus they become primarily goods and services (Cohen, 1988). Often, commodification of culture occurs due to exploitation of traditional items and ways of doing things because of a strong desire to increase economic growth. Therefore, there is a need for tourism operators and industry leaders to work alongside indigenous peoples to protect indigenous intellectual property and copyright (Pitcher, *et al.*, 1999) and avoid misappropriation of indigenous culture (Eggington 2002; Wilson-Clark 2003; van Den Berg, *et al.*, 2005).

Alarming though, many indigenous tourism products are not owned by indigenous people and often the operators do not work with indigenous people, seeking little to no input into the appropriate utilization of indigenous culture, land and sacred sites (Johnston, 2007; cited in Scantlebury, 2008). Additionally, difficulties in developing the Aboriginal tourism product have also been attributed not only to a lack of government funding but also to a limited awareness and interest from the tourist market (Schmiechen, 2006). Arguably though, there was renewed interest in the market when the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games showcased to the world, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as a unique and important feature of Australia (Schmiechen, 2006) and revitalized indigenous tourism in Australia.

SPORTING EVENTS IN AUSTRALIA

Over the past few decades sporting events have emerged as a significant social phenomenon, influenced by the re-emergence and acute popularity of the Olympic Games (McPherson & Curtis, 1989). However, the origin of sporting events is a

matter of debate as several countries, such as China, Egypt and Greece, have been labelled the birth place of the first sporting event (Peiser, 1996). Originally, sporting events were part of larger religious festivals (i.e., the Games of Olympia) or as warfare training. Australia's long history with sporting events dates back to the early settlement when colonists occupied their leisure time by participating in outdoor, physical and competitive sports, such as soccer games or horse racing.

Australians love of sports has seen these events increase in popularity and prevalence, with the country now internationally recognised as a major sporting nation. In 2005-06 around 44% of Australians reported that they had attended at least one sporting event in the previous year (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007). Today, Australia has some of the world's best sporting venues and has played host to numerous international events (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2008). With increasing stress levels Australians will continue to seek leisure activities and sporting events as an avenue to relax and escape their daily lives. Thus their significance and importance will continue to intensify (Kurtzman & Zauhar, 2003).

Sporting events range from mega-events, hallmark events, major events to festivals and much smaller events. These events come with their own set of benefits and costs to both participants and host regions (Chalip, 2006). Besides the often substantial economic and social benefits (Downey, 1993; Ritchie, 1984), smaller events also diversify a regions events calendar and project a new image and identity for the region (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). Increasingly sport events are being used as a tool for growing tourism activity within host regions (Masterman, 2004). Today, many countries regard sporting events as a unique way to market themselves internationally and boost economic activity. This has seen sporting events become a focus of governments worldwide; particularly within Australia. Indeed, an evaluation of Australian tourism strategies and plans found that events have become a major focus of the Australian tourism industry as they are viewed as a tool for regional economic development, risk management and stability (McLennan & Ruhanen, 2008).

Festivals and sporting events not only generate numerous opportunities for positive commercial outcomes and business development (Soutar & McLeod, 1993; Alston, 1998) but they also help to protect and build traditional culture and make non-indigenous people more aware of the strength and diversity of indigenous culture (Ryan & Huyton, 2002). Not surprisingly then, a key priority identified by Tourism Australia (2007) was the continued development of iconic indigenous festivals such as the Brisbane Annual Sports and Cultural Festival.

RESEARCH METHODS

To evaluate the 14th Annual Sports and Cultural Festival a questionnaire was administered to attendees at the 2007 event. Over the three days of the event a team of interviewers randomly sampled festival attendees inviting them to complete the questionnaire and a total of 481 useable questionnaires were obtained. To place the 481 survey sample into a population context, in a media release by First Contact (2007) it was estimated that over the course of the three day event “more than 20,000 people turned up to see and participate in the 13th Annual First Contact Sports and Cultural Festival in Brisbane” (pg 1). Given that the event occurred over three days and these estimated 20,000 attendees would have been likely to have visited on most days of the event, it is appropriate to divide this 20,000 estimate by the number of days to provide a more realistic, if moderate, estimate of the number of visitors. This, therefore, equates to 6,600 attendees at the festival on any given day. This revised estimate has been substantiated by the festival organizers who also claim that “the \$250,000 tournament drew over 2000 players and officials from 124 teams from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Canberra” (pg 1). Thus, based on these indicative estimates, team associated attendees represented around 31% of all attendees to the festival. While these estimates are approximates, they do provide an indication that the sample represents just over 2% of the population of all attendees.

The questionnaire was primarily derived from the 'Encore' event evaluation model software package developed by the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (STCRC) and included 29 questions that focused on:

- Demographics (age, gender, origin of visitor)
- Visitation (if they were a resident or visiting Brisbane)
- Expenditure (before, after and during the festival)
- Motivation for attending the festival
- Satisfaction and future attendance to the festival

Generally the results were analysed utilising the STCRC's Encore Event Evaluation Kit. However the research results should be considered in the context of the study limitations:

- Accurate total festival attendance figures are not available thus an underestimate was used to determine attendance and expenditure at the event.
- As only a random sample was collected the study has inherent sampling error.
- The results were obtained from attendees at an indigenous event and so results may be biased towards overestimating the importance of indigenous tourism activities (Moscardo & Pearce, 1999; van Den Berg, *et al.*, 2005).

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Positive Socio-economic Impacts of the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival

According to Downey (1993), sporting events have demonstrated that they can generate significant economic activity within the local region and as early as 2002, it was recognised that the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival had significant economic impacts with estimates suggesting that it generated in excess of \$1million

in financial impact to the local business environment (First Contact Inc, 2003). Similarly, the results of this study demonstrated that the 14th Annual Sports and Cultural Festival generated positive socio-economic outcomes including 1) increased economic injection into the Brisbane region, 2) enhanced community development and 3) preservation of culture and traditions.

Increased Economic Injection into the Brisbane Region

There is little argument that events have the potential to boost the economy in local regions due to their ability to provide, among other things, various opportunities for positive commercial outcomes (Soutar & McLeod, 1993; Alston, 1998). Increasingly, festivals are seen as vehicles to enhance tourism, which plays a significant role in the development of regions (Whitford, 2004). As such, survey respondents were asked to provide an estimate of their expenditure during their visit to Brisbane, or for Brisbane residents their expenditure while attending the festival. The results revealed that increased economic receipts were generated for the Brisbane region as a result of the 14th Annual Sports and Cultural, from among other things, local attendees and non local visitors' expenditure. Importantly, the results of this study revealed that 46% of attendees sampled were visitors to the Brisbane region. Using Encore it was found that the 14th Annual Sports and Cultural Festival was estimated to contribute some AUD\$432,900 of new visitor expenditure to the Brisbane region as a result of the tourism activity. This was based on a sample of 481 and an estimated 6,600 total attendees. There was also an estimated total local expenditure of \$68,100 which did not contribute to new expenditure within the region as a result of the event as these funds were already within the Brisbane region.

The expenditure of visitors on travel, accommodation, restaurants, shopping and other tourism related services in and around the Brisbane region is one of the numerous positive economic impacts emanating from the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival. Festival attendees who were not local residents spent the majority

of their total expenditure on accommodation (39%), meals, food and drink (30%) and transport (21%).

On average, visitor attendees stayed on average three nights each while attending the festival. On a 'spend per day' basis interstate visitors spent the most on average (\$86) followed by intrastate Queensland visitors (\$54) (Table 1). However, both interstate (\$35) and intrastate Queensland visitors (\$18) had relatively low expenditure on accommodation while in Brisbane. This relatively low value suggests that many were either staying in their own homes or with friends and relatives. Reflecting this is the fact that only 52% of visitor respondents had any expenditure on accommodation. As expected, local Brisbane residents had very low expenditure while attending the festival at around \$19 per day, which was mainly spent on meals, food and drink (\$12) at the festival.

Table 1: Total Expenditure estimates by Expenditure Item

	Interstate		Intrastate Queensland		Local Brisbane Residents	
Expenditure Item	Percentage (%)	Spend (\$) per person per day	Percentage (%)	Spend (\$) per person per day	Percentage (%)	Spend (\$) per person per day
Accommodation	41%	\$35	34%	\$18	1%	\$0
Meals, Food and Drink	25%	\$22	31%	\$16	62%	\$12
Other Entertainment	9%	\$8	8%	\$4	10%	\$2
Transport	20%	\$17	24%	\$13	24%	\$5
Personal Services	2%	\$2	0%	\$0	0%	\$0
Other Expenditure	2%	\$2	3%	\$2	3%	\$1
Total Expenditure	100%	\$86	100%	\$54	100%	\$19

As a result of increased tourism, the festival also has the potential “to raise awareness of the Brisbane region by promoting it as a desirable place to visit and thereby inducing longer term tourism and potential increased investment in the region” (Hunn, 2000, p. 58). In fact, there appears to be little debate that staging an event like the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival in Brisbane may improve awareness of the destination or the image of the destination (Backman, Backman,

Uysal, & Mohr Sunshine, 1995; Burns, Hatch & Mules, 1986; Hall, 1992, 1996; Kaspar, 1987; Ritchie, 1984; Ritchie & Smith, 1991; Roche, 1994; Travis & Croize, 1987; Witt, 1988) particularly if the festival can create interest or attract attention as a result of its status, timely significance or uniqueness (Ritchie, 1984).

Indeed, 90% of respondents indicated that they thought the festival was important for the Brisbane region. Reasons cited included: it 'brings people together' (25%), it 'attracts visitors to Brisbane' (10%), 'builds new relationships' (9%), 'generates revenue for the region' (7%), 'improves social cohesion' (7%) and 'increases cultural awareness' (5%). Besides these numerous direct impacts, the festival also generated indirect employment benefits including the employment of security firms, sports medicine providers, retail and services, hospitality and printing and publishing firms in the local region.

Enhanced Community Development

There is little argument that the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival is a unique sporting festival as "it is uncommon in Australia for indigenous managed and controlled organizations to successfully run public events on a scale of the Sports and Cultural Festival on an annual basis covering a decade" (First Contact Inc, 2003, p. 6). While sporting festivals can vary in size, style and purpose and can provide numerous benefits to both the participants and the host region, the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival is an occasion for a diverse array of indigenous and non-indigenous communities to come together to celebrate various aspects of their culture (Derrett, 2002). Indeed, 94% of respondents considered the festival to be important for indigenous communities and individuals. Of those that thought it was important, the largest proportion (19%) felt it was because the event brought people together and facilitated the gathering of communities.

Consequently, the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival has the capacity to generate a positive socio-cultural environment and thus positively contribute to the

development of the community (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006). The results of the study confirm this statement. For instance, just over half (51%) of the respondents indicated that they attended the event to 'support family or friends that were competing or performing at the event'. Other reasons respondents had for attending the 14th Annual Sports and Cultural Festival included to 'perform, participate or compete' in the event (34%), to 'socialise with friends or family' (21%), for 'fun and excitement', to 'support a community organisation or event' (12.5%) and for 'enjoyment or relaxation' (12%). Moreover, close to 90% of attendees went to the festival with family and or partners and nearly half of the attendees visited friends and relatives during other activities they undertook in the Brisbane region.

Thus, the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival is a useful vehicle to promote community development as it enhances the well being of the community by providing opportunities to break away from daily routines and allow participants to socialize with family and friends within the larger community (Carpenter, 1995). In essence, the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival has enhanced community development by creating social capital which has been created by developing social cohesiveness because the festival is a recurring social occasion in which all members of the community have the opportunity to unite and share cultural bonds (Arcodia & Whitford, 2002). Additionally, festival attendees shared a common social purpose and developed social networks that have the potential of being maintained far into the future, producing long term positive social benefits (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006). Thus, the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival has the potential for strengthening communal ties and uniting people and is representative of the many aspects of the social and cultural fabric of the community in which it is celebrated.

The celebratory theme of the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival allows people to participate in an occasion that generates a feeling of goodwill and community or a spirit of 'communitas'. The growth, popularity and support of the festival over the last fourteen years clearly demonstrates the community's need for this type of festival. Moreover, the need for the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival which

provides a venue for indigenous youth to participate in healthy sports activity in an environment free of drugs and alcohol is reiterated in the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991). This report identified, among other things, the need for programs facilitating the participation of indigenous youth and the need for an environment free of substance abuse (First Contact, 2003).

Preservation of Culture and Traditions

The Annual Sports and Cultural Festival not only promotes healthy outdoor, active, non-alcoholic activity for indigenous families but also actively encourages the preservation of culture and traditions of the participants. Importantly, Indigenous Australia is not a homogenous group and this festival encourages people from differing language groups/clans including Bungalung Butchala, Koombumberri, Wakka Wakka, Nugi and Guranpul of Stradbroke and Moreton to interact under the umbrella of a sporting contest. For instance, approximately 87% of respondents felt the festival contributed towards sustaining indigenous culture, traditions and values. The respondents indicated that this was mainly because the festival provides an opportunity to 'bring different cultures and tribes together to display and showcase culture' (11%), 'brings people together' (9%) and has 'cultural performances' (8%). The majority of respondents (82%) felt the festival helped to unite the community. Almost 92% of respondents felt that the festival helped to strengthen social networks and relationships as the festival provided the opportunity to meet new people (33%) and provided the opportunity to catch up with friends (20%).

Thus, the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival offers more than just increased economic growth; it offers the opportunity for enriching the cultural fabric of the Brisbane region. In fact, the effect of the festival is incalculable as the festival not only generates significant income, highlighted in the results of this study, but it also helps define what Brisbane is. For example, it has sprung from a community need and the results of the study clearly indicated the festival has maintained its roots

within the community. Thus the festival is instrumental in facilitating the development of a contemporary cultural identity within the Brisbane region.

Future Directions

The Annual Sports and Cultural Festival should be developed so that it not only satisfies the needs and expectations of the stakeholders but reflects the character of the Brisbane region. Festival management strategies that include consultation and participation of host communities appear to assist in avoiding many of the negative socio-cultural impacts associated with festivals. Therefore, by identifying the stakeholders of the event and establishing their needs and expectations, festival organisers will be able to ensure that the local community continues to derive some benefit and meaning from the festival.

An effective way to include the local community in the festival is through the utilisation of volunteers. Thus, festival organisers should continue to involve volunteers, providing them with opportunities for training in, and development of, a variety of skills pertaining to event management while encouraging more effective use of local educational, business and community spaces. These community networks not only facilitate the development of social capital but also provide a catalyst for revitalising existing and or new partnerships. Such partnerships may be with local entities or with the significant number of visitors from outside South-East Queensland and interstate that attend the festival.

Considering, the growing number of visitors that are attending the festival, it would be opportune now for event organisers to consider whether the focus of the festival continues primarily as a community-based sporting tournament or as larger festival that attracts a broader range of visitors and spectators. If the latter option is chosen then there will be a need to diversify the festival offerings while avoiding overzealous attempts at commercialisation. Such action may destroy the desired development of socio-cultural values and traditions of the host destination while at

the same time, destroying the authenticity and very essence of the festival.

Nevertheless, there is considerable scope to strengthen the cultural performance aspects of the festival which in turn, could develop a niche opportunity for Brisbane region and if correctly promoted, would attract a new cohort of participants and visitors.

While the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival should remain an indigenous festival, arguably there is scope within this context to develop a festival which appeals to a wider audience. Due to fourteen years of operations and advertising through local newspaper and radio media, there is awareness of the festival amongst the local target market. Nevertheless, there is an opportunity to strengthen the brand of the festival, increase sponsorship considerably and advertise more widely to increase broader awareness and visibility of the event and attract more visitors to the festival.

CONCLUSION

The success of the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival should not only be measured by direct economic contributions but should also incorporate socio-cultural impacts of the festival. While the results of the study revealed that the Brisbane region enjoys increased economic benefits as a result of hosting the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival, it is primarily a social phenomenon with the potential to provide a variety of predominantly positive social benefits alongside the economic benefits. Indeed, the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival increasingly plays a central, socio-cultural role in the Brisbane region and arguably, provides an opportunity for community celebration and cultural revitalisation. Alongside the provision for the community to celebrate, the festival also provides the Brisbane region with opportunities for increased benefits from festival spin-offs such as tourism and increased economic receipts.

Not surprisingly then, throughout history, festivals have contributed to the overall social and economic well being of communities and the results of this study

suggested that similarly, attendance at the Annual Sports and Cultural Festival has likely developed both increased economic and social capital by providing the community with specific opportunities for accessing and developing community resources, improving social cohesiveness and providing a focus for celebration. Importantly however, the festival organisers can determine whether the impacts on socio-economic life and the structure of the community enhance or detract from the social environment of Brisbane region by addressing any potential negative impacts through intervention and awareness. Thus it would appear paramount that the festival organisers facilitate community collaboration and consultation before, during and after the festival in order ensure a positive recurring community celebration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to acknowledge the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and First Contact Inc. for providing the funding to undertake this study.

REFERENCES

Alston, R, (1998). *Playing, Visions, Festivals: Remarks by Senator Richard Alston*.

Available online:

<http://www.search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo.ASP?action=view&item=0resultsID=66JKJ>.

Arcodia, C., & Whitford, M. (2002). Festival attendance and the development of social capital. *Proceedings of Conference on Tourism and Hospitality on the Edge. Council for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education*. Fremantle: Edith Cowan University.

Arcodia, C. & Whitford, M. (2006). Festival attendance and the development of social capital. *Journal of Convention and Event Tourism*, 8(1), 1-18.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007). *Sports Attendance, Cat. 4174.0*. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Bachelard, M. (1997). *The Great Land Grab: What Every Australian Should Know About Wik, Mabo and the Ten-Point Plan*. South Melbourne: Hyland House.

Backman, K., Backman, S., Uysal, M., & Mohr Sunshine, K. (1995). Event tourism: An examination of motivations and activities. *Festival Management and Event Tourism*, 3(1), 15-24.

Briedenhann, J. & Wickens, E. (2004). Tourism routes as a tool for the economic development of rural areas - Vibrant hope or impossible dream? *Tourism Management*, 25, 71-79.

Burns, J., Hatch, J., & Mules, T. (1986). *The Adelaide Grand Prix: The Impact of a Special Event*. Adelaide: The Centre for South Australian Economic Studies.

Butler, R. & Hinch, T. (1996). Indigenous tourism: A common ground for discussion. In R.W. Butler and T. Hinch (Eds.), *Tourism and Indigenous Peoples* (pp.3-19). London: International Thomson Business Press.

Butler, R., & Hinch, T. (2007). *Tourism and Indigenous Peoples: Issues and Implications*. Amsterdam: Butterworth-Heinmann.

Carpenter, G. (1995). The appeal of fairs, festivals and special events to adult populations. *World Leisure and Recreation*, 37(1), 14-15.

Chalip, L. (2006). Toward a distinctive sport management discipline. *Journal of Sport Management*, 20(1), 1-21.

Cohen, E. (1988). Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 15(3), 371-386.

Cohen, E. (1995). Contemporary tourism – Trends and challenges. Sustainable authenticity or contrived post-modernity? In R. Butler and D. Pearce (Eds.), *Change in Tourism. People, Places, Processes* (pp.12-29). London: Routledge.

Commonwealth of Australia, (1991). *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody*, National Report (5 vols) (Commissioner E. Johnston). Canberra: AGPS.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2008). *About Australia: Sporting Events*. Available online: http://www.dfat.gov.au/facts/sporting_events.html.

Derrett, R. (2002). Making sense of how festivals demonstrate a community's sense of place. *Proceedings of the Events and Place Making Conference Sydney*. Sydney: University of Technology Sydney, Australian Centre for Event Management.

Downey, B. (1993). Major sports events in Victoria: The economic impact and related tourism opportunities. *Leisure Options*, July, 28-32.

Eggington, R. (2002). *Bulyer Boona Boodja Koora Kooralong Ale Nyoongah Myar (Sacred Stick From the Land Long Ago is South West Aboriginal People's Property)*. Perth: Dumbartung Aboriginal Corporation.

First Contact Inc. (2003). *Sports & Cultural Festival: Business Plan*. Brisbane: Unpublished.

First Contact Inc. (2007). *Media Release: Indigenous Festival goes National on Foxtel*. Released 28 November 2007. Available online: <http://www.firstcontact.asn.au>.

Foo, L.M. (1998). *Cultural Tourism in Australia: Characteristics & Motivations*. Canberra: Bureau of Tourism Research.

Frankel, M. & Janke, T. (1998). *Our Culture, Our Future: Report on Australian Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights*. Surrey Hills: Michael Frankel & Coy.

Gwinner, K.P. & Eaton, J. (1999). Building brand image through event sponsorship: The role of image transfer. *Journal of Advertising*, 28(4), 47-57.

Hall, C.M. (1992). *Hallmark Tourist Events: Impacts, Management and Planning*. London: Belhaven Press.

Hall, C.M. (1996). Hallmark events and urban reimagining strategies. In L. Harrison and W. Husbands (Eds.), *Practicing Responsible Tourism: International Case Studies in Tourism Planning, Policy and Development* (pp.366-379). Toronto: John Wiley and Sons.

Hall, C.M. & Weiler, B. (1992). What is special about special interest tourism? In B. Weiler and C.M. Hall (Eds.), *Special Interest Tourism* (pp.1-14). London: Belhaven Press.

Harrison, D. (1996). Sustainability and tourism: Reflections from a muddy pool. In L. Briguglio, B. Archer, J. Jafari and G. Wall (Eds.), *Sustainable Tourism in Islands and Small States: Issues and Policies* (pp.69-89). London: Pinter.

Harron, S., & Weiler, B. (1992). Ethnic tourism. In B. Weiler and C.M. Hall (Eds.), *Special Interest Tourism* (pp. 83-94). London: Belhaven Press.

Hunn, C. (2000). *Modelling the Economic Impact of Special Events*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, St Lucia: Department of Economics, The University of Queensland.

Kaspar, C. (1987). The role and impact of mega events and attractions on national and regional tourism development. *Proceedings of the 37th Congress of AIEST*, 28, pp.11-12. Calgary.

Kurtzman, J., & Zauhar, J. (2003). A wave in time: The sports tourism phenomena. *Journal of Sport Tourism*, 8(1), 35–47.

Masterman, G. (2004). *Strategic Sports Event Management: An International Approach*. Oxford: Elsevier.

McLennan, C. & Ruhanen, L. (2008). *Analysis of National, State, Regional and Local Tourism Strategies and Plans: Identification of Strategic Issues*. Gold Coast: Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre.

McPherson, B. & Curtis, J.E. (1989). *The Social Significance of Sport*. Illinois: Human Kinetics.

Mercer, D. (1994). Native peoples and tourism: Conflict and compromise. In W.F. Theobald (Ed.), *Global Tourism: The Next Decade* (pp. 124-145). Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Moore, J., & Herron, J. (1997). *National Framework for Indigenous Tourism*. Available online: <http://www.dist.gov.au/media/archive/october97/298%2D97.html>.

Moscardo, G. & Pearce, P. L. (1999). Understanding ethnic tourists. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2), 416-434.

Northern Territory Tourist Commission (2008). *Five Year Tourism Strategic Plan: A Plan to Guide the Direction and Success of the Northern Territory Tourism Industry 2008 to 2012*. Darwin: Northern Territory Tourist Commission.

Notzke, C. (1999). Indigenous tourism development in the Arctic. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(1), 55-76.

Office of National Tourism, (1997). *Towards a National Tourism Plan*. Canberra: AGPS.

Peiser, B. (1996). *Western Theories about the Origins of Sport in Ancient China*. Available online: <http://www.umist.ac.uk/sport/peiser2>.

Pitcher, M., van Oosterzee, P. & Palmer, L. (1999). *'Choice and Control': The Development of Indigenous Tourism in Australia*. Darwin: Centre for Indigenous Natural and Cultural Resource Management, Northern Territory University, CRC for Sustainable Tourism.

Ritchie, J. (1984). Assessing the impact of hallmark events: Conceptual and research issues. *Journal of Travel Research*, 23(1), 2-11.

Ritchie, J. & Smith, B. (1991). The impact of a mega-event on host region awareness. *Journal of Travel Research*, 30(1), 3-10.

Roche, M. (1994). Mega events and urban policy. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 21(1), 1-19.

Ryan, C. & Huyton, J. (2000). Who is interested in Aboriginal tourism in the Northern Territory, Australia? A cluster analysis. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 8(1), 53-88.

Ryan, C., & Huyton, J. (2002). Tourists and aboriginal people. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29(3), 631-647.

Scantlebury, M. G. (2008). Is the sacred for sale? Tourism and Indigenous people. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 612-614.

Schmiechen, J. (2006). *Indigenous Tourism Research Agenda: Key Directions for the Future 2005-2008*. Northern Territory Tourism Commission, Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre, Tropical Savannas Cooperative Research Centre & Charles Darwin University.

Soutar, G. N., & McLeod, P. B. (1993). Resident's perceptions on impact of the America's Cup. *Annals of Tourism*, 20(3), 571-582.

South Australian Tourism Commission (1998). *Indigenous Tourism Demand: A Background Research Report*. Adelaide: South Australia Government.

Tourism Australia (2007). *Australian Government Response to National Tourism Emerging Markets Strategy and National Tourism Investment Strategy Reports*. Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources: Canberra.

Tourism Queensland (2004). *Indigenous Tourism Strategy*. Brisbane: Tourism Queensland.

Travis, A., & Croize, J. (1987). The Role and Impact of Mega Events and Attractions on Tourism Development in Europe: A Micro Perspective. *Proceedings of the 37th Congress of AIEST*, 28, pp. 59-78. Calgary.

van Den Berg, R. (2002). *Nyoongar People of Australia: Perspectives on Racism and Multiculturalism*. Leiden Boston: Brill.

van Den Berg, R., Collard, L., Harben, S. & Byrne, J. (2005). Nyungar Tourism in the South West Region of Western Australia: A Literature Review of Tourism. Available online: http://www.cscr.murdoch.edu.au/ncs_lit_review.doc.

Walle, A. H. (1996). Habits of thought and cultural tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 23(4), 874-890.

Wang, N. (1999). Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 26(2), 340-370.

Whitford, M. (2004). Regional development through domestic and tourist event policies: Gold Coast and Brisbane 1974-2003. *HTL Science*, 1, 1-24.

Wilson-Clark, C. (2003). Lost Treasures of the Nyoongars. *The West Australian Weekend Extra*, Feb 15, pp. 8-9.

Witt, S. (1998). Mega events and mega attractions. *Tourism Management*, 9(1), 76-77.

Zeppel, H. (1998). Selling the dreamtime: Aboriginal culture in Australian tourism. In D. Rowe and G. Lawrence (Eds.) *Tourism, Leisure, Sport: Critical Perspectives* (pp. 23-38). Rydalmere: Hodder Education.

Zeppel, H. (1999). Touring Aboriginal cultures: Encounters with Aboriginal people in Australian travelogues. *Tourism, Culture and Communication*, 2, 123-141.