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## A SWOT ANALYSIS ON SUSTAINABILITY OF FESTIVALS: THE CASE OF INTERNATIONAL TROIA FESTIVAL

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### Abstract

Events are important motivators of tourism, and figure prominently in the development and marketing plans of most destinations. They are universally important for their social and cultural roles, and increasingly have been promoted and created as tourist attractions. This study is structured into two objectives. The first objective of the study is to identify the current condition of the International Troia Festival (ITF) by definition of problems, managerial challenges, and the roles of stakeholders. This will be achieved through employing observation and interview techniques. The second objective of the study is to identify the current position of the ITF, including its sustainability and marketplace by employing a SWOT analysis.

**Keywords:** Festivals, Festival Tourism, Sustainability, Culture, SWOT Analysis, International Troia Festival.

### Introduction

Festivals are viewed as tools in place marketing and destination image making, and are valued for their ability to animate cities, resorts, and attractions (Andersson and Getz, 2008: 200). The general population of urban centers hosting festivals seldom derives any sustainable employment opportunities from festival tourism (Janniskee and Drews, 1998). Festivals are being more substantial for territorial and regional tourism planning activities. In that respect, the International Troia Festival (ITF) has a high potential of regional and territorial publicity with its historical prosperity from Iliad, with its cultural prosperity from different identities in Çanakkale, Turkey.

Çanakkale is located in Western Anatolia, and over the years it has become a livable and lively culture and college town with its' cultural heritage and activities. The city holds one of the older cultural festivals in Turkey. The event, organized in 1963 firstly by the city municipal authority attracts a significant number of people to its approximately 50 events over a period of 5 days in August every year. The festival is recognized as the symbol of cultural heritage, history, and intercultural communication in Çanakkale and neighboring cities. The mission of the festival is to enliven and enrich environmental consciousness, cultural awareness, as well as business life in Çanakkale (Gökhan, 2011). In case, the ITF is an international cultural festival which is nourished from Iliad, Odyssey, Trojan, Greek, Ottoman, and modern Turkish cultures, is now being organized 50'th time.

## Literature Review

Festivals are important topic on the main body of tourism research (Gartner and Holecek, 1983; Getz and Frisby, 1988; Uysal and Gitelson 1994; Gwinner, 1997; Visser, 2005). They generally are, and have been, placed on large scale celebrations to explain, how they may stimulate the economic development of tourist destinations (Walo et al., 1996; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Kim et al., 1998; Thrane, 2002, Saayman and Saayman, 2012), and how they may effect and stimulate socio-cultural structure and prosperity (Rao, 2001; Hall, 2001; Jackson et al. 2005; Varotsis, 2006). In addition, researchers explored motivational factors of visitors and dimensions underlying those factors (Backman et al., 1995; Scheneider and Backman, 1996; Scott, 1996; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Formica and Murrmann, 1998; Lee et al., 2004; Yolal et al., 2009, Hallman and Harms, 2012), as well as their importance in raising destination awareness by conveying its' specific identity to maintain competitive advantage (Esman, 1984; Delamere and Hinch, 1994; Besculides et al., 2002), and managerial models in sustaining event lifecycle (Frey, 2000; Varotsis, 2006; Yuan et al., 2008; Mosely and Mowatt, 2011; van Niekerk and Coetzee, 2011).

A number of studies have taken a broader social and cultural identity and prosperity perspective on festivals. Varotsis (2006) applied the notion of a re-interpreting cultural identity with festivals and events. Accordingly, Hall (2001) investigated effects of music and dance festivals on culture and cultural tourism with the sample of Indonesian Island of Bali. Raj (2003) indicated that, the festivals have major impact on the development of cultural tourism to the host communities. The festival organizers are now using the historical and cultural themes to develop the annual events, to attract visitors and to create cultural image in the host cities by holding festivals in the community settings. Therefore, the communities therein, whose members are themselves increasingly on the move, are constantly having to re-interpret their cultural identity in the light of both their immediate, past and projected experiences. Consequently, as researchers (Hall, 2001; Raj, 2003; Inkei, 2005) have contested that, local communities plays vital role with their culture and identity in development of tourism through festivals. Similarly, events and festivals play vital role on cultural identity of local communities, and have a big potential to generate cultural profundity and prosperity when they cater to out-of-region visitors, grants, or sponsorships (Getz, 1997).

According to O'Sullivan and Jackson (2002), the impact of festival tourism are, however, not always that self-evident. The influx of tourists can result in a change in the community infrastructure to serve the needs of festival visitors, so that as festivals grow and begin to make stronger links outside the locality, local entrepreneurs can become resentful and the economic benefits of the festivals less significant (Visser, 2005: 157). Yolal et al. (2009: 288), identified that, festivals are important on city officials and organizers of the events. They are aware that community cohesion and benefits sought from the festival, as well as the different means for attending the events, are all interconnected. To know the extent of the relationship that exists between those attending events, and their perceptions of the benefits and costs, helps city officials to develop appropriate policies and platforms to further build community cohesion, thereby gaining support from locals for future programs.

Tourism and social events provide incentives for locals and businesses (Allen et al., 1993; Gürsoy et al., 2004). A number of researchers have emphasized that there is a positive relationship between festival sustainability and community benefits (Gürsoy et al., 2004; Rao, 2001; Besculides et al., 2002; Chwe, 1998). Personal benefits or incentives from tourism are important positive impacts of tourism (Lankford and Howard, 1994; Tosun, 2002). According to the residents perception some of the studies emphasized that increasing traffic congestion and pressure on local services are shown as basic problems of tourism activities (Keogh, 1990; Jurowski, et al., 1997; Tosun, 2002; Gürsoy et al., 2004). Saayman and Saayman (2012) examined the impact of sport events on local economy via Comrades Marathon. They determined that Comrades Marathon contributes significantly to the provincial economy and that more than 600 jobs are dependent on the event. Yan et al., (2012) conceptualized the dimensionality of

programming quality of festivals and empirically tested it and its relationships with the satisfaction and behavioral intention levels of festival visitors. Consist of six dimensions, namely diversity, stakeholder balance, incrementality, simultaneity, flexibility, and linkage were found and pointed out with their research. Chwe (1998) argued that festivals and special events provide social incentives for residents to get actively involved in community activities and provide incentives for businesses to get involved in the community because of new promotional opportunities for businesses, and new recreational opportunities for locals.

Even though festivals and special events became one of the fastest growing of tourism attractions and research subject for tourism researchers, a few researchers have focused on specific context of sustainability debates on festivals. Therefore a little attention has been paid to whether festivals can provide an effective vehicle for urban tourism with sustainability context in its all processes (Frey, 2000; Quinn, 2006; Getz, 2010). According to Quinn (2006), the conceptualization of festival practices as socially sustaining devices is important to consider into the context of sustainable tourism. It is stated in this study that, the rationale of sustainable festival management and event organization usually rest on the assurance of removable economic, social, and cultural benefits to the human community and urban life.

### **Method**

More than one research method was employed, enabling triangulation of methods (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000). This approach can contribute to improved reliability and validity of the results of the research (Rossman and Rallis, 1998: 221).

### ***The Problem***

Defining a research problem is crucial in defining the quality of the answers, and determines the exact research method used (Shuttleworth, 2008). The problem of the study was; "what are the strategies that have to be applied on improvement of the managerial effectiveness for providing sustainability of the ITF as a universal festival?"

### ***Setting and Sample***

Observation technique is the first step of the research. Within this context, the whole of the events and event fields of the International Troia festival were considered as part of the observation. Content analysis was employed for solving and interpreting the findings. Content analysis is a research method which allows the qualitative data collected in research to be analyzed systematically and reliably so that generalizations can be made from them in relation to the categories of interest to the researcher (Haggarty, 1996). The data were collected primarily through recorded interviews and observation forms. If data are collected primarily through interviews, open ended questions will be used. Probes also tended to be open ended or specific to the participant's comments rather than to a preexisting theory, data analysis starts with reading all data repeatedly to achieve an impression and obtain a sense of the whole (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) as if one would read a novel. The recorded data were then typed on Microsoft office word program and read word by word to derive codes (Huberman and Miles, 2002) by first highlighting the exact words from the text that appear to capture key thoughts or concepts. Next the text was examined by making notes of the first impressions, thoughts and initial analysis. As this process continues, labels for codes emerge that are reflective of more than one key thought. Then codes were sorted into categories based on how different codes were related and linked. These emergent categories were used to organize and group codes into meaningful clusters (Patton, 2002). Those systematic were followed for analyzing the techniques which were used in this study.

Interview technique is the second step of the research. The interviews were semi-structured via 11 questions and the population was consisted of 15 people. 3 of them are the academic from Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, 3 of them are the members of non-governmental organizations of the city, 4 of them are the members of tourism sector (managers of the hospitality businesses and travel agencies), 2 of them are the members of city council and

current agenda 21, and 3 of them are employers of city corporation and public sector. The interviewees were selected according to observations on festival events.

Content analysis was employed in this study for the interviews and observations. There are various approaches to coding (Günlü et al., 2009);

- Coding according to previously identified concepts
- Coding according to the concepts identified through the data being analyzed
- Coding in a general framework.

The second coding type “coding according to the concepts identified through the data being analyzed” was preferred in this research since there is no previously defined conceptual structure guiding the analysis of the data.

One of the most important things in qualitative research is to test the validity and reliability of the research. Implementing different techniques in the same research, such as interviews and observation, is termed triangulation of methods. This is one means of improving the reliability of the research (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000). In order to test the validity of the research, two independent scholars were selected and were asked to investigate the codes and incidence of coding. As soon as they had coded and calculated incidence rates separately, responses were collated and the correct application of code determined by the author. After coding, code lists were classified into themes.

### **Research Findings**

#### *Findings from the Observations*

The whole of the events and the fields where the events organized at the ITF were considered as part of the observation. Within this context, 50 events were observed in 17 event field during the festival organization and content analysis was used for solving and interpreting the findings. Table 1, shows the themes and codes identified in the observation data.

Table 1: Themes and codes from observations on the event fields

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Code List</b>	<b>Coding score</b>	<b>Total Event</b>
<b>Structure of the Event Fields</b>	Outdoor/Historical instruments	7	50
	Closed space	9	50
	Amateur concert area	6	50
	Professional concert area	6	50
	Event space in streets	9	50
	Open air park	9	50
	Amphitheatre	4	50
<b>General character of event visitors</b>	Local people	33	50
	Mixed with local and foreign visitors	8	50
	Non organized mass	18	50
	Event oriented mass	34	50
	Special interests	21	50
<b>Cultural samples on event fields</b>	Thematic (theatre, folklore etc.)	29	50
	Outdoor concert	9	50
	International culture samples	21	50
	Local culture and identity samples	27	50
<b>General feature of the event</b>	Massive	21	50
	Unique (thematic)	22	50
	Cultural	32	50
	International	9	50
	Local	28	50
	Environmental	7	50
<b>Instruments which have to be protected from corruption and developed</b>	Events oriented local themes and cultures	23	50
	International culture events	32	50
	Publicity and promotion	36	50
	Professional festival/fair field	38	50
<b>Effects of the festival on urban tourism</b>	Local and touristic	4	50
	Touristic on international level	4	50
	Local (not touristic)	36	50

As seen on Table 1, general structure of event fields are varying with 7 different types. Event attractions were organized on 17 different fields which are with 7 different structural types. Mostly local people attend the events and they display non-organized massive visitor character generally. This result indicates that different fields and inadequate advertisement and publicity cause coincidental attendance to the festival events. Thematic features of the events are taking intensive interest from visitors with special interest level. The observations on events indicated that the ITF is an international festival but not international with its visitor origins, event attractions, and structural characters sufficiently. But also it is an international festival in terms of its cultural heritage, historical background, community support, and awareness of the people. The ITF is a cultural festival according to results of observation technique. The observations on the field indicated that general features of the events are hosting cultural, thematic, and massive instruments together. Local and international culture samples are in themes of which have to be protected. Effective publicity, advertisement, public relations, professional support, and organizational structure are in themes of instruments which have to be developed.

*Findings from the Interviews*

15 recorded interviews were performed during the festival organization. The participants of the interviews were chosen from different socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The interviewees were selected according to observations on festival events. The frequency of codes and themes from the interviews are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Frequencies of the Themes and codes between interviewees

Themes	Codes listed according to themes	Total mentions	F %
Structure of the festival	Culture festival	15	100
	International tourism festival	8	53,3
	Local tourism festival		
Current situation of the festival	A great image fact for city	12	80
	Local festival qualification	14	93,3
	International festival qualification	6	40
	Amateur festival qualification	12	80
Effects of festival on social and cultural structure	Non-excited festival	8	53,3
	Embracing whole of the community	8	53,3
	Increasing cultural brightness	12	80
	Distant from embracing whole of the community	13	86,6
Values which have to be protected	Mobilizing social and economic life	4	26,6
	Unique historical and cultural sources	15	100
	Contribution on local values and culture	9	60
	Part on international publicity	15	100
Effects of festival on Çanakkale tourism	Contribution on city image	15	100
	Refreshing city tourism	5	33,3
	Doesn't affect the city tourism	12	80
	Attracting domestic visitors	5	33,3
Policies have to be applied	Attracting foreign visitors	5	33,3
	All stakeholder participation	14	93,3
	Exploitation from ideas of authorities	13	86,6
	Theme including city history and culture	13	86,6
	Programmed development process	12	80
Elements have to be developed	Settlement far from authorization	7	46,6
	Publicity, public relations, advertisement	15	100
	Professional festival/fair field	13	86,6
Next festival development	Events suitable to intangible inputs of Festival	12	80
	Effective stakeholder participation	14	93,3
	Professional festival field	13	86,6
	Inclusive festival organization	11	73,3
	Events suitable for Festival theme	11	73,3

As seen on Table 2, the interviewees are characterizing the ITF as a culture festival and image factor of the city. According to the analyses of the interviews, the ITF is being specified as a local and amateur festival. At the same time the festival is an important factor on social and

cultural structure of the city but hasn't got an inclusive feature for whole of the society according to the interviewees. Interviewees decelerated views about necessity of protecting sources of historical and cultural heritage of the festival. Thereby developing theme and organization of festival intended to increase contribution of festival on city image, social, cultural and economic structure of the city are important factors to provide sustainability of the festival. According to the interviewees, effect of the ITF on Çanakkale tourism is deficient and stakeholder participation should be provided during the festival organization process.

### SWOT Analysis on Troia Festival

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the festival organization were analyzed in terms of sustainability via the data gained from observations, interviews, and the survey. Accordingly, the data of the SWOT analysis has obtained from the results of content analyses of observation and interview techniques, and the results of logistic regression analysis on survey. The SWOT analysis tool is important for developing an understanding of an organization, situation and decision-making for all sorts of situations in businesses, organizations, and for individuals. The SWOT analysis headings provide a good framework for reviewing strategy, position and direction of a company, product, project, region or person (Popa, 2010). The purpose of the analysis of external opportunities and threats is to evaluate whether an enterprise or a project can seize opportunities and avoid threats when facing an uncontrollable external environment, such as fluctuating prices, political destabilization, social transition, change in role of law, etc. the purpose of analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses is to evaluate how an enterprise or project carries out its internal work, such as management, work, efficiency, research and development etc. (Chang and Huang, 2006: 158).

If used correctly, SWOT can provide a good basis for successful strategy formulation. Table 3 shows the SWOT analysis for the ITF.

Table 3: SWOT Analysis for International Troia Festival

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><b>Natural attractions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural attractions of Çanakkale as a city where the festival is being organized (Substantial flora and fauna, convenient climate, beaches, clear sea, fresh air and islands etc.).</li> </ul> <p><b>Cultural Attractions</b></p> <p><i>City</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnographic values</li> <li>• Mythological values</li> <li>• Cultural events (carnivals, festivals, etc.)</li> <li>• Authentic villages (structural and cultural)</li> </ul> <p><i>Festival</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural events (Concerts, theatres, folk dances, exhibitions etc.).</li> <li>• Mythological values which are the source festival.</li> <li>• International cultures and values which attends to the events.</li> </ul> <p><b>Archeological attractions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Troas, Assos, Parion, Alexandria Troas, Imbros, Tenedos etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Touristic Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security and communication service</li> <li>• Hospitality and F&amp;B Organizations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Institutional Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-governmental organizations</li> <li>• Local Authorities collaboration</li> <li>• Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University</li> <li>• Agents of tourism sector (Accommodation, F&amp;BE and Travel)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficiency of consistent and well equipped festival/fair field/region.</li> <li>• Deficiency of the fields of festival events.</li> <li>• Deficiency of an effective festival speech and theme.</li> <li>• Deficiency of festival publicity.</li> <li>• Amateurism of festival organization.</li> <li>• Locality of international festival.</li> <li>• Deficiency of utilizing internationalization sources of festival (Troy, Iliad etc.).</li> <li>• Deficiency of professional support.</li> <li>• Deficiency of effective sponsorship.</li> <li>• Deficient stakeholder participation..</li> <li>• Deficient physical and service quality of event fields.</li> <li>• Deficiency of entertainment and shopping points.</li> <li>• Deficiency of hygiene conditions and tourist health.</li> <li>• Deficient security and health service on event fields.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<p><b>Potential Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment opportunities for local people during</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disruption of ecologic and cultural structure</li> <li>• Big accommodation enterprises which adaptable</li> </ul>

<p>festival organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rise of cultural and ecologic environmental conscience</li> <li>• Contributing maintenance of natural, cultural, and historical values of the region</li> <li>• Being alternative of time factor and “3S” mass tourism</li> <li>• Providing integration of cultural tourism with other touristic attractions</li> <li>• Providing accommodation opportunities convenient for Festival visitors’ choices.</li> </ul> <p><b>Advances related sustainability of festival org.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increase of collaboration between local authorities and tourism sector.</li> <li>• Increase of contribution of university</li> <li>• Efforts for professional support on festival events.</li> <li>• Old background and sustainability of festival.</li> </ul>	<p>with cultural and environmental structure of the island are being established</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique historical values of the Festival are being lost.</li> <li>• Potential effects of political changes on festival organization.</li> <li>• Inadequate governance on facilities.</li> </ul>
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Socio-cultural, socio-economic, and structural problems resulting from sustainable festival organization in Çanakkale were exposed according to the results of the field research. The advantages and disadvantages of the festival, opportunities and threats to the Çanakkale tourism and the ITF were determined with a SWOT analysis.

### Discussion

Festivals and events are now a worldwide tourism phenomenon and are central to the culture of host community as perhaps never before. As van Niekert and Coetzee (2011) indicated that festivals have shown tremendous growth as larger and smaller towns seek tourism dollars created by short-term events. From a tourism perspective, festivals create product, enliven a destination, and promise a glimpse into the authentic culture of a place. From a festival perspective, visitors create new forms of demand, sources box office of income, and a mean heightening of their reputation.

This study focused on determining current condition of the ITF by definition of basic problems, managerial challenges, and roles of stakeholders, identifying current position of festival on international marketplace to gain sustainability of the festival. In this context, a SWOT analysis was employed to determine strengths and opportunities of the ITF towards similar local and international festivals in sustainability perspective and to emphasize weaknesses of current organization and threats to the festival in process of gaining sustainability in marketplace. As seen on table 3, natural, cultural, archeological prosperity, and touristic and institutional infrastructure of Çanakkale are the strengths of the ITF to gain competitive advantage in marketplace. Also environmental conscience, employment, and accommodation etc. are the opportunities of the ITF for Çanakkale tourism. The ITF has a significant influence on socio-cultural and socio-economic life of Çanakkale with its’ long history, cultural heritage, and historical sources as an international event. The results suggested that, the success of any festival or special event heavily relies on the support of local communities; organizers may place more importance on the social benefits of festivals and special events to the local community. An effective and sustainable festival organization requires effective stakeholder participation, especially non-governmental organizations, tourism sector and local peoples who might be influenced by festival organization including the ITF. Effective stakeholder participation is an important element that is underlying on success of big organizations, like events and festivals etc. In this context, effective collaboration of stakeholders should be gained for robust tourism development.

Field researches of the study and SWOT analysis indicated that the ITF should be based on cultural heritage which is its’ own source. Also the festival should be based on an effective theme which reflects its’ cultural heritage on determination of city identity at the same time. Effective professional support should be provided for festival organization process. In this

context, similar festivals and their successful processes should be examined. A Professional festival/fair field with high standards of physical equipment and service quality should be constructed for the ITF and accordingly for Çanakkale.

A successful and sustainable tourism strategy identifies how to; welcome and involve visitors satisfaction, achieve a profitable and prosperous industry, engage and benefit host communities, and protect and enhance the local environment. These factors will become more and more important for the ITF to heightened competition. Field research determined deficient publicity and advertisement campaign oriented to the ITF. Effective publicity and advertisement campaign should be performed to promote tangible and intangible values of the ITF. For this purpose, publicity and advertisement programs about festival should be performed at international events like EMIT, EXPO etc. In addition, effective sponsorship support and service should be performed with spreading on broader environment during the organizing and programming process of festival organization.

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