

Article

Study of Perceptions on Cultural Events' Sustainability

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Abstract: Cultural events and festivals can have a significant and important influence on the development of local communities. Their utilization of the endogenous resources of an area means that these events, most often, have a positive impact on the local economy. Quite consequentially, they may also extend the socio-cultural opportunities of local citizens. However, their utilization of time and space does raise concerns regarding environmental impact. Therefore, it is imperative that stakeholders study their net impact on a region. This present paper examines the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impact of the Transilvania International Film Festival (TIFF). With a history of 15 editions, the festival gathers, year by year, an increasing number of people in Cluj-Napoca. The growth of the event has had unmistakable and important effects on the city. The purpose of the paper is to analyze resident participants' perceptions on economic, socio-cultural, and environmental effects. To reach this goal, an exploratory and descriptive research was conducted. Both primary and secondary data were used in the analysis, the questionnaire being the main tool used for collecting data about participants' perceptions. The results emphasize the positive effects at the socio-cultural level. The festival provides multiple possibilities to spend free time in a pleasant way, it sustains the development of cultural life, and it improves the educational and the cultural level of community. Moreover, the festival does not influence, in a negative manner, the moral principles of the society and it does not generate an increase in crime rate. From the economic point of view, the festival has the capacity to attract investments and additional revenues for the local government, it sustains the development of the city infrastructure, and it creates opportunities for residents to develop new economic activities. Lastly, from the environmental point of view, the festival sustains the improvement of environmental issues, it does not generate important traffic problems, and it does not deteriorate touristic resources.

Keywords: cultural events; sustainability; film festival; residents' perceptions; economic impact; socio-cultural impact; environmental impact

1. Introduction

Nowadays, event tourism represents an important sector for tourism development and a substantial area in Destination Marketing/Management Organizations' (DMOs) policies and strategies. From their perspectives, events are highly valued as attractions, catalysts, place marketers, and image-makers [1]. Events are not new to community life and are related to the manifestations of local traditions, habits, or arts; they gather together people to take part in, or to observe, specific activity [2]. They are of interest to scholars of various disciplines (anthropology, sociology, and leisure and tourism) because of their role in reducing tourism demand seasonality [3,4]. According to the nature of the events, attention is given to three types of events: business, sport, and festivals or other

cultural celebrations. Of these events, the latter two have raised the most interest for DMOs due to their potential economic value generation.

Cultural festivals and celebrations have proliferated in the last 20 years to a greater degree than any other form of community event [5]. Urban economic development and urban tourism have been invigorated by the repositioning of art and cultural festivals in the urban policy agenda [6–8]. These venues offer citizens and visiting tourists the opportunity to extend their cultural horizons and experiences. Thus, festivals offer an alternative urban leisure opportunity to citizens, and a cultural experience to those tourists focused on culture [9]. The tourism approach of cultural and arts festivals has become an important focus for researchers interested in cultural studies [10]. They are often described as a cultural process in which culture is consumed, reproduced, and created [11]. Getz (2008) [1] defined cultural festivals as specific events within the cultural domain, which present a significant contribution in terms of originality or innovation in their field. But a more comprehensive perspective regarding cultural and arts festivals implies a threefold goal of (1) attracting resources and participants; (2) repositioning the urban image; and (3) acting as a driving force for cultural activity and social cohesion [11].

Cultural events have a major role in the development of cultural tourism. Film tourism is an important component of cultural tourism and is defined as “tourist visits to a destination or attraction as a result of the destination’s being featured on television, video, or the cinema screen” [12]. According to Grunwell and Ha (2008), one of the most rapidly expanding forms of cultural events worldwide is represented by film festivals [13]. In this context, the sustainability of cultural events has become an important issue for the event organizers (and stakeholders). However, “relatively little attention has been paid to whether festivals can provide an effective vehicle for sustainable tourism” [10].

In this regard, an understanding of residents’ perceptions toward the event’s benefits within a sustainable perspective is important for event organizers and local administration in order to develop efficient strategies for events development and resident involvement. Each individual may perceive the impact of an event according to its characteristics. This is the reason it is important for stakeholders to group participants into different segments and gain a better understanding of their needs and behaviors [14]. Thus, the objective of the study was to evaluate the residents’ perception regarding the level of sustainability for a cultural event—Transilvania International Film Festival (TIFF)—and to understand how their perceptions can be influenced by two specific types of factors: demographic factors and attending motivations.

2. Literature Review

The literature contains various approaches to evaluating sustainability. Different methods are employed to measure the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural impacts of these events. Although the issue of sustainability evaluation represents an important concern for international institutions, there is no generally accepted approach to evaluating it. Recently, important steps have been taken toward the development of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) performance indicators for destinations, hotels, and tour operators [15] and The European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS) for Sustainable Destinations [16]. According to the European Commission, stakeholders should be able to monitor and manage the sustainability of their tourism activities in a destination. This is the reason for which they have developed the ETIS, which is, besides a management and information tool, a monitoring system allowing for the evaluation of performance in relation to sustainability from one year to another [17]. Hence, sustainability can be perceived as an ongoing improvement process, which can motivate stakeholders to become more and more sustainable. The goal is not “perfect sustainability”, as this is an unrealistic goal [18]. Rather, the stakeholders should aim to achieve a desired level of sustainability, as they work together as a constituent group with the shared goal of enhancing sustainability over time. They can evaluate their progress by comparing the results they achieved with the targets (reference values) they established at the beginning of the evaluation period [19].

In the case of events, the literature focuses mainly on the positive economic benefits for the destination. This is probably due to organizers' inherent self-interest in assessing these effects [20]. The impact of an event can include an assessment of the economic, social, and environmental impacts it has on the local community. The economic impact of a festival can be based on the direct expenditure and opportunity cost [20], a cost-benefit analysis of the festival, or an estimation of the local economic impact [21]. The environmental impact can be assessed using the ecological footprint [20,22], carbon calculations [20], or environmental input-output analysis [22]. Cierjacks et al. (2012) suggest a number of operational performance indicators for litter management which can be used for predicting litter distribution in the festival area and for assessing the efficiency of litter reduction measures [23].

The socio-cultural impact of festivals can be examined from different perspectives: in monetary terms as a non-use value [20], as the instantaneous social capital generated on its attendees [21], et cetera. Festivals encourage the building of social capital and foster the development of local communities, while culture has an important role in terms of both touristic attraction and creation of instantaneous social ties [21]. Visitor benefits gained from attending a multicultural festival in South Korea were analyzed by Lee, Insun, and Lee. Transformational benefit was identified as the greatest single benefit of multicultural festival attendance. The results of this study show that multicultural festivals have an important role in promoting harmony and integration, by improving mutual understanding between migrants and natives [24].

Thus, in the context of sustainable tourism development, a new approach emerged: the sustainable event. This becomes crucial for those communities for which tourism development depends on festivals and events [25]. Consequently, in order to contribute in a sustainable manner to the local development, the events have to assure a balance between economic, social, and environmental objectives, with appropriate strategies for optimizing positive and minimizing negative impacts and be self-sustaining with only a minimum of public sector support [26]. Sustainable events should have an ethical dimension, characterized through the adoption of pro-environmental practices like reduction of energy consumption, use of public transportation, or waste management [27]. A similar approach is promoted by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which adds that a sustainable event should leave a "beneficial legacy for the host community and all involved" [28]. The potential negative impact should be reduced, firstly, by evaluating if it is really necessary for the event to take place or if its timing can be coordinated with other existing meetings or events. If a coordination of events is not practical, the new event and its venue should feature unique characteristics that are likely to generate a legacy that will last long after the event [28].

Smith-Christensen (2009) emphasized that, apart from sustainability, responsibility represents a key characteristic of events. In view of their contribution to the sustainable development of the local community, these events should be responsible. Thus, stakeholders, including local authorities, sponsors, suppliers, the private sector, and the community, should be concerned with both characteristics of the events [26]. Compared to other types of events, culture and art festivals are not efficient from an economic point of view. Therefore, the direct implications of governmental and public administration in financial support is mandatory and should take into consideration their goals related to the improvement of the community's life style and quality of life. The lack of financial resources is considered a main barrier to organizing sustainable events (besides the lack of time, knowledge, skills, and stakeholder involvement) [29]. As a result, in the case of cultural events, this aspect represents a critical issue for achieving sustainability. In this context, the sustainable manner for managing and organizing events can be better followed in accordance with the strategies for assessing sustainable urban and tourism development. According to the "PoS" framework [30] a key element of sustainability is what is often referred to as the "institutional dimension". The institutional context of sustainability refers to the extent of residents' participation in the decision process regarding the development of the community. Cavus and Tarrisevdi (2003) found that when the residents believe that they have a voice and that they exercise some control over the tourism planning process, they express more favorable attributions about its development [31].

Dickson and Arcodia (2010) examined the role of professional associations in promoting sustainable event practices. The results show that professional event associations are less involved in encouraging event managers to ensure the events they organize are sustainable than are citizens' groups [32]. Yao-Kuei (2016) studied the impact of government policy on festival loyalty of various interested parties (tourists, residents, and local businesses). Their research identifies a direct and positive relationship between government policy and environment quality, and a direct and positive relationship between environment quality and loyalty [33].

The attitude of the residents toward the impacts of event tourism development is important to both the public administration/government and to event organizers. According to Assante, Wen, and Lotting (2012), the perception of residents of effective government management of tourism will have a positive effect on overall community satisfaction and will lead to a positive attitude for sustainable tourism development [34]. The individual's attitude represents a mental, emotional, or rational predisposition with regard to an object, fact, person, or situation. Attitude is formed on the basis of learning, information, thinking, experience, predisposition, belief, faith, observation, et cetera, and it plays an important role in influencing a person's behavior. Thus, the attitude represents a link that connects the individual's perception to the behavioral intention [34]. Therefore, in order to understand the residents' attitudes toward events, we need to examine their perceptions on different factors and situations.

The residents, more precisely the ones who attend the event, play an important role in this process. It is their capacity as customers which make them most sensitive to, and aware of, progress in the event's sustainability. Because the film festival takes place every year over a period of 10 days, these customers have the opportunity to perceive the event's sustainability from two perspectives: as participants—perceiving all the potential benefits of being there and experiencing the festival atmosphere and as residents—perceiving all the potential negative effects when they do not attend the festival, yet must endure the pedestrian and automobile traffic within the city during their daily commutes and as they fulfill their regular responsibilities within the community. The residents' involvement and favorable perceptions towards the event's sustainability influence their attitudes and support of the development of the event [34]. Although some approaches in evaluating citizen' perceptions of events have focused on emphasizing the role of different factors (including demographic characteristics) in determining attitudes towards the event, the findings of these studies have been inconclusive [35].

3. Materials and Methods

This paper focuses on residents' perceptions of the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts of festival activities. To evaluate the activities which could generate positive and negative effects, we conducted exploratory research, reviewed the existent literature [36,37], and conducted interviews with TIFF organizers. To evaluate the residents' perceptions, we used a questionnaire to collect data. An online questionnaire was administered two weeks following the end of the festival. The survey was sent (by email) to 3466 TIFF participants. Of the 563 valid responses, 463 were from residents and 100 were from visitors. Because our interest is in local perceptions of the event, our analysis included only those resident participants of the 2016 festival. From the statistical point of view, the sample is representative at 95% confidence level in terms of both the number of festival's participants and the city's number of inhabitants. To determine the minimum size of the sample, the methodology for finite population implemented in a similar study was used [38] (for example, in order to be statistically representative for the entire population of the city, at 95% confidence level, the size of the sample should be 383 answers). The sample's structure is similar in terms of demographic characteristics with the structure of the TIFF participants, an aspect which ensures the sample's representativeness. Compared to the city's population, there are differences in terms of age, education, and gender (the sample's respondents are younger, more educated, and there are more women), an aspect which represents a limitation of the study.

Based on the literature of event sustainability [1,10,20,26,36,39] and on residents' perceptions [25,37], 23 items were generated to assess the residents' perceptions in the case of TIFF. Of the 23 items created, six addressed economic factors, nine socio-cultural factors, and eight environmental aspects. All the items were evaluated using a five point Likert scale with the following two anchors: strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5). Table 1 provides additional information regarding the way these items were generated/identified in different studies. The items used were derived from three sources:

- previous studies where these items were tested and implemented;
- adaptations from previous studies in order to be more adequate to a film festival or to better express a specific effect; these are identified in Table 1 as “adapted from”;
- created by the authors starting from the conclusions emphasized in the literature; these are identified in Table 1 as “created based on”.

Table 1. Sources used to develop the items.

Items	References
Increases the residents' incomes and their standard of living	Created based on [10,20,25,36,37,39]
Creates new employment opportunities for residents	[25,36,37]; Created based on [39]
Generates additional revenues for the local budget	Created based on [20,26,37]
Attracts investments to the city	[25]
Encourages the residents to develop new economic activities (stimulates the local entrepreneurship)	Created based on [10,26,37]
Generates additional public services expenditures (like police, firemen, etc.)	[37]
Provides multiple opportunities to spend free time	Adapted from [25,37]
Promotes communication and social interactions	Created based on [10,39]
Stimulates the emergence/development of the feeling of pride for “being from Cluj-Napoca”	Created based on [10]
Promotes local culture and identity	Created based on [10,37]
Stimulates the development of city's cultural life	Created based on [10,37,39]
Facilitates the educational and cultural development of the society	Created based on [10]
Improves the residents' foreign language skills	[37]
Generates an increase in crime rate	[37]
Has a negative impact on the society's moral principles	[37,39]
Contributes to the improvement of the city's natural environment	[37]
Creates traffic congestion	Created based on [20,26]; adapted from [25,37,39]
Creates waste and has a negative impact on the city's aesthetic aspect	Created based on [20,39]
Determines an increase in the pollution level in the city	Created based on [20]; adapted from [25]
Contributes to the destruction of tourist attractions	Adapted from [39]
Motivates public institutions to arrange the public spaces (roads, buildings, parks)	Adapted from [25,37]
Motivates public institutions to exploit unused spaces for cultural and social life	Created based on [10,36]
Motivates the public institutions to invest in the restoration of cinemas	Created based on [10,25,36]

Source: created by the authors.

We calculated the Cronbach's α coefficient to test for internal consistency of the three perception scales related to the sustainability of the festival. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or above is considered acceptable [40,41]. The results obtained are presented in Table 2:

Table 2. Internal consistency.

Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's α Value	Decision
Perceptions of Economic Sustainability					
Increases the residents' incomes and their standard of living	3.63	1.027	0.597	0.701/0.830 (without the rejected item)	Accepted
Creates new employment opportunities for residents	3.55	0.992	0.611		Accepted
Generates additional revenues for the local budget	4.13	0.887	0.507		Accepted
Attracts investments to the city	3.99	0.932	0.605		Accepted
Encourages the residents to develop new economic activities (stimulates the local entrepreneurship)	3.78	0.958	0.576		Accepted
Generates additional public services expenditures (like police, firemen, etc.)— <i>opposite values</i>	3.01	1.038	−0.18338		Rejected
Perceptions of Socio-Cultural Sustainability					
Provides multiple opportunities to spend free time	4.70	0.58	0.481	0.78	Accepted
Promotes communication and social interactions	4.38	0.764	0.586		Accepted
Stimulates the emergence/development of the feeling of pride for “being from Cluj-Napoca”	4.23	1.017	0.512		Accepted
Promotes local culture and identity	4.43	0.802	0.586		Accepted
Stimulates the development of city's cultural life	4.75	0.534	0.67		Accepted
Facilitates the educational and cultural development of the society	4.51	0.726	0.615		Accepted
Improves the residents' foreign language skills	3.75	1.022	0.364		Accepted
Generates an increase in crime rate— <i>opposite values</i>	4.19	0.991	0.094		Accepted
Has a negative impact on the society's moral principles— <i>opposite values</i>	4.60	0.818	0.21		Accepted
Perceptions of Environmental Sustainability					
Contributes to the improvement of the city's natural environment	2.90	1	0.163	0.702	Accepted
Creates traffic congestion— <i>opposite values</i>	2.99	1.106	0.317		Accepted
Creates waste and has a negative impact on the city's aesthetic aspect— <i>opposite values</i>	3.93	1.025	0.498		Accepted
Determines an increase in the pollution level in the city— <i>opposite values</i>	4.11	1.011	0.488		Accepted
Contributes to the destruction of tourist attractions— <i>opposite values</i>	4.48	0.813	0.454		Accepted
Motivates public institutions to arrange the public spaces (roads, buildings, parks)	3.72	1.003	0.302		Accepted
Motivates public institutions to exploit unused spaces for cultural and social life	4.17	0.87	0.461		Accepted
Motivates the public institutions to invest in the restoration of cinemas	4.32	0.841	0.443		Accepted

Source: authors' calculations.

Given that the alpha value for all categories of perception were above 0.70, the three survey dimensions demonstrate an acceptable level of internal consistency. Out of the 23 included items, 22 were accepted, but the item related to additional public expenditures generated by the festival was rejected because the Item-Total Correlation value was negative and the alpha value in the absence of this item was higher.

In order to have a better overall measure of the residents' perceptions towards the three dimensions of sustainability (economic, socio-cultural, and environmental), a synthetic/summary variable for each category of perceptions was constructed. The creation of these synthetic variables involved the use of the median of the scores received from each respondent: in the case of economic sustainability perception, the result was the median of the first five items (the sixth item was eliminated), in the case of socio-cultural sustainability perception, the result was the median of the middle nine items, while for environmental sustainability perception, the last eight items were used.

Because some of the items emphasize negative impacts of the event, and given also the fact that a higher score represents a negative aspect from the point of sustainability (i.e., 5—strongly agree in the case of “determines an increase of pollution level in the city”), we reverse coded these items so that they were consistent with the previous coding scheme. As a result, the range of the final score of the synthetic variables was a value between 1 and 5, where 1 represents the perception that the film festival is not sustainable at all, while 5 represents the perception that the film festival reached its “perfect” level. It is advisable that the festival organizers establish their own optimal level: a level which they will consider to be the most appropriate for the future sustainable development of the festival. In this way they will be able to compare their target with the residents' perception. But for the purpose of this investigation, we have used the median value of responses on a 5-point scale in order to gain insights into the fundamental nature and direction of consumer perceptions of the events. This might be thought of as a “benchmark” of sorts that can be used in future assessments of the event.

The literature emphasizes the role of participants' motivation to attend festivals or cultural events and their perceptions regarding the impacts on the local community. To test this relationship, the Bacellar's categories of motivation were used: escapism, watching, content specificity, socialization, event experience, and family togetherness [42]. A set of 12 items describing motivations to attend the TIFF were used (using a Likert scale from 1, not important at all, to 5, very important), and using SPSS they were tested for internal consistency and the variables defining these motivations (the median of items) were computed. Due to the specificity of the festival, it was considered to be more appropriate to use only five categories of motivation; the “watching” category was eliminated because there were no famous actors or film directors attending the TIFF, actors or directors who could have attracted people only to see them.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Characteristics of the Respondents

The majority of residents who responded to the TIFF questionnaire were young adults, the average age being 31.78 years (the average age was situated between 30.8 and 32.7 years at a 95% confidence level); educated, 84% have at least a bachelor degree; employed, 77.1% have a job or are freelancers; and 67.8% are female who, in equal percentages, are either engaged in a relationship/married or single/not married (see Table 3).

Table 3. Characteristics of the respondents.

Gender	Freq.	%	Employment Status	Freq.	%
Female	314	67.8%	Student	89	19.2%
Male	149	32.2%	Employee	303	65.4%
Total	463	100%	Freelancer	54	11.7%
Education (Highest Level)	Freq.	%	Without a job/retired	17	3.7%
Grammar school	9	1.9%	Total	463	100%
High school	65	14.0%	Marital Status	Freq.	%
Bachelor degree	249	53.8%	In a relationship/married with children	75	16.2%
Post graduate degree	140	30.2%	In a relationship/married without children	170	36.7%
Total	463	100%	Single/not married with children	17	3.7%
Income (1 Euro = 4.45 Lei)	Freq.	%	Single/not married without children	188	40.6%
<800 lei	51	11.0%	No answer	13	2.8%
800–1500 lei	64	13.8%	Total	463	100%
1500–2200 lei	84	18.1%			
2200–2900 lei	75	16.2%			
2900–3600 lei	40	8.6%			
>3600 lei	109	23.5%			
No answer	40	8.6%			
Total	463	100%			

Source: authors' calculations.

Regarding the respondents' fidelity in respect to the festival, 24.0% were new participants at the TIFF (they attended one or two editions) and 30.7% participants had a high level of fidelity (they attended at least seven editions). Nonetheless, analyzing the presence at the last edition, it was observed that 51% attended the festival at least 5 out of 10 days. The results emphasize that the participants' experience is positive (4.17 on a scale from 1 = very dissatisfied to 5 = very satisfied, the mean was between 4.07 and 4.27 at a confidence level of 95%) and their perceptions lead to a favorable attitude and loyal behavior towards the festival. It can generally be concluded that their expectations are fulfilled. This is an important aspect because the TIFF, as a cultural event, which promotes cultural activities such as cinematic art, succeeded in the process of raising a large interest in the local community towards the film industry.

4.2. Economic Effects

Festivals and events are now recognized by many researchers as important tools for increasing the local economic activities and generating post-event impact. The main economic benefits are related to the direct expenditures of visitors and the emergence of job opportunities. With over 73,000 (2015) and 79,000 (2016) tickets sold, over 100,000 total participants each year, and a budget of 1.5 million euros [43], the TIFF has a positive economic impact on the host community.

The TIFF determined a growth in tourism activity as well. The number of tourists participating at the festival represented between 15% and 19% of the total participation (estimation at a confidence level of 95%), which is roughly 14.8% of Cluj-Napoca's accommodation capacity. Visitors' direct expenditures in 2015 were evaluated at approximately 181,600 euros and included the expenditures for accommodation, meals, transportation inside the city, and other expenditures (authors' estimations, available in [43]).

To organize the festival, a team of over 190 employees and over 400 volunteers contributes year by year to the success of the festival. Converting the number of hours worked by volunteers into full-time jobs will generate another 136 jobs per one month.

Other significant long-term benefits derived from the promotion of the destination and from media exposure. In this regard, the film festival is now associated with Cluj-Napoca by tourists and local citizens. In fact, 34% of visitors consider the TIFFF as a representative cultural symbol of Cluj-Napoca, and 34% of visitors considered the TIFFF as the most important national cinematographic event. Moreover, the notoriety of the festival resulted in its inclusion in the “Lonely Planet Guide” promoting Cluj-Napoca as the “film capital of Romania” and as a destination of festivals and cultural events [44].

With regard to residents’ perceptions of the economic benefits, the results reveal that they perceive the additional revenues for the local budget and the attraction of investments as being the main economic benefits of the film festival on the local community (Figure 1). One of the main reasons for this perception could be represented by the articles regarding the festival budget, published before the beginning of the festival, articles which emphasized that the TIFFF succeeded to attract both public (from the Romanian Ministry of Culture) [43] and private funds.

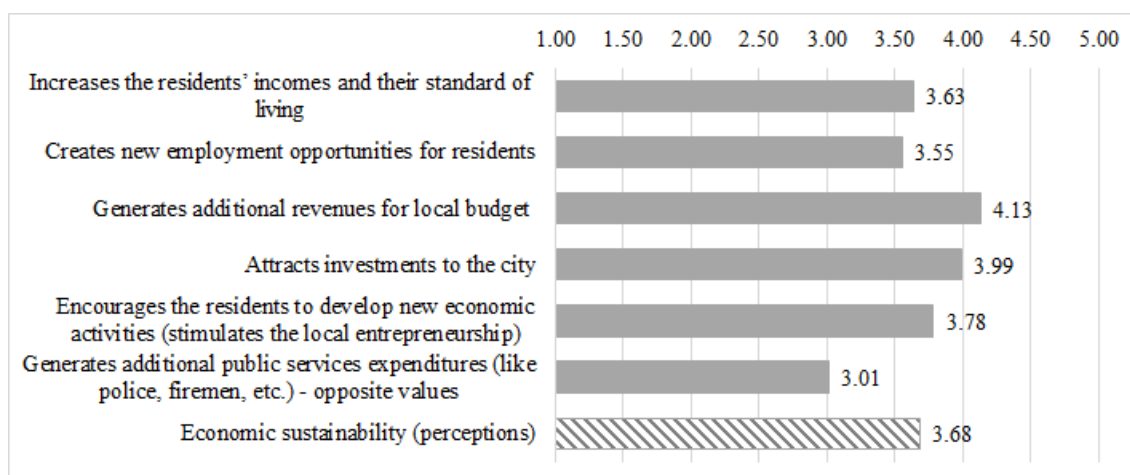


Figure 1. Residents’ perceptions toward economic benefits. Source: authors’ calculations (1–totally disagree; 5–totally agree).

Computing the economic sustainability variable, the score obtained was above average (3), which means that respondents perceive the film festival as having positive economic impacts on the local community.

In order to identify the factors which could influence the participants’ perception regarding the economic impact of the festival, three possible relationships were tested:

- firstly, the relationship between perceptions and respondents’ demographic characteristics;
- secondly, the relationship between perceptions and respondents’ degree of fidelity in regard to the festival;
- and lastly, the relationship between participants’ perceptions on economic sustainability and their reasons to attend the festival.

The results emphasized that demographic characteristics and the degree of fidelity have no influence on respondents’ perception of economic sustainability of the TIFFF. Nonetheless, there is a statistically significant medium, positive association between perceptions of economic sustainability and the reasons to attend the TIFFF in the case of people participating for content specificity, socialization, and event experience; there is also a statistically significant weak, positive association between

perceptions and other reasons to attend the TIFF (Table 4). In conclusion, all the respondents perceive that the festival has a positive economic impact on Cluj-Napoca.

Table 4. Relationship between the perceptions on economic sustainability and reasons to attend the Transilvania International Film Festival (TIFF).

Reasons to Attend the TIFF	Pearson Chi-Square	Chi-Square Sign. Value	Kendall's tau-b	Level of Significance
Escapism	62.435	0.001	0.175	0.01
Content Specificity	98.146	0.000	0.253	0.01
Socialization	80.732	0.000	0.220	0.01
Event Experience	94.979	0.000	0.214	0.01
Family Togetherness	53.816	0.009	0.195	0.01

4.3. Socio-Cultural Effects

Like any cultural event, the TIFF is directly linked to social and cultural values generated in favor of the host community. One important negative impact could be the alienation of some segments of the host population not interested in cinematography. In this regard, the festival's organizers tried to reduce this feeling by diversifying the range of activities to include music concerts and art exhibitions. Analyzing the activities, the calendar, and the means by which the festival was organized, the following socio-cultural effects could be identified:

- Generates shared experience and exchange of ideas: In the case of some film projections, the organizers consider it important to include an introduction with the presentation of the film's subject and a debate at the end, with a question and answer session. Thus, a special atmosphere is created around the film projection which fosters debates arising from the different perspectives of the audience and highlighting the role of the audience.
- Long-term change in attitude of the participants: The festival promotes, within the local community, a new way of spending free time, which is more related to cultural values. Because the target market is formed of young adults, the festival generates an important lasting change in their behavior and an improvement of their quality of life. Also, starting in 2009, the TIFF has been committed to fostering the literacy of the children and teen aged cinema audience in Romania. This commitment is evidenced by the development of EducaTIFF, a special program dedicated to them. Its main purpose is to stimulate learning and a critical understanding of films, in order to raise children and teenager's knowledge and awareness of the cinematography industry and cultivate their passion towards film art.
- Offers local citizens the opportunity to extend their cultural horizons and experiences.
- Develops community pride: Firstly, one of the organizers' objective is to promote Romanian films and cinematographic values through special programs dedicated to this issue. Secondly, through promotion campaigns, images, and locations, the TIFF offers the opportunity to form a collective solidarity around this event, a feeling of pride as a representative event for the community at a national and international level.
- Creates social cohesion: The TIFF experienced a steady growth of local participants throughout each year, but more importantly, the number of volunteers who responded directly to the community's need has grown in size and in their level of engagement in the events.
- Negative impacts associated with interruption of businesses activities or resident exodus are insignificant.

The highest score out of all 22 analyzed items is related to the TIFF's impact on the development of Cluj-Napoca's cultural life (see Figure 2): 96.1% of the respondents agree at least with the fact that the TIFF has an important contribution to the city's cultural life and to facilitating the community's

educational and cultural development through films focused on different topics (ECOTIFF) and cultures (Romanian, Argentinian, Norwegian, or Hungarian movies) and special projects (EDUCATIFF, Let's go digital).

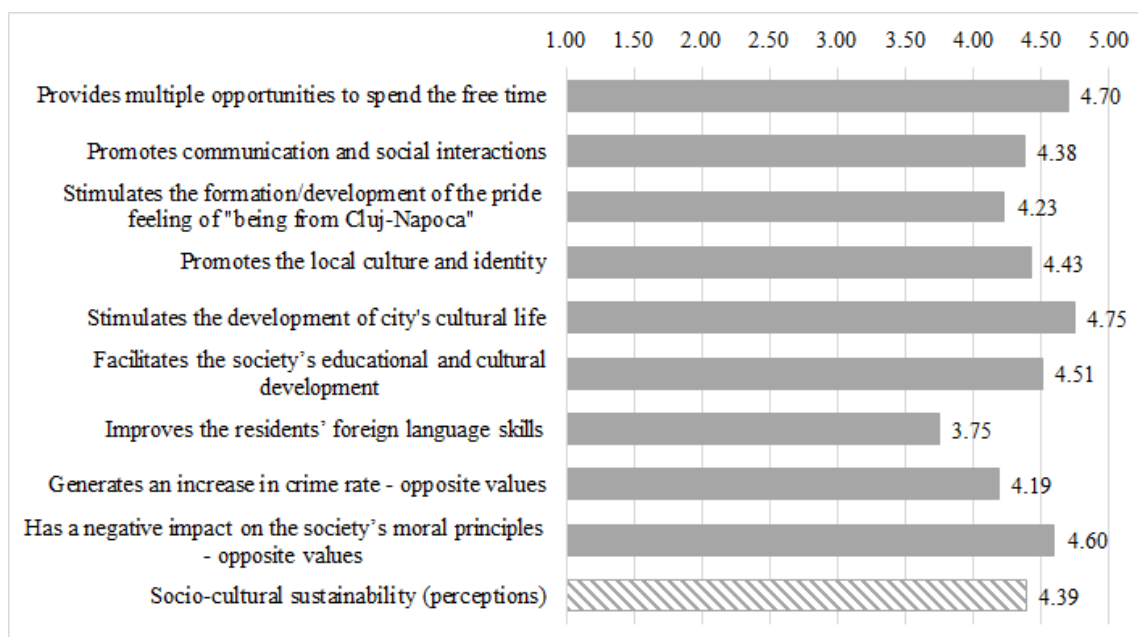


Figure 2. Residents' perceptions toward socio-cultural benefits. Source: authors' calculations (1–totally disagree; 5–totally agree).

The festival's positive impact on the development of the cultural and social life of the city of Cluj-Napoca is perceived mainly by the residents attending the event for content specificity (Pearson Chi-Square = 132.442, higher than the reference/table value for 0.001 significance: 51.18; Kendall's tau-c = 0.278, statistically significant at 0.001) and event experience (Pearson Chi-Square = 85.946, higher than the reference/table value for 0.001 significance: 51.18; Kendall's tau-c = 0.211, statistically significant at 0.001), the first reason being more related to the cultural aspect of the event, while the second being more related to the social aspect.

Analyzing the impact of the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their perceptions of the socio-cultural sustainability of the festival, it is worth mentioning that there is a statistically significant weak, positive association between the age of the respondents and their perceptions; the older the participants, the more they perceived the socio-cultural benefits. Moreover, their perceptions are positively related to the number of days they attended the festival; the more days they attended the event, the higher the score or socio-cultural sustainability.

The residents attending the TIFF for experience and content specificity are more aware of the socio-cultural sustainability of the event. As can be seen from Table 5, there is a statistically significant medium, positive association between these respondents' motivation and their perception. Moreover, these categories of respondents perceive the socio-cultural effects as being the most important out of the overall effects the TIFF has on Cluj-Napoca.

Table 5. Relationship between the perceptions on socio-cultural sustainability and reasons to attend the TIFF.

Reasons to Attend the TIFF	Pearson Chi-Square	Chi-Square Sign. Value	Kendall's tau-b	Level of Significance
Escapism	40.500	0.019	0.137	0.01
Content Specificity	132.442	0.000	0.278	0.01
Socialization	32.361	0.118 (NR)	0.107	0.01
Event Experience	85.946	0.000	0.211	0.01
Family Togetherness	17.704	0.817 (NR)	NR	NR

Another important aspect in the socio-cultural perception analysis focuses on the participants' perception that the festival does not have a negative impact on moral values of the society (91.8%) and does not determine an increase in crime rate (76.7% of respondents).

4.4. Environmental Effects

The negative environmental effects of festivals are small in comparison to other types of events. The main reason for this is that the activities developed in a built environment generate fewer negative effects compared to the ones organized in a natural environment. Secondly, the film festival is not concentrated in time and space. At every edition, there are over 400 film projections located in 12 inside venues and three open air venues, during the 10 days of the festival [45]. In 2015, the maximum number of participants per film showing was 2366 persons at the opening gala, in an open space venue [46].

As a result of informal discussions with the TIFF organizers', the main environmental effects of the TIFF were identified:

- Raise awareness towards environmental issues: Every year the festival has a section dedicated to environmental issues—ECOTIFF;
- Long-term conservation of the area in question: In 2014, the organizers' cleaned and renovated an old movie warehouse, one of the main goals of that edition being to promote alternative activities in abandoned old buildings. Moreover, in 2016, the organizers succeeded in persuading the local authorities to renovate two old cinemas, turning them into event halls. From that moment on, the buildings have been used for different socio-cultural activities;
- Traffic congestion may occur sometimes as a result of closing streets for open air projections;
- Noise pollution in the case of open air projections;
- Additional energy consumption due to a higher number of film projections in theaters;
- Additional consumption of public services: Cleaning, security, et cetera.

By analyzing participants' perceptions, it can be observed that there are both positive and negative effects on the environment because of the TIFF in Cluj-Napoca (see Figure 3). What is really important to mention is that the negative effects such as tourist attractions destruction, increase of pollution, or creation of waste are not perceived as a real and lasting threat to the sustainability of the event. The only aspect which could raise concerns is traffic congestion, but, fortunately, this is not such a significant problem; the score obtained is close to the middle of the scale at 2.99. The main open space location is situated in the city center and some of the streets near the location usually are closed in the evenings, potentially causing residents or visitors (who may not know the city well) inconveniences in reaching their destination.

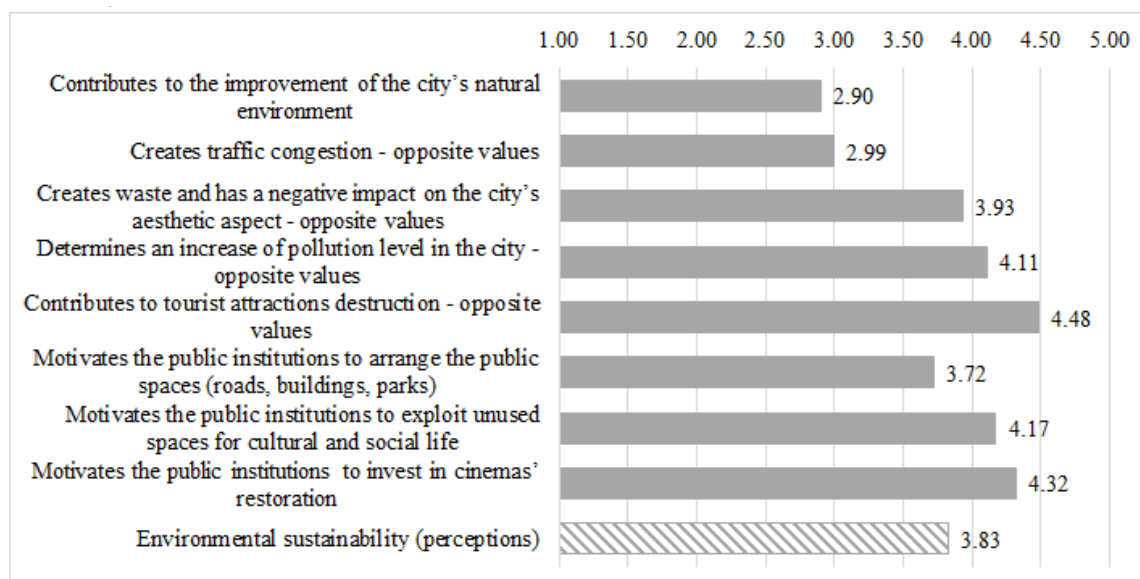


Figure 3. Residents' perceptions toward environmental effects. Source: authors' calculations (1–totally disagree; 5–totally agree).

Another important aspect perceived by the respondents is the involvement of public institutions in improving the film and events' infrastructure in the city. Both items describing this attitude obtaining average values above the mean; 80.6% of respondents agreed at least with the two items measuring this aspect.

The residents having a higher level of fidelity tend to grant to the festival a higher level of environmental sustainability; there is a statistically significant weak, positive relationship (Pearson Chi-Square = 45.470, higher than the reference/table value for 0.05 significance; Kendall's tau-c = 0.097, statistically significant at 0.01) that participants attending many editions of the festival felt the festival does not have a negative impact on the city's environment. Moreover, they noticed an improvement in the city's built environment.

Also, we noted a statistically significant weak, positive association between the age of the respondents and their perceptions regarding the environmental sustainability of the TIFF; the older the respondent, the more they perceived the environmental sustainability of the festival (Pearson Chi-Square = 63.368, higher than the reference/table value for 0.01 significance; Kendall's tau-c = 0.14, statistically significant at 0.01).

Analyzing the motivations to attend the TIFF revealed that residents attending the festival for content specificity and for event experience tended to consider the festival as being more environmentally sustainable compared to other residents (Table 6).

Table 6. Relationship between the perceptions on environmental sustainability and reasons to attend the TIFF.

Reasons to Attend the TIFF	Pearson Chi-Square	Chi-Square Sign. Value	Kendall's tau-b	Level of Significance
Escapism	87.671	0.026	0.100	0.008
Content Specificity	166.706	0.071	0.173	0.000
Socialization	81.898	0.065	NR	NR
Event Experience	116.602	0.000	0.173	0.000
Family Togetherness	NR	NR	NR	NR

Synthesizing the results of the analysis, the TIFFF is perceived by the resident participants as being a sustainable event, generating lasting legacies at the level of the local community including increased notoriety for the city, enriched cultural life, reconversion of old and unused buildings into cultural infrastructure, et cetera. The fact that the overall perception regarding the impacts of the TIFFF was higher for all the three pillars of the sustainability concept (see Figure 4) is in accordance with Fredline, Deery, and Jago's results [47], who emphasize that the impacts could be perceived at different levels in compliance with the type of the event. Fredline et al. (2006) suggested that events, in general, have fairly positive economic and social-cultural impacts and no substantial negative environmental impacts [47]; it can be concluded that cultural events are perceived by residents as having a higher socio-cultural impact and a higher sustainability level.

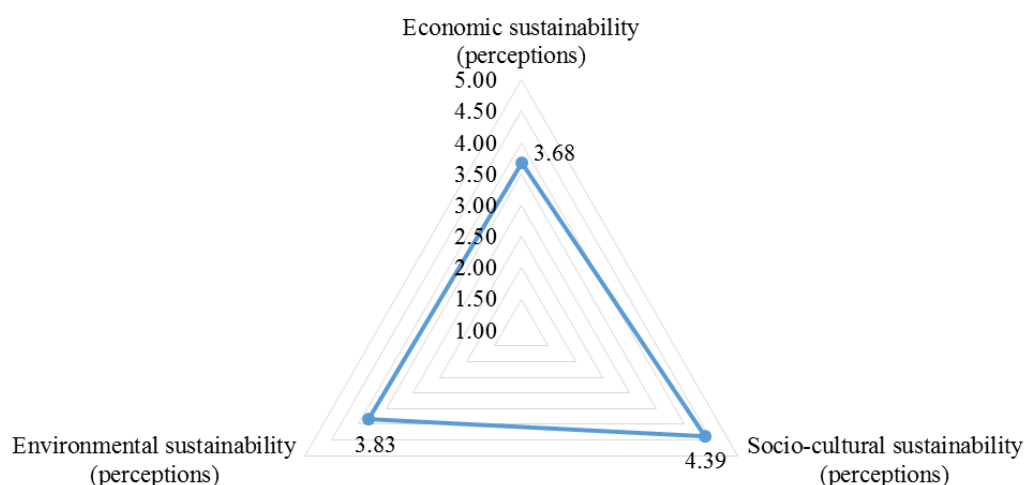


Figure 4. Residents' perceptions toward economic, socio-cultural, and environmental effects. Source: authors' calculations (1–totally disagree; 5–totally agree).

5. Conclusions

The present study used several methods to evaluate the residents' perceptions towards the sustainability of a cultural event and provided a better understanding of this process. The research seems to indicate that when the event organizers include the community in their objectives, supporters and participants are better able to recognize the overall benefits of the event and higher levels of event sustainability are likely.

Out of the total benefits generated by the TIFFF, cultural benefits—the festival's capacity to support education and cultural enrichment—are the most valued by participants. The social dimension is also highly valued by participants—the festival providing a multitude of opportunities to spend free time and to interact with their social group. In considering participants' motivations and demographic characteristics, a general conclusion emerges: among all the types of effects generated at the level of the community, the socio-cultural dimension was the most highly appreciated by the participants. According to Getz (2008), sustainable events are those that fulfill important social, cultural, economic, and environmental roles, such roles being the ones that people value. In this regard, the current research suggests that such events that address the communities' social and cultural priorities can become important local symbols, permanently supported by the community, and a powerful tool for promoting the sustainable development of the destination.

From an environmental perspective, residents consider that the festival contributed first of all to the development of the city infrastructure, and from the point of the economic impact, the main benefit they perceived was the festival's capacity to generate additional revenues for the local budget.

By testing the assumptions on the factors affecting the residents' perceptions on the festival's effects, we managed to highlight several interesting aspects. Firstly, the perceptions on the economic

effects of the festival are perceived in a similar way by all the participants, no matter the demographic characteristics or degree of fidelity they had. Moreover, the residents attending the TIFF for escapism, socialization, and family togetherness perceive the economic impact of the festival as being the most significant. This is an important aspect for the TIFF organizers, especially considering the fact that the festival receives public funds to cover its expenditures, and an adequate perception of the economic benefits generated by the festival for the city will determine a positive attitude and an increased involvement of the residents in the future editions.

The motivations to attend a cultural event influence the residents' perception on economic, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits. Due to different motives for attendance and the variety of interests in attending an event, people establish different expectations on these three criteria which, in turn, generates different perceptions of their experiences. Even so, results show that cultural events, like film festivals, have a potential role in building community identity and developing strong social bonds. Thus, a context for the local authorities can be created in order for them to develop appropriate action plans and incorporate sustainable strategies for the future development of the destination.

The age of the participants and their level of fidelity may have a positive, weak influence on their perceptions regarding the socio-cultural and environmental impacts. These people, most of whom have attended many editions, may have a greater proclivity for evaluating the effects of the festival on the city's built environment. This may be one reason they tend to appreciate these aspects more than others. They are also able to better evaluate the changes the festival generated in terms of their behavior and of the improvement of their quality of life.

As a cultural event, it was expected that the participants attending the TIFF for content specificity would perceive the festival's socio-cultural impact as being the most significant. The results validate this assumption. Their interests did seem to have a positive effect on their perceptions of the event and its impact on the culture of the community. In order to extend our findings, the present research can be extended by analyzing the perceptions of residents who did not attend the TIFF. Even if they do not have an overall view of the effects, this category of people could provide important information regarding the way the festival is perceived by residents, and reveal some of the reasons they did not attend the event. That this study included only residents who attended the film festival is a limitation of this study; doing so allowed for the opportunity to limit the scope of our study to the most relevant audience and the most critical constituent group. It is likely that the perceptions of "non-attenders" to an event may be different because they would have less insights into the factors of sustainability. Finally, although our sample size was adequate for statistical analysis, a larger and more inclusive sample frame, especially compared to the structure of the city's population, would strengthen the findings of our study.

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