A Community Based Event Management in Agricultural Products Exhibition: The Royal Queensland Show (EKKA) Australia

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ABSTRACT
One of the successful event tourism is The Royal Queensland Show. It has been seen for 136 years with more than 400,000 people, more than 10,000 animals, and 23,000 competition entries, a smorgasbord of award-winning food and wine and hours of free family entertainment. This research aims to examine the participation of the community in the event. This research adopts a qualitative interpretive framework to gain an understanding of the way communities interpret and make sense of their experiences into the event. Data have been collected from annual reports. The participants were recruited by purposeful sampling. Access to the sample was obtained via associations representing the Brisbane community in Queensland Australia. Inductive thematic analysis was adopted to analyze the data. A ladder of citizen participation model was developed in community participation based tourism in EKKA. The ladder helps in understanding the situation of tourist destination communities and the current state of local involvement in tourism development.

Keywords: Community Based, Event Management, A ladder of citizen participation model

INTRODUCTION
The annual festival is not only a competitive domestic market but also in regional and global markets. The further local agricultural products development allows creating higher value by organizing more marketing channels in annual agricultural products exhibition.
An agricultural product is one of the main sustainable incomes of Australia. In 2012–13, the gross value of agricultural production (GVAP) in Queensland was $10.08 billion, which was 21 per cent of the total gross value of agricultural production in Australia ($48 billion). Cattle industries is the most important commodity in Queensland based on the gross value of agricultural production. It has contributed 34 per cent (around $3.4 billion) to the value of agricultural production in the state [9]. Time and distance is a real barrier for communication between related communities who produced similar commodity. For example, beef, breeders of one bred may need to travel many days to view the activity of the difference breed. Therefore, annual agricultural products exhibition is an essential activity.
The research problem of this study has been selected because there has been a lack of knowledge about sustainable models for development in rural and indigenous communities associated with the selection of agricultural exhibition. It also considers the factors that influence the citizen participation in an agricultural products exhibition.
exhibition context. These factors lead the researcher to begin her enquiry from a multiple research perspective. The research aim is to examine the participation of the community in the agricultural exhibition. These two research questions were developed: 1) what are the types of community organization? 2) What is the role of community organizations to participate in the event?

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

This paper builds on the communalities and themes identified in the overview of research on agricultural products exhibition, with specific consideration afforded to key social science perspectives. We consider the scope of research with regard to community based, event management and a ladder of citizen participation model from a social sustainability practices. Consequently, gaps in current understanding were identified.

**Community Based**

Moving local operators into positions of management in tourism is an important component in alternative or sustainable models for development in rural and indigenous communities. The community aims to promote and encourage the development of their attractions for instance, the agricultural, farming, horticultural, industrial, manufacturing and cultural resources. The exhibition can represents an opportunity for community members to gather socially, harness business opportunities, exchange ideas and innovations and present their agricultural and industrial products and initiatives to the domestic, national people and international visitors. Therefore, the development, proud and value added to community products are the positive effect while traffic congestion, threat for daily life and over crowed are on the opposite side [3].

**Event Management**

With regard to be catalysts for a multiplicity of other activities, such as infrastructural investments, tourism businesses, and destination marketing are events. Types of organization, uniqueness, certain mission, and continue innovation development is mentioned in the stakeholder management strategies of events [1].

In term of society and culture is efficiency or effectiveness focused. The history of the festival, planning and management, experiences, form of events, outcomes and affects are also considered in events management [4].

Young & Tilley (2006) stated that socio-effectiveness practices push beyond corporate social responsibility commitments toward an organizational social mission and sustained positive impact on society. Thus, for agricultural exhibition to become socially sustainable, event organizers should look past charitable giving programs and exercise social sustainability practices that will leave a positive legacy both internally and externally.

With regard to internal and external social sustainability, Pfeffer (2010) indicated that internal social sustainability practices might include the provision of health insurance, health and wellness programs, minimal layoffs, reasonable work hours, a living wage, and equitable employment and labor practices. In addition, Polese & Stren (2000) stated that the external social sustainability practices will positively contribute to the social sustainability of the organizations host city, particularly in the areas of governance, social and cultural policies, social infrastructure and public services, urban land and housing, transport and accessibility, economic revitalization, and the building of inclusive public spaces.

**A ladder of citizen participation model**

Arnstein (1969) emphasized that citizen participation has to be accompanied by power redistribution. She states that power redistribution is the purpose of participation, thereby enabling society to fairly redistribute benefits and costs. She introduced a ‘ladder of citizen
participation’s explain the necessary steps, categorized into three levels of gradual evolution: ‘non-participation’, ‘degrees of tokenism’ and ‘degrees of citizen power’ (Figure 1). The ladder has a further eight rungs. The first rung is ‘manipulation’ where power holders utilize participation as a distorted means of public relations. Second is called ‘therapy’ where local citizens’ values and attitudes are adjusted to those of the larger society with power. Third is named ‘informing’ where the locals are informed of their rights, responsibilities and options (the first and most important step towards legitimate public involvement). Fourth stated as ‘consultation’ where residents are encouraged to express their opinions (a legitimate step towards full participation). Fifth is called ‘placation’ where public influence gradually grows, but it is still largely tokenism. Sixth is entitled partnership where negotiation is conducted between citizens and power holders, thereby redistributing, in practice, the power and responsibilities for planning and decision-making. Seventh is known as ‘delegated power’: the public achieves dominant power over the decision-making. Eighth is enabled as ‘citizen control’ where citizens are awarded full control and power for policy and management. Arnstein’s participation ladder is useful either to identify the current level of community participation, or to define the steps required to promote greater involvement. This ladder helps in understanding the situation of tourist destination communities and the current state of local involvement in tourism development.

METHOD
This research aims to explore the type of community organization and their role to participate in the agricultural exhibition. An instrument was developed and administered on the EKKA organizers annual reports. The content analysis of the data was conducted on these employing coding and narrative analysis. Annual reports (1892-1938, 1950-1999, 2000-2014) from the organization and formed a collaborative resource to access the role of community organizations who participate in the agricultural exhibition. The data was then analyzed using content analysis, considering the role of community participation in the agricultural exhibition. This study chose qualitative data “based on a theoretical or purposive strategy [where] units are chosen not for their representativeness, but for their relevance to the research question” [8].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
History of the show
On 13 August 1875, a group of colonists met at the Brisbane Town Hall to form the National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland. The association's charter, with Governor Sir William Cairns as its president, was to promote and encourage the agricultural and industrial development of Queensland; as well as provide a unique opportunity for country and urban residents to come together in a celebration of Queensland lifestyle.
In January 1876, Bowen Park was chosen as the site for the first Show. The park covered 6.8 hectares bordered by Bowen Bridge
Road, Gregory Terrace and a creek which ran through the middle of what is now Main Arena.

From 22 - 26 August, the 'Intercolonial Exhibition of 1876' was held. A public holiday was declared and on opening day 17,000 people attended - a colossal success, given that the total population of Brisbane at the time was only 22,000. Men attended in their suits and ladies in their finest garments. Food was served on long tables and the first show bag - a bag of coal - was free for all visitors [5].

In 1921, the first 'Royal' Show was held, when the Association was granted the prefix under warrant from His Majesty King George V. Since then, the shortened name "Ekka" has replaced "Exhibition" in the Queensland vernacular, indicating locals' affection for the Show.

Ekka has since been held every year with only two exceptions. In 1919, Brisbane suffered a Spanish influenza epidemic, and in 1942 during wartime the showground were used as a staging depot for troops moving north.

Today, Ekka runs for ten days and attracts about half a million visitors every August. Ekka is famous for its mix of entertainment, agriculture and education. From Champion Rooster of Show to the glamorous fashion parades, Ekka has always celebrated the rural and the urban; the traditional and the innovative, and it's for this reason the event holds a special place in the hearts of Queenslanders - as it has for generations.

Community Based

Moving local operators into positions of management in tourism is an important component in alternative or sustainable models for development in rural and indigenous communities. RNA aims to promote and encourage the development of the agricultural, pastoral, horticultural, industrial, manufacturing and cultural resources of the state of Queensland. It represents an opportunity for their almost 5,000 members to gather socially, harness business opportunities, exchange ideas and innovations and present State’s agricultural and industrial products and initiatives to the people of Queensland and national and international visitors. Therefore, it became Queensland’s biggest and most anticipated yearly event and still achieves its aim of connecting Queenslanders of all ages, from the country to the city and from all walks of life.

Event Management

The Royal Queensland Show was organized by The Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland (RNA). It was established in 1875 to promote and encourage the development of the agricultural, pastoral, horticultural, industrial, manufacturing and cultural resources of the state of Queensland. It is a member based organization governed by 21 RNA Councilors. An executive team of seven, including the RNA President, is responsible for overseeing the operations of the association which owns and operates the Brisbane Show grounds, situated 1.5 kilometers from Brisbane's central business district.

The organization’s charter is to celebrate and champion the essential role agriculture plays in the everyday lives of Queenslanders. The RNA aims to provide a vibrant destination at the Brisbane Show grounds with leading educational and event facilities and activities that capture the hearts and minds of all Queenslanders, from the country to the city.

The RNA runs the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka), Queensland's largest event, on behalf of the community for 10 days each year in August. Staged at its original birthplace, the Brisbane Show grounds, the Ekka showcases is unique tradition and heritage by bringing the city and country together for a once a year get-together. More than 400,000 people on average gather to see thousands of exhibits, 10,000 animals,
world-class entertainment and taste award-winning food and wine. Along with this, the organization runs the Royal Queensland Food and Wine Show—a series of seven individual competitions unearthing the best produce in Australia. Outside of the annual Ekka, the Brisbane Showground is a venue business which hosts more than 200 events each year and is home to the Royal International Convention Centre.

**A ladder of citizen participation model**

Regarding the three levels of gradual evolution: ‘non-participation’, ‘degrees of tokenism’ and ‘degrees of citizen power’, the result was shown that to be the degree of citizen participation since 1901. Prior to 1901 while the show had been in operation since 1876 record keeping until 1901 was not comprehensive.

In 1892 and 1893, an available record shows that community participation through membership subscriptions (5%, 6%), gate entrance fees (15%, 14%) was contributed. A substantial part of the financing was through government (loan 36%, grant 4%) (Table 1).

In term of motivation, the prize money where came from donations, special prizes and trophies was awarded to attract more competitors. Obviously, free family entertainment is the most attractive for Queenslanders. The organizer decided for the first time in the Royal Queensland Show’s (Ekka) history, the show ran over two full weekends in 2014. EKKANITES, entertainment and special effects in a 360 degree design, and the biggest Fireworks display was creating an unforgettable experience for the audience. A primary motivator for attendees to Ekka was to attend for fun and entertainment.

With regard to innovation development, telephones, microphones, electric lights and even an electric thief detector were used since 1879. September 23, 2014, the landmark historic $2.9 billion regeneration project the key aims is to open the show grounds up for the public to enjoy year round. The residential, retail and commercial offerings will form the central point of the regeneration where the best retail, events, entertainment and commerce will combine.

**CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this article has been to examine the participation of the community in the agricultural exhibition. The disciplines that have informed this enquiry include a social sustainability practices. Resulting from the melding of social science perspectives undertaken within this paper it appears a complete understanding of the participation of the community in the agricultural exhibition. Whether this understanding can ever fully be achieved is debatable, however, it is a worthwhile focus for research as to means of the community in the agricultural exhibition participation to which each of the social sciences reviewed can contribute. In-depth studies of citizen participation in agricultural exhibition may also provide the key to unlocking the sociologically framed question of whether delegated power the public achieves dominant power over the decision-making.

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Table 1. Source of finance
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