Information Management and Business Review (ISSN 2220-3796)
Vol. 16, No. 3, pp. 7-12, Sep 2024

A Conceptual Discussion Related to Festival Events in Malaysia

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Abstract: This study explores the rapidly growing subject of festival event management in Malaysia's travel and tourist industry, emphasizing the cultural, social, and economic effects of festivals. The project aims to improve festival management efficiency by identifying stakeholder concerns and investigating best practices. Through a conceptual analysis of 24 papers from Emerald, Science Direct, and Scopus, the study emphasizes the significance of continuous innovation, management frameworks such as EMBOK, and strategic planning. The findings suggest that addressing gaps in administrative practices and specialized education can significantly improve the effectiveness and sustainability of Malaysia's festival events.

Keywords: *Festival Event Management, Tourism Industry, Event Planning, Event Management Process, Tourism*

1. Introduction and Background

Event management is a sub-sector in the tourism industry. This industry is linked to the events management sector because of the sheer volume of events it can produce and the number of foreign business travelers it can attract to a location (Bouchon et al., 2015). Planning, arranging, and carrying out festivals—which can encompass everything from culinary festivals to music and cultural festivals—are all included in festival event management. Festivals are a major factor in drawing visitors, stimulating local economies, and energizing local communities. Andersson & Getz, (2016) explains that festivals and special events draw tourists from a variety of demographics by offering unique experiences and cultural enrichment. Apart from this, it contributes to financial impact as well (Dwyer et al., 2000). Both the general economic development of the area and the expansion and viability of local firms can benefit from a sizable economic influx. In addition, festivals can have positive social and cultural effects in addition to positive economic effects. According to Raj et al., 2017), this type of event can improve community involvement, social cohesiveness, and overall quality of life.

Nonetheless, yet a dearth of discussion among scholars related to event festivals. The measurement of affecting elements in the festival and event business has not received much attention, which suggests that there is a growing interest in this field but a dearth of knowledge (Louw & Esterhuyzen, 2024). In the area of festival event management procedures and administration techniques, there is a specific gap due to the absence of discussion related to event festivals. As a result, there is a need to explore more on the diversity of issues related to the event's festival.

The diversification of festival activities draws more attention from researchers, which suggests that they are still relatively unstudied (Quinn, 2009) According to Mohd Ariffin & Jame, (2021), festivals are a multifaceted phenomenon that is rapidly expanding and is essential to the travel and tourism sector. Researchers poll festival attendees in case studies, and each study is distinct in the range of cultures it examines (Dieck et al., 2018)). Studies on Festivals in Europe (Grappi & Montanari, 2011), the Middle East (Akhoondnejad, 2016), Asia (Li & Yu, 2022), the United States (Yuan & Jang, 2008), Africa (Saayman et al., 2012), and Australia (Savinovic et al., 2017) have all been documented, according to Tanford & Jung, (2017).

Additionally, a variety of research topics are examined in these studies, such as the reasons behind attendees' decisions (Jin & Weber, 2016), customer segmentation (Chang, 2006), importance performance analysis (Baker & Draper, 2013), attendee characteristics (McDowall, 2010), satisfaction (Sohn et al., 2016), and loyalty (Yuan & Jang, 2008). People go to festivals for several reasons, as is often recognized, but it is less clear how these

reasons impact the results.

The significance of research in festival event management cannot be overstated. As festivals gain popularity and economic significance, their success hinges on comprehending the complexities of event management procedures and administration tactics. Studying how to use these distinctive features to draw both local and foreign guests is crucial for Malaysian festival events, where cultural variety and legacy are important factors. Policymakers and event planners might benefit from a study of regional festival landscapes when creating plans that support both tourism and cultural preservation (Andersson & Getz, 2016). With 84.7 million domestic tourists in 2019, domestic tourism in Malaysia reached one of its highest peaks in statistical statistics (Malaysia Tourism, 2022). Malaysia Tourism (2022) states that 3.6 million people were employed in this sector, which generated RM 240.2 billion (15.9%) of the GDP.

Researchers are still debating governance, operations, and festival event management (Laing, 2018). The issue of inadequate time management and sound quality illustrates a practical issue in Malaysia (Hassandarvish, 2022). Thus, it is essential to comprehend the entire event planning cycle, as each stage affects the outcome (Goldblatt, 2008; Laing, 2018; Hazira et al., (2022); Nordvall & Heldt, 2017). This shows that it is essential to comprehend the entire event planning cycle.

2. Literature Review

Event management process: According to Glenn et al., (2023) careful planning and close attention to detail are necessary for event management. Planning a budget, keeping to a schedule, selecting a suitable venue, securing the necessary permits, handling parking and transportation, scheduling speakers or performers, and ensuring compliance with safety and health regulations are all crucial components. Additionally, marketing and communication techniques are crucial for engaging the target audience.

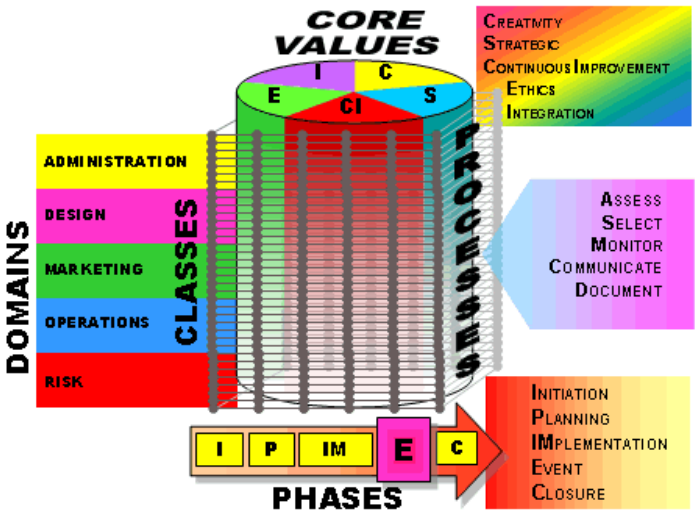
Planning, organizing, leading, and controlling are the four primary responsibilities at the core of management, according to Carpenter et al., (2012) (P-O-L-C framework). The four jobs are intimately related to one another when it comes to running a business. This process involves several processes, including the development of the original concept, careful planning, implementation, and post-event analysis. Every step of the event requires specific responsibilities and considerations to ensure that it meets its objectives and meets the expectations of its stakeholders.

Numerous academics have made substantial contributions to the theoretical literature on event management over the years. Getz, for instance, has published a great deal about strategy management, tourism, and event impacts (Getz, 2007; Carpenter et al., 2012). While Goldblatt wrote seminal books on planning and special events (Goldblatt, 2008), Bowdin advanced the field's knowledge of event management (Glenn et al., 2023). The operational and strategic facets of tourism and event planning are the focus of Nordvall and Heldt's research (Nordvall & Heldt, 2017). Furthermore, prominent figures in the industry have shared their insights about running festivals through publications including Eavis's Guide to Glastonbury (2015), Halpin's on Lollapalooza (Eavis & Eavis, 2019), Leland (2015), and an insider's perspective on the Edinburgh Festival Fringe (MacFarlane, 2018). As a result, event management is acknowledged as an interdisciplinary field that is investigated in both practice and research.

There are a lot of procedures and options to consider when planning an event. Festival events, on the other hand, are classified as exceptional events and must be planned to use a far more appropriate and compatible strategy (Moss, 2018). The researcher emphasizes the use of the EMBOK model for this application of research on the event management process, specifically in organizing festival events.

Event professionals can use the EMBOK (Event Management Body of Knowledge) model as a reference, which outlines the fundamental knowledge and abilities required for effective event management (Goldblatt 2008, p. 65). It covers fundamentals such as identifying stakeholders and formulating plans for events. Planning, marketing, operations, risk management, financial control, and event design are important areas. Managing event locations, applying project management techniques, integrating technology, and guaranteeing sustainability are examples of technical competencies.

Figure 1: EMBOK Model



(**Source:** Goldblatt, 2011)

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There are phases, a process, core values, and domains within the model, as shown in Figure 1. Silvers (2004) developed the Silvers taxonomy, which consists of five key knowledge domains: risk, marketing, operations, design, and administration. It was based on Freeman et al., (2010). the tasks that event stakeholders perform and those that the researcher of this study can investigate under the administration domain are the knowledge domains, which are functional fields of activity (Silvers, 2013; Brown & Stokes, 2021; Adongo et al., 2019; Hazira & Alagas, 2022).

Festival event industry in Malaysia: About an event festival, based on current studies, optimizing the cultural, economic, and social consequences requires improving festival event management strategies. For example, Jones's latest research from 2021 highlights community involvement and sustainability but demonstrates how Malaysia is organizing cultural events differently. This section highlights the necessity of continuous research and innovation to meet the dynamic demands of festival event management in Malaysia. By doing this, the festivals will continue to be significant and successful in promoting tourism and cultural heritage. However, among Malaysian festival event stakeholders, there is a lack of literacy regarding research on the administration domain and event management process. The paucity of past researchers on the subject of event management is highlighted by their limitations, as demonstrated by the works of Bouchon et al. (2015), Jones (2021), Alvarado (2022), and Hazira et al. (2022). To close the knowledge disparity between academic curricula and industry requirements and guarantee that graduates are adequately equipped to meet the expectations of the tourist sector, Bouchon et al., (2015) endorsed the need for specialist event management education. Hence strengthening and increasing Malaysia's festival event industry's management efficiency.

Enhancing the scope of research on festival event management in Malaysia also confers significant benefits to the industry. Through a detailed analysis of the administrative domains and stakeholder event management process, researchers can offer critical insights required to enhance operational efficiency and strategic planning. With this expanded study agenda, researchers like Akhundova, (2024), who emphasize the value of tailoring event management strategies to local conditions and emerging trends, may be able to fill in the gaps. These programs enhance the inventiveness and competitiveness of Malaysia's festival event sector while also

pushing the professionalization of event management methodologies.

As a result, at this critical juncture in its evolution, Malaysia's festival event management industry stands to benefit greatly from more study and innovative methods. A recent study highlights the importance of sustainability, community involvement, and flexibility to socioeconomic shifts to optimize the impact of cultural events. Despite the literature that has already been published showing these shortcomings, current research promises to close the gaps in specialized education and the mismatch between academic curricula and industrial requirements. By broadening our understanding of administrative strategies and event management protocols, Malaysia can strengthen its position as a dynamic tourism destination for both local and international tourists while also optimizing the cultural, economic, and social benefits of its festivals.

3. Research Methodology

This article is a conceptual discussion related to event management. 24 articles were used for an underpinning discussion related to the diversification of the event's festival. All the articles were based on Emerald, Science Direct, and Scopus databases. These articles were chosen due to the relatedness of articles in discussion on the event's festival.

4. Conclusion

Future discussion is in demand for exploring more in-depth issues related to the event's festival namely the inclusion of culture in mitigating the process of organizing an event. A thorough examination of the literature shows that careful preparation, close attention to detail, and the tactical application of many management frameworks and models are essential for successful event management. The multidimensional nature of event management is highlighted by (Glenn et al., 2023), who highlight the crucial elements of scheduling, budgeting, venue selection, permits, transportation, and safety regulatory compliance. The necessity of successfully engaging the target audience is further highlighted by the blending of marketing and communication strategies.

The P-O-L-C framework (Planning, Organizing, Leading, Controlling) is presented by Carpenter et al. (2012) and summarizes the main duties of management. This framework necessitates a methodical approach from the initial concept to post-event analysis because it is closely related to the event management process. This iterative method makes sure that every stage is carefully thought out and carried out, matching the goals and expectations of stakeholders.

Scholars like Getz, (2002), Goldblatt (2008), and Andersson & Getz, (2016) have contributed theoretical works that offer a fundamental comprehension of the operational and strategic aspects of event management. Their studies validate the multidisciplinary nature of the area by fusing theory and practice, together with industry insights from practitioners such as Eavis & Eavis, (2019) and MacFarlane (2018).

Moss (2018) argues that customized approaches are necessary to maximize the cultural, economic, and social effects of festival events. Jones (2021) emphasizes the value of sustainability and community involvement, especially in the setting of Malaysia, where cultural events are conducted distinctively. For festivals to meet the ever-changing demands of festival event management, ongoing research and innovation must be conducted.

Nonetheless, a notable void exists in the literature about the administrative domain and event management procedures among Malaysian festival participants. According to studies by Jones (2021), Alvarado (2022), Bouchon et al. (2015), Hazira et al. (2022), and Jones, (2021), there are gaps in the present research and a need for specialist event management education. This discrepancy indicates a mismatch between industry demands and academic curriculum, highlighting the need for improved management effectiveness in Malaysia's festival and event sector.

Improving research in this area has several advantages. Thorough examinations of administrative domains and stakeholder management procedures can provide vital information for enhancing strategic planning and operational effectiveness. Scholars such as Akhundova, (2024) support customized approaches that are in line with regional circumstances and new trends, encouraging creativity and competition in Malaysia's festival

event industry.

The literature emphasizes how complex and multidimensional event management is, and how important it is to plan carefully, apply management frameworks strategically, and never stop innovating. The EMBOK model and the P-O-L-C framework offer strong frameworks for efficiently organizing events, and contributions from academics and business professionals emphasize the multidisciplinary nature of the discipline.

Festival events offer special opportunities and challenges in Malaysia. To make the most of these events, customized approaches that take into account the cultural, economic, and societal implications are crucial. The effectiveness of the sector is hampered by a significant research void in the administrative field and event management processes among stakeholders.

Filling this knowledge vacuum with more in-depth studies and specialized training will greatly improve Malaysia's festival event management effectiveness. Malaysia may enhance its status as a dynamic tourism destination by integrating ideas from in-depth evaluations of administrative tactics and coordinating academic courses with industry requirements. In addition to maximizing the festivals' cultural, financial, and social benefits, this will advance environmentally friendly and community-focused event management techniques.

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