THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF RURAL EVENTS: THE INGLEWOOD OLIVE FESTIVAL

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ABSTRACT

Rural areas have encountered numerous changes to the economic and social fabric of their communities over recent decades. As a result they have suffered declining economies and shifting demographic characteristics, therefore they have looked to tourism and specifically events as a foci of rejuvenation. However much of the research in this area has been directed towards the economic impacts of tourism and overlooked the social consequences that tourism and events create. Additionally much of this research has investigated urban and large scale events at the peril of smaller community rural events. This paper investigates the social consequences of a small rural community festival utilising a case study approach of Queensland's Inglewood Olive Festival. The results suggest that a number of social consequences occur within rural areas from hosting community events, these are evident on both an individual and a community level. The findings were categorised into five domains: physical, economic, learning and developing, affective and networks and interactions.

KEYWORDS: Rural Events, Social Consequences, Inglewood

INTRODUCTION

Event management research has attracted increased recognition within academic literature over the last decade. However much of this research has been predominately focussed on the economic impacts of events and festivals (Mules & Faulkner, 1996; Anderson & Solberg, 1999; Burgan & Mules, 2000). It has only been in recent years that a shift in focus of this research has occurred with greater recognition being attributed to the social consequences of events (Hall & Hodges, 1996; Delamere, Wankel & Hinch, 2001; Fredline & Faulkner, 2002). One characteristic of much of the research into the social consequences of events has concentrated on large-scale events and overlooked the fact that events are diverse and widespread throughout communities (Hall & Hodges, 1996). The purpose of this paper is to examine the social consequences of events within rural areas. This will use the Inglewood Olive Festival as an example of a rural event to describe the social consequences that exist or result to communities from an event stakeholder perspective.

RURAL EVENTS

Rural areas throughout Queensland, and many other states and territories in Australia, have been faced with an unprecedented number of negative circumstances over past decades. The combined impact of severe drought, deep recession and a significant decline in commodity prices has had a detrimental effect on rural economies. Additionally, the commercialization of agriculture and the impacts of technology, such as improvements in transportation, mechanicinisation of farm equipment, refrigeration and chemicals have all played significant roles in changing rural areas (Butler, Hall & Jenkins, 1998). This has led to an outmigration of younger people, high unemployment levels and the loss of public services (OECD, 1993; Butler, Hall & Jenkins, 1998). As a result rural communities and regions are looking to alternative sources of income and see tourism as an option (Williams & Shaw, 1998; Sharpley, 2002).

Events, particularly events that draw tourists, have the ability to draw outside investment and financial resources into local communities, which can lead to positive economic benefits that may sustain rural communities undergoing economic transition. However, there is a tendency to use tourism as a panacea for the macroeconomic and social problems that exist in rural areas (Tosun & Jenkins, 1996). This is evidenced in the Australian environment by the excessive seizure of tourism as a means to discontinue the decline in economic activity and to protect basic servicing and investment levels in rural areas (Cooper, 1982). However, all too often the social consequences of tourism and events are overlooked in favour of the economic advantages.

Research has shown that while tourism's economic impacts are generally welcomed (Keogh, 1990; Mules & Faulkner, 1996; Burgan & Mules, 2000) many of the social consequences of tourism development are perceived in a more negative light (Liu, Sheldon & Var, 1987; Soutar & McLeod, 1993; Dwyer, Mellor, Mistilis & Mules, 2000). While the tension between the economic and social consequences builds within a community, attitudes towards tourism and tourists will deteriorate, thus damaging the viability of tourism in such locations. Therefore, it is essential to have an understanding of the consequences of tourism and events in general, specifically social consequences, to ensure the sustainability and success of the tourism and events industry in these areas (Pearce, Moscardo & Ross, 1991; Ap, 1992; Getz, 1994; Lankford & Howard, 1994).

SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF RURAL EVENTS

Social consequences refer to quality of life issues, such as social stratification, attitudes, beliefs, values of the host communities and lifestyles (Milman & Pizam, 1988; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). This is the way in which tourism and events are perceived to contribute to changes in value systems, individual behaviour, family relations, collective lifestyles, safety levels, moral conduct and community organisations (Fox, 1977; as cited in Ap, 1990). Generally these social consequences can be evidenced on two different levels: community level and a more personal individual level (Delamere, Wankel & Hinch, 2001).

At a community level the social consequences may include the development of resources and facilities for recreation purposes, improvements to infrastructure, issues relating to behaviour, a sense of occasion, enhanced community spirit, enhanced community pride and a modernised community image (Ritchie, 1984; Getz & Frisby, 1989; Hall, 1992; Janiskee, 1994; Craik, 1995; Gorney & Busser, 1996; Delamere, 1997; De Bres & Davis, 2001). Improvements to infrastructure, such as roads, sewage, irrigation and water supply, although designed to improve the tourist product have widespread benefits for host communities as well. Bell Planning Associates (1994) report that the increasing range of facilities and services were another additional benefit of tourism development for local residents. However, reduced access to resources and facilities may be a consequence that impinges on the quality of life of residents, especially during peak times such as the hosting of events (Crandall, 1994; Goodwin, 2000). Furthermore, increased litter, congestion and crowding, noise and crime have been cited as examples of pressure on local infrastructure and the quality of life of local residents (Crandall, 1994; Burns & Holden, 1995; Lindberg, Johnson & Berrens, 1997). Increased sexual exploitation, alcoholism, crime, drug addictions are also significant social problems that are sometimes introduced by tourism development.

Events especially provide the local community with the opportunity to participate in recreation, socialisation and a celebratory atmosphere, often lacking in rural areas, therefore this has extensive benefits for the local residents (Janiskee, 1994; Smith & Jenner, 1998). Events also have the potential of putting small communities, especially rural ones, on the map, which in turn contributes to increased tourism potential in the future. Tourism and events have the potential of strengthening the social fabric of the community through the opportunity to volunteer and the increasing of local interest and participation in events and the resulting socialization (Janiskee, 1994; Mayfield & Crompton, 1995; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Researchers (Janiskee, 1991; Mayfield & Crompton, 1995; Mount & Niro, 1995) have indicated that an event in a rural area can be seen as an expression of their friendliness and an affirmation of the willingness of the community to work together. This is due to many events in rural areas being developed out of the community and based on strong community involvement and support, thus developing and utilising the existing stocks of social capital.

Social capital is the ability of citizens to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures (Portes, 1998, 2000). Social capital grows out of those social interactions and networks that are experienced in daily lives. It is not the quality of individuals but, rather, the quality of a group or community as a whole (Putnam, 1993; Cox, 1995; Portes, 1998, 2000; Dhesi, 2000; Murray, 2000). Social capital both arises out of and helps build a sense of social trust, the norm of reciprocity on which social exchange and networks is based (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995; London, 1997). Without trust, cooperation is impossible; without cooperation, society-building cannot happen. Social capital is embodied in norms and networks of civic engagement (Putnam, 1993; Livermore & Midgley, 1998). Social networks and social institutions are social structures that support communication between individuals, foster sturdy norms of generalized

reciprocity and encourage the emergence of social trust (Cox, 1995; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995). Social capital is developed through active relationships with each other, therefore accumulating trust and increased by continual use (Cox, 1995b). These stocks of social capital tend to accumulate when used, and can also be depleted when not, thus creating the possibility of both virtuous and vicious cycles that manifest themselves in highly civic and uncivic communities (Sirianni & Friedland, 1995). Developing social capital is also a means of building human capital, strengthening the capacities of individuals and families to overcome adversities and take advantage of opportunities (Sanoff, 2000). Therefore, rural communities can look to events, especially those events that are developed by the community, as a source of celebration of their community and as a source to build social capital within their community through stakeholder community participation.

At a more personalised or individual level the social consequences relate to quality of life, employment prospects, learning new skills, participation, a personal satisfaction from socialising and recreating with others and behavioural issues. However, the opportunity for full time continuous employment within rural tourism and event enterprises may often be overstated with a greater proportion of the employees being previously farm labourers, family members or community volunteers (Hjalager, 1996). The attitudes an individual has towards his or her community can often be enhanced by involvement and participation in events (Gorney & Busser, 1996). Participation in planning and organising events also leads to the learning of new skills which individuals can apply to different aspects of their lives and that of their community (Reid, 2002a). The opportunity to socialise and recreate with others is a major motivational factor, which is particularly relevant in rural communities as a way of forgetting the harsh reality that they may otherwise be facing with drought and distance.

Although the social consequences of tourism is strongly related to the social consequences of events, they differ in that events have foundations within a community and they celebrate the characteristics special to that community (Delamere, 1997). Additionally, the high concentration of event and tourism activity in a small localised area over a short time period creates unique and more intense social consequences for events. Much of the research on the social consequences of events has focussed on mega events or hallmark events (Hall, 1992; Hall & Hodges, 1996; Soutar & McLeod, 1996; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Fredline & Faulkner, 2000) with little being investigated into these consequences in rural areas (Delamere, 1997; Molloy, 2002). Therefore, it is essential that the social consequences of events in rural areas are investigated.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research methodology was adopted to collect seventeen (17) in-depth interviews with stakeholders in the Inglewood area during January 2003. Stakeholders were identified using an event stakeholder typology (Reid & Arcodia, 2002b), with representatives from all of the stakeholder groups encouraged to participate. In total 16 stakeholder groups are included within the typology, with 17 respondents from within these groups being included within this study. Stakeholders were initially contacted by phone and a suitable time for their participation was arranged. The interviews utilised a semi-structured approach and varied in length from 60 minutes to up to 2 ½ hours and were audio tape recorded. The interviews were transcribed and returned to respondents for member cross checking, with all results obtained from a content analysis of these transcripts.

CASE STUDY: INGLEWOOD OLIVE FESTIVAL

Inglewood is located in mid south central region of Queensland about 3 hours south west of Brisbane between Warwick and Goondiwindi. Currently just over 1000 residents reside in the town with a further 1600 in the surrounding region (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). In the late 1990s the Shire Council employed an economic development officer in an effort to turn around the thirty years of decline, thus the olive industry was introduced into the region. Traditional primary production markets of cattle, sheep, lucerne, wheat, grain and timber had been the norm in the area therefore primary producers were hesitant in changing their crops to crops that had not been proven to be profitable. There was apprehension as to whether olives were just a 'flash in the pan' type of enterprise that had been set up for tax minimisation purposes by investors based in the city as other industries such as aloe vera and ostriches have proved to be.

The Olive Festival in Inglewood was established in 1999 by a group of local residents with the support of one of the major olive producers, the local shire council and local businesses. The first two

festivals were put on with much fan fare and media coverage, however there were a number of issues that resulted. A lack of effective management and accountability resulted in many areas of the festival making significant losses, with many local businesses failing to be paid for services rendered or goods supplied for many months. It was only after the major sponsor and the local council provided additional money that they were paid. Personality factors also arose between the committee and the rest of the community with many in the community being pushed out or alienated by the management committee. Consequently, many in the community were put off side with the festival and widespread community support was not forthcoming.

There are a number of social consequences that arose from the Inglewood Olive festival, on both a community and an individual level, which are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1 Social Consequences of Inglewood Olive Festival

Community Level	Individual Level
Community Support	Sense of Achievement/Confidence
Participation	Opportunity to Socialise/ Interacting with Others
Ownership	Education/ Learn new skills
Sense of Achievement/Confidence	Changing attitudes
Sense of Occasion/Entertainment	Pride
Positive atmosphere	Trust
Showcase the Tourism Potential of the Region	Releasing stress and tension
Promoting the Industry in the Region	Relationships
Education	Leadership
Identify community skills & resources	Motivated
Identity	
Pride	
Community Spirit	
Relationships	
Trust	
Unity	
Communication	
Leadership	
Motivation	
Changing Attitudes	
Traditions	
Improving Recreation Facilities	
Issues involving cost/ Spin-off effects of Economics	
Anti social behaviour/Crime	
Congestion	
Noise	

These social consequences were grouped into five domains for ease of analysis. The variables were grouped due to commonalities in the variables. The five grouped variables included the physical, economic, learning and developing, affective and networks and interactions domains as outlined in Table 2.

Physical Domain

The physical domain includes the social consequences of noise, congestion and anti social behaviour/crime. These consequences although generally considered to have negative connotations were not strongly evidenced as a result of the Inglewood Olive Festival. Any event that involves the opportunity to consume alcohol has the potential for creating anti social behaviour, with the Inglewood Olive Festival being no different. However the issues involving alcohol were not unique to the festival, rather a result of the culture of the town. Inglewood has five licensed premises and alcohol consumption is relatively high. However the festival provides the venue to combine a large number of people in a celebratory mood so therefore there were some incidences of anti social behaviour noted by 4 (23.5%) respondents. Crime though was not reported as a consequence of the festival, with 9 respondents who discussed issues of crime indicated that crime was not a consequence of the festival.

Table 2 Grouped Variables of Social Consequences

	Physical Domain	Economic Domain	Learning & Developing Domain	Affective Domain	Networks & Interactions Domain
Community Level	-Noise -Congestion -Anti social behaviour/ crime	-Issues of cost/ spinoff economic benefits -showcasing tourism potential -promoting industry/ employment -improving recreational facilities	-Identifying community resources & skills -education & training -sense of achievement/ confidence - leadership -changing attitudes	-sense of occasion/ entertainment -positive atmosphere -motivation -identity -pride -traditions	-participation -unity -community spirit -trust -relationships -community support -ownership -communication
Individual Level			-Education/ Learn new skills -sense of achievement/ confidence -leadership -changing attitudes	-Releasing stress and tension -motivated -pride	-Opportunity to Socialise/ interacting with Others -relationships

Planning for the increase in numbers to the town and region has resulted in many strategies being put in place by both the organising committee and the local authorities. This ensured that there was minimal congestion, with the 8 respondents who talked about this all stating that congestion was not an issue. Noise also had a limited impact. The four respondents that talked about noise all indicated that due to the location of the festival away from the residential hub of the town there had to date been no complaints about noise. One respondent indicated that as it only occurred one night a year the residents most closely affected justified the noise that was occurring and did not feel as though it was an impediment to their quality of life.

Economic Domain

Issues of cost as well as spin-off economic benefits, showcasing the tourism potential of the region, improving recreational facilities and promoting industry and employment were related within the economic domain. This was due to the variables all having economic implications for the community, i.e. showcasing tourism has the potential of increasing tourist numbers and improving recreational facilities. This has cost implications while also contributing to the infrastructure available to the community. One factor that emerged as a social consequence related to the cost of attending and participating in the festival. Even though the gate entry is a minimal cost, approximately $5, the additional costs of food, rides and products can add up. However, the timing of the event emerged as an issue. The Olive Festival is the middle of May, which is usually a couple of weeks after the agricultural show so there was some consternation about timing that arose. As one respondent noted "the biggest problem in this time of year is that with the Show, the Olive Festival and then Easter it is a really big drain on a low socioeconomic base here" [I12]. However the financial gain for the community from tourists spending their money in the town has widespread social consequences. The extra money that is generated to the region as a result of the festival enables those businesses to consider hiring additional staff to cope with the increase in numbers, which enables a family or individual to have more money that they can then spend in the town. This has the potential to flow through the community.

Industry and employment is one key characteristic in enticing people to move to a region or to guarantee jobs for those that are already residing in the region, therefore for the economic viability of a town there needs to be sufficient industry or employment infrastructure. A major finding of this research indicated that "we need an industry or industries to set up here, that sort of thing. Yeah the advertising from it [the festival] is really beneficial" [I12]. The festival is able to promote some of the cottage industries that are developing in the region, marketing local products and services therefore generating income. Income generation, especially income generation from external sources of funding like tourists

increases the financial success of the region. However it is questionable whether the festival itself provides any direct employment benefits to the community, this is due to the reliance on volunteer labour. Previously the festival was organised by a council employee who was being paid to in an economic development/tourism officer role, therefore some of the time dedicated to this role involved working on the festival. Since this contract was terminated no person is employed within these roles in the council. The future holds opportunities though for future employment as a direct result of the festival. The indirect employment opportunities that result from the festival are based on the employment of more staff at businesses during the weekend to cater for the increase in numbers. This affects service stations, food outlets, the grocery store, motels, craft stores and other businesses that are open in town throughout the weekend of the festival. The olive processing plant is also opened as a result of the festival.

The Inglewood Olive Festival also is able to promote the town and the region on a much wider scale. Festivals are a buzzword and are being used as a tool to market regions and to entice tourists (Hall, 1992). However in doing this a process of education is required for the local community in understanding the benefits that tourism can bring to a region. The role that tourism has played in other rural centres has shown to the locals the advantages that can be gained from tourism, however there is a general lack of awareness of the attributes and facilities within the area that can be marketed. Although always friendly and helpful to tourists in town it was noted that some locals felt inconvenienced by the intrusion of tourists to 'their' camping or fishing spots. Therefore, education to locals of the benefits that accrue to communities from tourism is required. The Inglewood Shire Council has also reacted slowly to the need to develop a coordinated tourism approach with no tourism officer or employee being focussed on tourism development within the shire. Therefore, until tourism begins to be considered as valuable, with a tourism or marketing officer employed within the shire, and the benefits of seeking tourism are disseminated to the local community the advantages of showcasing the festival and the region will only be minimal or token in nature.

Of the 13 respondents who discussed the recreational facilities 8 (61.5%) acknowledged that the festival had contributed to the recreational resources of the region. One of the advantages of the Olive festival, as discussed previously, was the use of the existing recreational resources to host the festival. A secondary outcome to this was the upgrading or improvement of the golf club facilities.

> …when last years was thinking of going ahead we got in as a club, I think it got the club together and we said 'well the clubhouse isn't looking real crash hot'. I think the benefit was there that the public eye and visitors were coming from all over, so last year we got in and did the clubhouse up as a club. It was a real motivation for us to get in and make sure that the club looks nice, which is a huge improvement to what it was. [I9]

Although not a direct response of the festival new recreational facilities were also created for the town. This included walkways and cycleways, beautification of the main street and historical plaques telling the story of Inglewood. This was to enhance the quality of life of individuals within the community and creates an object of interest for tourists. So it can be evidenced that as a result of the festival either directly or indirectly recreational facilities are being upgraded and created to support the increased profile of the community.

Learning & Developing Domain
The learning and developing domain included variables such as identifying community skills and resources, educating and training, sense of achievement/confidence, leadership and changing attitudes. These all had education, learning and development as key. The Olive festival is organised and planned by a local organising committee in association with local community groups, organisations and businesses, therefore they are relying on the local community to provide everything to establish, organise and implement the festival. In one of the previous festivals a dinner was held in a large marquee, consequently the marquee, tables, chairs, glasses, chinaware, tableware and cooking facilities had to be hired at great expense. As a result of this, the community and the olive festival committee acknowledged that the existing facilities that abide within the community for holding functions such as this were not being utilised. Therefore, the festival held in 2003 utilised the existing resource of the Inglewood Shire Council Civic Centre to hold the function eliminating the need to hire a marquee and cooking facilities as well as tables and chairs. It is only through the learning process and the identification of community

resources that this solution was achieved. The location of the festival, at the golf club, also utilised existing resources and infrastructure within the town. This ensures that infrastructure in the town has a multi functional purpose and is used regularly rather than solely for the purposes it was originally built for, in this case golf which is only played one afternoon a week in Inglewood.

Community skills were also identified as the result of the festival. Talent and skills in individuals are identified and if utilised can contribute to the education of others working alongside of them.

> …sometimes in small communities people don't always want people to look at them and people who are a bit different maybe feel a bit ostracized or they hide their differences, whereas a show like this allows them to suddenly bloom and display some talents that people did not necessary know about. [I1]

However, one respondent indicated that although it may identify skills it may also highlight shortcomings also. Therefore it is necessary for organising committees on festivals such as this to be aware of what both the skills and shortcomings of individuals within the community are and to best cater to these to get optimum results.

One interesting outcome of the research indicated that due to mindset within the community there was an expectation that the government was going to assist the community. This is an unrealistic expectation as government is not in the position to assist financially and with external skills and resources, therefore a community that is able to develop these skills will be in a better situation to foster development. By developing the community skills and resources it is utilising the existing social capital within the community and developing new social capital. This can then be used by the community to seek solutions to their own problems and to drive community development.

An important social consequence of the festival that was noted by the respondents was the sense of achievement and confidence felt at both a community and individual level.

> …there is a great sense of achievement in helping or being instrumental in making a big event happen in a small town. So really to transform a small town into somewhere where something big is happening that looks really exciting and well run is a great sense of achievement. [I1]

An outcome of this would be an enhanced sense of confidence in the abilities of the community and individuals within the community to tackle other projects.

Education and training was another key outcome of being involved in organising and planning the festival and also in the olive industry. Education is important in all facets of life on both an individual and a community level. At a community level the outcomes of education are widespread but include understanding, trust and development of new skills. Involving the community in the organising and planning has the potential to further utilise and develop the community's skills. This can have spin-off effects for the community through the application of learnt skills to other facets of community life or an individual's own business or their jobs. If an individual has learnt from others within the community a skill or gained the confidence to do such they may be encouraged to take on other projects within the community, therefore enhancing the community resources that are available to solve problems or to seek further community development.

The Inglewood community has a number of different leaders; political leaders, group leaders and influential individuals. Politically the council has had the same mayor for 15 years which has enhanced stability, however it is questionable whether this is an ideal situation for new ideas and input as well as rejuvenating stale economies. Seventy percent (12) of the respondents indicated that the festival enabled leadership skills to be learnt or developed. This is beneficial as it enables people to learn and develop new skills that they can then utilise in different facets of their lives. Additionally it provides the community with a larger pool of leaders that can drive different projects, once again with the aim of empowering them to overcome the adversities that they face. Leadership also has different levels and by acknowledging what individual's capabilities are within the community is also important. There is no

point forcing an individual into a leadership position if they are not ready or are incapable as things will not happen, perhaps it may be best to guide them through the process. Another issue that became evident was the need to develop these leadership skills amongst the youth. This was due to the fact that the community was an aging one and if all the leadership is lost at the top then there is no one that has the skills to lead the community to carry on. One of the issues that 4 (24%) of the respondents indicated though was the need for planned progression of leadership. There is no point having one person in a leadership position for a number of years with no thought to how the festival is going to be continued when that person steps aside. Therefore, succession planning is required. Additionally, there needs to be continuity with those in leadership positions or on organising committees being available for consecutive events so that the knowledge gained from previous festivals is not lost. This has particularly been a problem with the Olive festival as there has been a complete overhaul of the organising committee recently. However, if there was some consistency in the transfer of knowledge between organising committees it might ease the load.

Change is an issue that although not discussed in previous research had a significant influence on the Inglewood community. The issue with the olive industry was that it was challenging or introducing a new industry to the already long established rural industries that existed within the town. For a community that has clear divides between 'locals' and 'others' the olive industry was treated as an 'other' as well, therefore lacking support of many 'locals' who wanted to keep the status quo of primary production, i.e. Sheep, cattle, grain and logging. This is evidenced at all levels of the community, with many of the shire leaders or councilors being primary producers who have lived in the region all of their lives. For effective change to occur there needs to be a major paradigm shift in the thinking of the community. The community needs to be aware of the situation that is happening to their town, both economically and socially. One such factor has been the changes that have occurred with the population of Inglewood. There is a constant movement of people in and out of the town, with many people treating the local government and professional jobs as stepping stones to something better. This results in a constant turnover of staff and a lack of stability. Additionally, there is a tendency for those people to come into the community with grand ideas for rejuvenation however they do not tend to stay long enough to follow the ideas through to fruition. Therefore the community gets disheartened and the divide between 'locals' and 'others' intensifies. Unfortunately due to the problems associated with this and the financial problems of the previous festival there has been a general unwillingness by 'locals' to be office bearers in the organising and planning of the festival. One significant benefit though is that the festival encourages the two parties to intermix in a social setting, which may contribute to a level of understanding and respect between them if the festival is considered a success. The educational component of the festival has the possibility of also widening the knowledge of all within the community to the contribution that olives could make to the region. The greatest way of achieving success and changing attitudes in communities that are resistant to change is by proving the viability of the industry and the benefits that the industry can have for the community. This can only be achieved by effective communication and education.

Affective Domain

The affective domain relates to intrinsic characteristics such as the sense of occasion/entertainment, positive atmosphere, motivation, identity, pride and traditions. Rural towns are full of occasions that allow people to come together, especially with sporting fixtures and other events, however these larger community festivals provide the opportunity of getting the whole town together. The festival was also the catalyst for providing entertainment that the people within the community would not evidence on a regular basis. The Olive festival also encouraged those people that are not living in the town or the region also to have a reason to attend. This creates the opportunity to showcase the entertainment and sense of occasion of the festival beyond the community.

The changes to society over the last 40 years have resulted in people becoming more isolated, individualistic and focussed around activities that occur within the home, therefore they are not socialising external to the home as was previously the case. Community events are structured events so that it enables people to get out and socialise with a broad range of other people in an entertaining setting. One of the main objectives of the festival was to provide this sense of occasion.

The harsh reality of country life is that drought has caused many primary producers to fall on hard times. If the festival is able to relieve these tensions and stresses for a short time then it is socially a

success. But not only that it might be the catalyst that depicts to those that are making a living out of the land what being a part of the community is all about and reinforce their determination to carry on.

A facet that the Inglewood community has struggled with over the last few decades since the decline of many of their major industries has been a sense of apathy. They have struggled to remain motivated and enthusiastic when they are faced with ongoing economic hardships and the loss of services. However, the Olive Festival created a real vibe in the community. This positive atmosphere has a twofold effect, it might encourage locals to stay or persuade others to come and live in the region. Social consequences of the festival are also evident on a more intrinsic level for the community. Having an event, or organising an event, requires commitment and focus on the part of those involved therefore motivation needs to be high. One feature though with the Inglewood community is that there is a certain amount of motivation or vision lacking. Motivation is strongly linked with leadership, participation and ownership. One of the outcomes of motivation within a community is the ability to facilitate effective responses and develop their own projects. This leads to the utilisation and further development of social capital within the community to overcome adversities. So not only will the community benefit through having a motivated community that utilises its stocks of social capital it also has the potential of enticing new members to live there.

The most positive and frequently mentioned social outcome that the Inglewood Olive Festival has created for the community was an identity or image. Historically the town has struggled for an identity as it is just like all other sheep and cattle grazing areas, there was nothing that made it unique. The town has been marketed as 'the olive capital of Australia' even though this is questionable given the longer established and larger South Australian olive industry and the fact that the major olive groves surrounding the Inglewood shire are 60 to 90 kilometres away and not even located within the shire. There are a number of social consequences that result from this community identity: pride, enhanced recognition, economic spin-offs which lead to social benefits and a willingness to be associated with the town rather than being so quick to leave. Social benefits of keeping the community cohesive and proud to live in town are a significant benefit that arises out of external people recognising and identify Inglewood with the olive festival.

> …kids feel embarrassed about being in a small town they want the bright lights the want to be from somewhere, it is just the uplifting of the image and perhaps a bit of paid or work opportunities from time to time as the industry grows keeps a couple of kids there or even some older families wanting to stay. It keeps the community there together and it is growing, because it was a declining population and that has stabilised and started to change. [I1]

Additionally that media coverage and identity formation results in increased thought about Inglewood in travellers minds, which could potentially be converted to economic spin offs if they stop in the town. This leads to increased business in the town leading to foreign money being generated and that can be redistributed within the community as well as improvements to social conditions for recipients.

Identity also has the potential of enhancing pride in the region. Pride is a powerful tool and if utilised effectively it can improve participation rates and be a factor in the community taking ownership of the festival. Individuals through their participation also have enhanced their own sense of pride, particularly in relation to achieving things that they may have otherwise not thought that they could possibly do. This has spin-off benefits for the community through the confidence and enhanced self image that an individual may possess as a result of being involved in the festival. An enhanced sense of pride in the community also may encourage people that were thinking of moving out of the area to reconsider because they like to feel part of the community and are proud to be part of that. A challenge now for the community is to develop that feeling of pride that the festival has created and implement strategies to remind the community throughout the year of this.

Networks & Interactions Domain

The final domain refers to networks of relationships and interactions. This incorporates consequences such as community support, relationships, participation, ownership, unity, trust and communication. The community support for the festival is mixed. However, there was some confusion as to whether this was superseded by the olive industry support rather than the festival. As a result of the

first two festivals having financial difficulties there was some scepticism about community support for the festival. Eight (47%) respondents were cynical but gave limited support, once again this was overridden by the overall feeling of the community to the olive industry. A further 5 respondents (29.4%) stated that the community was supportive of the festival. The remaining 3 respondents (17.6%) stated that the community was not supportive of the festival. However, one advantage of the festival not having sponsorship this year was that it has resulted in the committee scaling back the size and scope of the festival to a more sustainable level. Additionally, it has encouraged them to be more inclusive of the community in the hope that this will persuade the community to be supportive of the festival and to take ownership of the event.

Another issue with community support revolves around issues of leadership. The community does not fully support someone until they have proven themselves. A general feeling of not wanting to step outside of the mould or to put oneself in the firing line has been another factor affecting community support. However, this is not a feature unique to Inglewood many rural communities have enforced norms and values that are entrenched within the community. There are a number of ways of overcoming this: a successful event and educating the community of the benefits of holding and being involved in organising events.

Participation was inextricably linked with community support and has ramifications for the community in terms of the social consequences. However, in rural communities that have a finite number of people there is difficulty in obtaining participation at a planning and organisation level. There are a number of issues that affect participation; fear of officialdom, stepping outside the community norms and other commitments. Being a small town with a limited group of people that are willing to get involved in organisations and committees and a large number of committees vying for these people there was a feeling that "you are flogging the flogged" [I10]. The town is 'over committeesized' with too many community organisations all doing something, therefore the resourcing of people to work these committees is stretched to capacity. All these committees are working independently of each other even though they might have strong links or capability of joining. The local community needs to identify and analyse these organisations to determine if their resources could be better utilized through amalgamation or collaboration.

The official nature of committees has also reduced the willingness of some to become involved. "People hate committees and meetings, there is too many of them. Whereas if you could have something that was less threatening, meetings to some people are they get totally out of their depth" [I11]. A more laid back affair, possibly a sausage sizzle or community barbeque could allow people to come together in a non threatening environment to discuss what they would like to see evolve. Many residents are not confident of their ability or feel that their contribution is not worthy therefore they do not get involved. With a more social and open process this could encourage those people to participate without feeling ridiculed for their ideas. Additionally, it allows for wider community participation thus enabling social consequences to be heightened in a positive way. The financial issues with the first two festivals and the scale that the original committees were hoping to achieve also caused many residents to avoid participation. However, there is a general willingness to be involved or participate in helping to run the festival over the weekend.

By involving the community ownership of the festival is being encouraged. However, ownership has become an issue. It is hard to take ownership of a project that has yet to prove itself financially sustainable. Rural communities are conservative and astute, if a project fails no one wants to be associated with it. This approach though only investigates the economic viability and management of the previous festivals and does not acknowledge the affects the festival has had socially. Economic consequences are easier to quantify while the social consequences are somewhat abstract and given little thought. That is why it is so important to take into consideration the full range of consequences of festivals. Many respondents indicated that they had not even thought about the social consequences of the Olive festival until they were asked through this research, as a result they were surprised that the festival although having previously negative economic contributions was positive socially.

The contribution that the festival has had on community spirit has been overwhelming positive. Thirteen respondents (76%) indicated that the festival had a positive influence on community spirit. Community spirit was closely aligned with the sense of pride that the residents felt in the town as a result

of the festival. One issue that became pertinent was the sense of isolation that can sometimes happen to a community due to changing societal values. The festival provides the opportunity to work together on a community project which can create that community spirit. However, 2 respondents (12%) indicated that community spirit was not affected by the festival. They believed that due to the poor participation rates the festival could not have provided the chance to improve community spirit, although if the participation levels increased this could have a different affect. The consensus is growing though that the Olive festival has the ability to positively influence the degree of community spirit that is evident in a community, particularly if the event acquires a community participatory approach.

Another significant finding was that many respondents indicated that they had met new people at or as a result of the festival. The festival also allowed for newer members of the community to meet more established members in a relaxed and social atmosphere. It is very difficult for new residents to be accepted in rural communities that have deeply entrenched values and norms, this is especially relevant in Inglewood. One feature of the community that became evident was the divide between 'locals' and 'others'. To be classified as a local a resident basically has to have been born in the area with a running joke in the town being 'I have been here for 50 years and I am still not a local'. This is not unique to Inglewood but is a characteristic of many country towns. The festival however is able to bring these diverse groups together, allows for them to socialise and get to know one another rather than across deep chasms. This will strengthen, or has the possibility of strengthening the level of understanding and objectives of the different groupings making a stronger or more cohesive community.

Another facet that encourages new social relationships to be formed is through the hosting of festival attendees. The town of Inglewood has limited accommodation facilities and therefore as a way of overcoming this the local community have hosted guests within their homes. This enables the residents to earn additional income but also opens their eyes to the way other people live or their lives and cultures. Many respondents however indicated that although new social relationships were formed during and as a result of the event it was unlikely that deep long term relationships would result. One of the strongest findings indicated that while the new social relationships were formed and tended to be short term the benefit of the festival was felt more positively with existing social relationships. It provides the occasion for people that are located out on properties to catch up with others that are also out on properties and with friends that may reside closer to town. The strengthening of relationships within community organisations was also noted, especially as the result of working closely together throughout the festival. This leads to the contribution that the festival and social relationships has had on social trust within the community.

In order for a community to participate in an event there needs to be an amount of trust that exists within the community and between the festival and the community. To date and due to the complications of the first two festivals this has been lacking. However, through working together and utilising the networks that exist within the community it can assist in developing this trust. An interesting finding of the research indicated that one way to develop this trust was through the use of locals to manage and organise the festival. This is because the locals have a greater knowledge of these networks and the intricacies of the workings of the community. Therefore a local leadership, in its many forms, is better able to approach, include and instil trust in the festival. Trust is integral for a successful rural event, it also has the power to unite the community.

The issue involving unity is twofold for the Olive festival. A sense of community and unity within the community is very important, especially in small communities that are trying to deal with adversity. The financial ramifications and innuendo that resulted from the first two festivals however, caused a split in the community. Times of adversity can draw a community together or fragment it even further, the fact that key sponsorship has been lost as a result of the previous festival has forced the community to work together to put on a festival. Therefore, a stronger sense of unity has resulted. As discussed previously developing social trust is integral for a community in order for them to work together to achieve common goals. One way of developing this trust is through effective communication. The Olive festival has had a number of problems relating to the distribution of communication. Firstly, there were issues related to transparency of the organising committee.

> …if they [the community] are not kept informed of it then the information that is
> circulated could be inaccurate, get out of control and snowball…if there is no

communication and they are only hearing things here and there it doesn't flow through, they won't get the support for it. [I16]

In addition to creating more transparent and open forms of communication the objectives of the festival and the likely benefits also need to be addressed. The community has to have an understanding of what these goals are and the potential benefits so that they can be better informed and supportive. There are a number of ways that this could be done. The local council could prepare literature in the form of a brochure that could be distributed within rate notices or as pamphlets in the local paper to inform residents. A mailbox idea was also discussed [I1], whereby residents were able to discuss concerns or issues in an anonymous fashion that could then be dealt with by the organising committee. Whatever function the communication takes it needs to be honest, discuss what the festival hopes to achieve, what the benefits to the community may be and transparent in the actions of the committee.

CONCLUSIONS

Numerous social consequences resulted from the Inglewood Olive Festival for the local community. These were particularly relevant in five key domains: physical, economic, learning and developing, affective and networks and interactions. The festival did not lead to increases in crime or anti social behaviour within the community. Additionally congestion and noise were limited due to the rural location ensuring that there was adequate space to alleviate these problems. Therefore in contrast with other social consequence research the physical domain variables had limited impact within a rural event environment.

Economically the festival generates financial gain to the community through tourists and increased spending. However costs associated with attending a festival and participating in various aspects of the festival had the potential to disadvantage lower socioeconomic groups. Therefore rural communities that have suffered economic hardship have to look to events as a source of celebration of the community by keeping costs at a minimum for attendees. There is a need for tourism planning within the area with communication and education to members of the community of the consequences of tourism. However, the festival was able to assist in upgrading recreational facilities thus enhancing the quality of life and standards that exist within the community. By utilising the existing resources of the golf club, and other community facilities and resources, the festival ensures that these facilities are being used for other purposes throughout the year. This also does not put added financial burden upon the community for the development of new facilities.

A significant finding from the research was the learning and skill development of community members through their involvement in planning and organising the festival. These skills have the potential of assisting the community in developing new projects or activities, both personally and professionally, within the region. By utilising and developing the stocks of social capital that exist within the community they are better placed to generate development without relying on the different levels of government. However a finding that is unique to this research is dealing with the process of change that rural communities are going through. By developing the learning, skills and leadership of community members may assist the community in dealing with such change.

Intrinsic social consequences also arose from the research. Similar to other social consequences research relating to events the sense of occasion, creation of an identity and image, enhanced community spirit and pride were created from the Inglewood Olive Festival. However, a finding that may be particularly pertinent to rural areas is the opportunity that the festival creates to release stress and tension by forgetting the hardships of rural live, even if for just a few hours.

However the strain on resources for small communities results from adding additional committees to organise and plan festivals such as the Inglewood Olive Festival. There is a need to identify existing committees and in some cases amalgamate these to effectively utilise the existing skills and resources rather than added to the burden of community members. Transparency of communication and committee activities will also assist in creating a greater sense of community ownership, support and unity for the festival.

A key finding of the research was that the actual community makeup and philosophies themself determines the consequences that will either impinge on or benefit them. Particularly interesting was the

affect of change and the social consequences that this has on rural communities through the implementation of new industries and or events. Education of the roles that events play for communities, especially socially, could benefit these rural areas in coping with change and developing consequences that are socially beneficial for their communities. This is best utilised through a community stakeholder participatory approach to the planning and organising of events in rural areas.

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