



# Green Point residents' perceptions of the socio-economic impact of the Cape Town Carnival

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## Abstract

This study investigates the socio-economic impact of the Cape Town Carnival (CTC) as perceived by residents of the Green Point suburb of Cape Town. In most cases, successful carnival events are underpinned by community support thus it is crucial to examine residents' perceptions towards such events. The CTC is an annual cultural event which celebrates the transformative power of creativity as well as African identity. In this study, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 318 Green Point residents within a two weeks period after the 2016 CTC event (12 – 26<sup>th</sup> March). The respondents were surveyed using a spatially-based stratified random sampling method. The investigation explored the perceptions of the residents, in relation to the carnival event, as well as highlighting the positive and negative aspects of their experience. The research primarily adopted quantitative research approach by using a questionnaire with mostly closed-ended questions. The data were analysed using SPSS version 24 software and the findings were visually presented by the use of frequency tables. Key findings of the study highlighted that residents generally perceived the socio-economic impacts of the CTC event positively. However, few residents perceive the event negatively and suggested ways of ensuring that it continues flawlessly. The study recommends more community involvement in the planning of the event. Furthermore, due to the change of perceptions over time, it is recommended that longitudinal and comparative studies be conducted in order to assess the perceptions and to compare the impacts of hosting the CTC event in the Green Point area.

**Keywords:** Cape Town Carnival; residents perceptions; socio-economic impacts; local events; event impacts

## Introduction

According to Banjo (2011), local residents play a key role in the planning and hosting process of cultural events as they are the ones most affected. In addition, Fredline (2006) highlights that local residents often form an influential group, and the success of events largely depends on the support and involvement of the local community. According to a number of researchers, though events have taken into consideration the economic implications of the hosting, residents' perceptions have often been neglected aspects of events planning (Turco, Swart, Bob & Moodley, 2003; Ohmann, Jones & Wilkes, 2006; Swart, Bob & Arrey, 2008). Therefore, community perceptions about a cultural event are essential to the success of the event and its sustainability. According to the social exchange theory of Ap (1990), Gursoy, Jurowski and Uysal (2002), and Lindberg and Johnson (1997), residents form event perceptions based on



what is expected to occur. Based on this social exchange theory, Allen, Hafer, Long and Perdue (1993) posit that locals are likely to participate in an exchange if there is a belief that the benefits from so doing will outweigh the costs, and will be inclined to support future development in the community. Therefore, residents' perceptions are likely to be derived from their knowledge, value systems and experiences with similar events as suggested by the social representations theory (Moscovici, 1982). The importance of the role played by the perceptions of local residents in the planning and implementation of events originates in the fact that large-scale events tend to have both direct and indirect impacts (socio-cultural, environmental, and economic) on residents (Jeong & Faulkner, 1996). In addition, Turco et al. (2003) note that without stakeholder support especially local community members (residents), several sanctions may be imposed by the community. Such sanctions may include:

- Loss of local support for the organisations and authorities promoting the event;
- Unwillingness to partake in the event or in the tourism industry
- A lack of word-of-mouth promotion of the event; and
- Hostility towards visitors, manifested in respect of overcharging, rudeness and indifference displayed towards them (Turco et al., 2003:227).

Waitt (2003) and Cornelissen and Maennig (2010) confirm that the perceived social issues such as community pride and international recognition are among the more widespread benefits for host communities, rather than economic gains. However, Waitt (2003) further argues that the importance of events in addressing social issues decreases especially when the positive event spinoffs are not sustained after the event. In this regard, the negative impacts of the event such as traffic congestion and noise disturbances, as well as broader impacts such as increased prices and a heavier tax burden remain in the community members' minds if they are not taken into consideration (Kim, Gursoy & Lee, 2006).

In South Africa, a number of studies have considered residents' perceptions regarding the hosting of events, in the host communities (Zhang, 2007; Ntloko & Swart, 2008; Swart et al., 2008; Swart & Bob, 2009, Muresherwa, Machisa & Steyn, 2017). These studies confirm the importance of considering community members in the planning process of events. According to Turco et al. (2003), the hosting of events should include consideration of the perceptions of the local residents. If residents are involved in the planning process, it dispels any resentment that might be felt towards the events and tourism growth in the future (Turco et al., 2003). Bob and Majola (2011) are also of the view that residents' concerns and attitudes should be addressed and this can be achieved when various stakeholders (event organisers, sponsors, government and private sector) work together and invest significant resources in the hosting of the event.

Viviers and Slabbert (2012) argue that it is important to keep in mind that different members of the community have different value systems, which underpin the ways in which the community members interpret phenomena in the world around them. It is therefore reasonable to assume that within a community setting many different attitudes would exist regarding the relative merits of hosting events and festivals.

Information about the impacts of tourism linked to events particularly from the host's perspective is therefore an important factor that needs to be considered in planning. Mangia, Canonic, Toraldo and Mercurio (2011) state that irrespective of how tourism is introduced and developed in a community, residents are important players who can influence the success or failure of the local industry. They may contribute to the wellbeing of the community through their participation. However, Cudny, Korec and Rouba (2012) believe that residents may be instrumental in discouraging the industry by opposing it or exhibiting hostile behaviour toward tourists. Heightened tension and community divisiveness can occur because of tourism development and pitting tourism supporters against non-supporters (Loots, Ellis & Slabbert, 2011). Furthermore, tension between residents and tourists can occur. People will often feel



stressed over the new, increasingly hectic community and personal pace of life (Lee, 2013). In developing and attracting tourism to a community, the goal is to achieve outcomes that best balance benefits and costs for all stakeholders, particularly residents, tourists, and the industry (Lee, 2013).

Saayman (2011) argues that to handle this type of situation, research into perceptions and attitudes can help planners. If different profiles of groups within a particular community are known, pertinent development strategies can minimise any potential negative effects and maximise the overall population's support for such alternatives, while allowing identification of those groups most likely to disagree with these strategies. Thus, Snyman and Saayman (2004) argue that it is clear that a positive environment will influence the communities' attitudes and perceptions positively. The aim of the current study was to determine the perceptions of residents regarding the impacts of the CTC to establish the overall value of the carnival from two angles, firstly the social and secondly the economic perspective. This investigation explored the perceptions and experiences of the residents of the Green Point suburb in relation to the carnival event and highlighted the positive and negative aspects of their experience.

### ***Impacts of the CTC (2010-2016)***

According to Jafta (2013), an independent impact assessment of the CTC conducted by Equity Solutions in 2011 was the first to offer information regarding the carnival event. This study pointed out the contribution of the event to the local economy, for example job creation, allowing for skills transfer and gaining of work experience (Jafta, 2013). The event created income from the vendors situated within the parade locale and restaurants in the surrounding vicinity. During the years 2010, 2011, and 2012 the income generated from the event was R5.2 million, R6.8 million and R13 million respectively (Jafta, 2013). According to the CTC annual review report for 2016, the average expenditure per event attendee was R330 and the overall expenditure was R10.1 million (CTC, 2016).

Jafta (2013) further indicated that the event generated employment opportunities for local residents. In the years 2010, 2011 and 2012, this event created 250, 242 and 777 jobs respectively, which were both full-time and temporary. However, the 2016 CTC annual review report indicated that 986 jobs were created due to the direct impact of the budget and funding that was available for the event (CTC, 2016). These jobs included costume production, float building and event logistics and 60% of these jobs were filled by the youth. This helped to reduce unemployment rates, especially among the youth in South Africa. The carnival project has achieved sustainable growth and has contributed significantly to employment creation. Employment creation has reduced problems such as poverty, crime, violence, gangsterism, substance abuse, loss of dignity and morale, and disengagement, which stifles attempts to build social cohesion (CTC Report, 2016). Equity Solutions (2011) examined the CTC brand as a cultural and social bonding experience. Equity Solutions (2011:30) concluded that:

- Culture, history and memory can successfully be used to build cohesion, create employment and training opportunities and generate an interest in the arts;
- The organisation does contribute to raising the city's cultural profile and visibility, and the carnival can become a significant contributor to local tourism and the local economy;
- The carnival fosters economic development;
- The carnival's celebration of history through cultural displays resonates with people, which stimulates a sense of belonging, and
- For the organisers of the carnival this contributed to a strong branding process as well as the improved wellbeing of local residents.



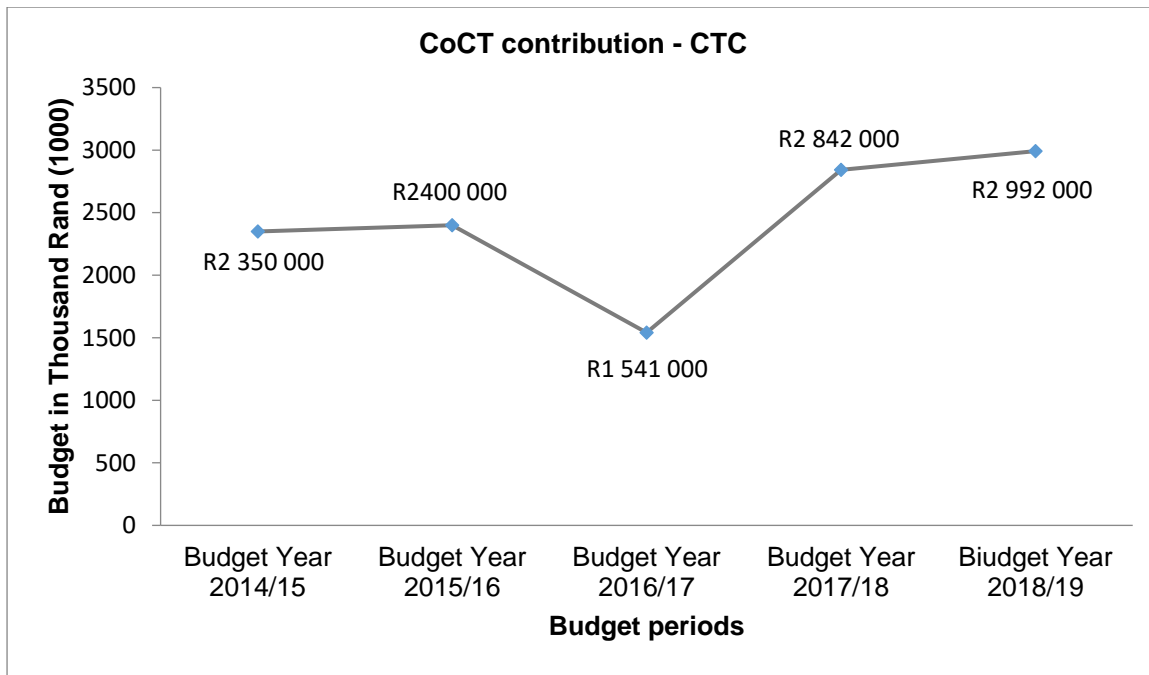
Equity Solutions (2011) further reported that the carnival has the ability to create jobs (both direct and indirect) as well as achieve social inclusion. However, this can only be achieved when sustainable funding mechanisms are put in place. The carnival event has the potential to transform lives of local community members through presenting various opportunities to people.

The 2016 CTC offered unique opportunities for creative talent and presented opportunities for skills development such as construction, designing and lighting facilities (CTC, 2016). The CTC annual review suggested a number of local economic development opportunities offered by the event, such as entrepreneurial and small business development through the procurement of services from small enterprises (CTC, 2016). The report further indicated that the CTC has the potential to become an iconic Cape Town event, capable of attracting foreign and local tourists to the city (CTC, 2016).

Like any other cultural events, the CTC draws thousands of visitors who come to watch as performers showcase their skills. These visitors are attracted from different parts of the country and even beyond South Africa, for example foreign countries including Zimbabwe, China, Australia, Canada and the USA (CTC, 2016). The 2017 CTC event attracted an estimated 44 900 spectators and the majority (55.0%) of them were South Africans, while the rest were from foreign countries (South African Cultural Observatory [SACO], 2018). It is undoubted that the carnival event appeals to both locals and foreign visitors. While the CTC noticeably attracts a good crowd to the street procession and plays an increasingly important role in training, development and providing an outlet for arts and culture-related industries, the direct impact of the event is of great benefit to a number of stakeholders particularly the residents who lives in the area where the event is hosted.

The CTC is considered a national flagship event and is part of the DAC's Mzansi Golden Economy (MGE) (CoCT, n.d). The MGE is a South African government strategy that aims to increase and enhance the economic contribution of the arts (SACO, 2018). In 2012/2013, the CTC included over 1 500 performers from 47 communities and was attended by an estimated 55 000 people, creating over 800 jobs (DAC, 2014). The core of the event created 150 jobs, of which 76% were opportunities for young people, across a wide range of creative, technical, marketing, and events management areas (DAC, 2014). In addition, DAC (2014) indicates that 642 additional jobs were created through the suppliers to the festival.

For the 2017 CTC event, the financial year 2016/2017 had a sponsorship valued at R2.7 million which was approved by the CoCT (CoCT, n.d). The City's commitment to supporting home-grown events is shown in their support in the form of sponsorship. In 2015, Cape Town Municipality contributed R2 350 000 towards the carnival event. In 2016, 2017 and 2018 the City's contribution towards the CTC event was R2 400 000, R1 541 000 and R2 842 000 respectively (CoCT, n.d). There has been growth in the sponsorship from the City (except a decrease in the 2016/17 period) which shows continued support from the City to promote local events (see Figure 1). The 2019 CTC (financial year 2018/2019) already has sponsorship approval valued at R2 991 689 from the City of Cape Town (CoCT, n.d).



**Figure 1: City of Cape Town budget allocation for periods 2014/15 – 2018/19** (Researchers' construction, adapted from CoCT, n.d.)

According to SACO, which is the creative economy think tank and research unit of the DAC, the 2017 CTC had a significant impact on the economy, generating revenue in excess of R41 million (SACO, 2018). The increasingly popular CTC seems to be generating astounding economic and social benefits for the City of Cape Town and creative industries, together with social cohesion and stimulation of the creative economy (SACO, 2018).

## Methodology

### *The study area and CTC event*

The study area was the suburb of Green Point, which is home to the CTC event and where it has been hosted for the past eight years. The Green Point area is the only place in Cape Town that hosts this annual community party where the vibrant diversity of Cape Town and South Africa is showcased. The event brings together more than 50 community groups to Green Point and the Fan Walk, displaying spectacular floats, giant puppets and extravagant costumes to spectators who come from various parts of Cape Town and beyond (Let's Go, 2017).

The first annual CTC was held in Long Street, Cape Town among the captivating festivities that characterised the hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament (CTC, 2015). It is estimated that 11 000 people attended the event in 2010 and since its introduction, the spectator crowds at the carnival event have increased to over 50 000 (CTC, 2015). The event is held annually in March and attracts a huge crowd. However, the carnival was relocated to the Fan Walk, Green Point and now proceeds down the Fan Walk, Somerset Road and to Main Road Green Point. The street party and parade celebrates diversity, creativity, and cultural understanding through vibrant dance routines and impressive costumes (Cape Town Magazine, 2015).

### *Green Point residents and sampling*

To determine the sample size for the Green Point residents, the study used the database for the 2011 City of Cape Town (CoCT) census for the suburb of Green Point, as this was easily accessible to the researchers. According to the CoCT (2011) statistical report, the population



of Green Point was 9 301. However, the target population of the study only included residents who resided within a two kilometre radius from where the event begins and finishes (distance from the event procession route). The study focus area was approximately two thirds of the whole area, hence the resident population was 6 200. The CTC parade starts from Somerset Road, turns into the Main Road in Green Point and proceeds all the way into the Cape Town Stadium.

The sample size was established by using a spatially based stratified random sampling method. Spatially-based implies that the entire geographic area under study has been surveyed. According to Clark, Riley, Wilkie and Wood (1998), Tharenou, Donohue and Cooper (2007), and O’Gorman and MacIntosh (2014), a basic form of sampling, such as a spatially-based stratified random sampling method, involves the selection of elements from a population, in relation to which all elements in the population have an equal, non-zero chance of being selected. The sample frame ensured that all strata (age, gender, occupation type, managerial level) were well represented in the sample (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005; Tharenou et al., 2007). The subjects for the study were then selected randomly from each stratum. Tharenou et al. (2007) highlighted that a spatially-based stratified random sampling method is most appropriate when subjects within each stratum are homogenous but are different from subjects in other strata.

According to Isaac and Michael (1981), with a total population size of 6 200 residents, a 95% confidence level is achieved when a sample of 383 respondents is selected. However, only 318 residents participated in the current study. Face-to-face interviews with Green Point residents were conducted within a two week period after the 2016 CTC (12 – 26 march 2016). Residents were interviewed in homes situated on both sides of the street. Every third household was approached and a questionnaire was administered to one respondent per household. In the case of unwillingness to participate in the survey, the next available household was approached. Some of the challenges experienced during data collection were the unwillingness of some residents to participate, and because the survey was conducted during the day, many residents were not at home. Some residents would not open gates for the research team and some would only indicate their unwillingness to participate through the intercom. In these instances, the fieldworkers would approach the next household with an available house owner or tenant. It was found that many residents spent their days at the Green Point Park area, the fan walk and at the nearby gym. Therefore, instead of going strictly door-to-door, fieldworkers surveyed residents at such locations. Before commencing the survey, potential respondents were screened by being asked if they were resident in the Green Point area. If they were, and once the fieldworkers confirmed their willingness to participate, the survey proceeded.

### ***Data collection and analysis***

In ensuring the integrity of the current study and in line with research ethics, permission was obtained from the Green Point Residents and Ratepayers Association (GPRRA). In addition, the Cape Peninsula University of Technology’s Research Ethics Committee granted ethical approval for the study to proceed. Permission was also sought from the respondents and they were required to sign informed consent letters. By signing the consent letter, respondents agreed to participate in the survey. The consent letter specified that all information obtained would remain strictly confidential, and also informed respondents that they were free to omit questions that made them feel uncomfortable and that they could withdraw from the study at any stage. The data obtained from the questionnaires was captured and analysed on IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software (version 24). Frequency tables were presented to illustrate the findings which were analysed and interpreted.



## Results

This section presents the study's findings, analysis and discussion of the responses of residents from the data that was collected. The findings presented in this section include data regarding the attendance patterns and the socio-economic impacts of the 2016 CTC as perceived by Green point residents.

### ***Attendance patterns***

The results show an overwhelming majority of respondents (92.8%) indicating that they had attended previous editions of the CTC event whilst only 7.2% were attending the event for the first time. Of the 92.8% who indicated that they had attended the CTC in previous years, 22.4% had attended once, 32.0% twice, whilst 45.6% had attended more than three times. These results indicate that the residents of Green Point are supportive of the event as shown by their attendance and participation.

### ***Impacts of the 2016 CTC on residents***

In order to determine the impacts of the CTC on the residents of the Green Point area, respondents were asked to show their level of agreement with a range of statements relating to how the event impacted on their community. Impact statements regarding social and economic aspects of the carnival event were developed based on previous studies for example Fredline and Faulkner (2002). The questions were adapted to suit the current study's context. Residents' perceptions of the social and economic impacts of the CTC are presented in this study. Gursoy, Kim and Uysal (2004) suggest that events such as cultural events are likely to generate economic benefits for the local community, serve to build community cohesiveness, and generate social incentives for residents and businesses. However, besides creating benefits, these events are also likely to create problems or costs for the local community (Gursoy et al., 2004).

### ***The social and economic impacts of the 2016 CTC on residents***

In order to determine the perceptions of the residents regarding the impact of the CTC event in the Green Point area, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a range of relevant statements. A five-point Likert scale was used with the following options available: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree and SA = Strongly Agree. In trying to simplify the analysis, responses were grouped with the 'strongly agree' and 'agree' categories merged and the 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' categories merged, to provide the levels of agreement from the highest to the lowest for easy reporting. The resulting categories were 'Disagree = D', 'Neutral = N' and 'Agree = A'.

As shown in Table 1, most of the residents (53.5%) agreed that the carnival event made locals feel proud of their city and their community but 10.3% disagreed and 36.2% remained neutral on this statement. The results also indicated that most of the event attendees agreed with the statement that the event provided an opportunity to have fun with family and friends (56.9%), the event provided an opportunity to meet new people (63.1%), the event increased entertainment opportunities for locals (63.8%), and that the event increased interaction between locals and tourists (59.8%). In support of the above results, Rao (2001) indicates that events such as cultural events have public benefits beyond merely generating revenue because they provide a place where local community members can get together and participate in mutually enjoyable activities. Moreover, Gursoy et al. (2004) indicate that events such as cultural events and special events create more social benefits than the social costs incurred, and event organisers do not perceive these events as activities that create social problems within the community. Cultural events also play an important role in creating trust and cohesiveness among community members (Chwe, 1998).

**Table 1: Residents' perceptions of the socio-economic impacts of the CTC (in %, n=318)**

	D	N	A	Mean	Std deviation
<b>Social impact statements</b>					
The event made locals feel proud of their city and their community	10.3	36.2	53.5	3.57	0.957
The event provided an opportunity to have fun with family and friends	7.2	35.8	56.9	3.69	0.954
The event provided an opportunity to meet new people	8.2	28.7	63.1	3.72	0.985
The event increased entertainment opportunities for locals	8.2	28.0	63.8	3.74	0.977
The event increased interaction between locals and tourists	11.7	28.5	59.8	3.66	1.029
The event disrupted the lives of local residents and created inconvenience	14.5	35.0	50.5	3.48	1.069
The event increased crime	22.6	33.0	44.3	3.26	1.086
Unruly behaviour of visitors because of excessive drinking or drug use	20.8	37.4	41.9	3.25	1.086
<b>Economic impact statements</b>					
The event is good for the economy as it created jobs	6.3	30.2	63.5	3.75	0.905
The event is good for local business (increased turnover)	5.6	31.1	63.2	3.75	0.898
The event attracted tourists to the area	6.3	33.2	60.5	3.72	0.910
The event gave increased media coverage for the area	14.5	34.3	51.2	3.51	1.019
The event was a waste of public money	30.7	22.2	47.2	3.23	1.288
The event increased the price of items such as food and transport	21.4	28.7	49.8	3.38	1.132

*\*Responses based on a Likert scale (A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree)*

Although most of the residents were in agreement on the positive social impacts of the CTC, they also indicated serious concerns about the negative impacts of the event. As shown in Table 1, 50.5% of the residents agreed with the statement that the event disrupted the lives of local residents and created inconvenience, while on the other hand 14.5% disagreed and 35% remained neutral on the statement. In addition, the results indicate that 44.3% of event attendees agreed that the event increased crime, while 22.6% disagreed and 33% were neutral. The event attendees were also asked to indicate if the event had led to unruly behaviour of visitors because of excessive drinking or drug use. The results indicate that 41.9% of respondents agreed with the statement, while 20.8% disagreed and 37.4% remained neutral.

In terms of the economic impact of the event, the study's results indicate that the majority of residents (63.5%) agreed that the event is good for the economy as it created jobs, while 30.2% remained neutral on this notion. A significant number of residents (63.2%) agreed that the event is good for local business as it increased turnover, but 31.1% were neutral. The majority of residents (60.5%) agreed that the event attracted tourists to the area, while 33.2% were neutral. On the statement that the event gave increased media coverage for the area, 51.2% agreed and 34.3% were neutral. Residents had mixed views about the event being referred to as a waste of public money, as 47.2% agreed, 30.7% disagreed and 22.2% remained neutral. Furthermore, close to half of the residents (49.8%) agreed with the statement that the event increased the price of items such as food and transport but 21.4% disagreed and 28.7% remained neutral. Interestingly, Jeong and Faulkner (1996:7) reported that cultural events generate costs such as increases in prices of goods and services as they charge exorbitant prices during the hosting of such events.





During the data collection process, some respondents were quick to mention the problems which they were facing linked to the event. These problems included the following: shoplifting (3.1%), littering (11.0%), limited parking (19.8%), use of inappropriate language by some people (swearing) (11.0%), people were drunk (12.9%), road closures in the area (11.3%), and many others. In trying to address the identified problems, the respondents offered a number of suggestions and these included the need of having more parking areas to accommodate the vehicles of the large numbers of fans. Some residents were concerned about the drunken behaviour of some people, which included swearing, and suggested that alcohol be restricted during the period of the event. In addition, residents suggested increased visible policing during the event, educate people on waste management (no littering and more bins), reducing noise levels, not allowing children at the event for fear of them getting lost or hurt by drunken people fans, and informing and monitoring the event attendees on the “dos and don’ts” of the area. However, despite these problems, respondents were still keen to support the event.

## Conclusions

This study ascertained the perceptions of Green Point residents regarding the impacts of the CTC in order to establish the overall value of the event from the socio-economic impact perspective. Furthermore, the study aimed to evaluate the contribution towards the growth and sustainability of event tourism in the Green Point area, and how local residents benefitted from the event, if at all. Involvement levels in event participation and related activities were found to be significantly high.

Recommendations were made to the 2016 CTC event organisers and relevant stakeholders that the opinions of stakeholders such as residents should be considered and embedded within the strategic planning and management of the event. This would generate a positive impact from hosting the event. The outcome of the research elucidated the importance of understanding residents’ perceptions and their contribution towards a successful event. Residents may have a varying perceptions of the impacts and therefore a thorough evaluation should be considered. Finally, as Fredline (2004) asserts that because the perceptions of residents often change over time and are based on their experiences during an event, a pre- and post-event survey should be conducted to allow for a better comparison and a more refined understanding of responses. Therefore, due to the change in perceptions over time, it is recommended that longitudinal and comparative studies should be conducted in order to assess the perceptions and to compare the impacts of hosting the CTC event in the Green Point area.

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