

Exploring the Perceived Impacts of Arts Festivals on Tourism Development The Case on Two Greek International Festivals

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Abstract

Towns and cities are increasingly using arts festivals as an important motivator to attract tourism and to stimulate urban development. This research seeks to address tourism interrelationships that develop between destination residents, festival visitors, cultural stakeholders and the tourism industry. The objective of the paper is to explore the role of the International Arts Festivals in the tourism development of Kalamata and Drama, Greece, through measurement and evaluation of the perceptions of its main stakeholder's groups. Primary data were collected with online questionnaires, distributed during autumn 2016. 130 questionnaires were answered concerning the Drama International Short Film Festival and 186 questionnaires were answered concerning the Kalamata International Dance Festival. The two Festivals are significantly acknowledged for their overall role in the cities' tourism image and growth, despite different characteristics of the two festivals and of the two cities. The city of Drama has benefited from its festival, which has played a significant part in improving the city's tourism infrastructure, image and first-time visitor attraction. As Kalamata is an already established destination, the festival there may have not necessarily translated into much higher tourism revenues and infrastructure improvement, but it has significantly enhanced its image and high-profile visitor attraction. The residents and cultural stakeholders value the role of the festivals not only because of increased revenues through tourism but also for raising cultural standards in their cities. The visitors seem to consider festivals as a great motive for visiting a destination and an opportunity to combine their visit with holidays and sightseeing in the greater area.

Keywords: International arts festivals, cultural tourism, cities, perceptions, Kalamata, Drama, Greece

1. Introduction and Study Context

During the past two decades, arts festivals have been multiplying in the Western world and becoming more visible and culturally prominent. Worldwide, national governments and local authorities are increasingly using cultural festivals and special events as key elements within regional development strategies, since these provide opportunities for tourism promotion, increased revenues and investment in host regions (Getz 2007; Van de Wagen 2005). These events help recreate the image of a place and contribute to the extension of the tourism season (Huang et al. 2010; Boo and Busser 2006; Kotler et al. 1993; Mehmetoglu and Ellingsen 2005).

While an extensive literature on the various social, cultural and economic elements of festivals does now exist (Getz 2008; Waitt 2008), festival research was mainly focused upon mega-events and other hallmark events, leaving regional and small community cultural events rather underexplored (Bres and Davis 2001).

However, support for the operation of festivals and special events is thought to make a an important difference in peripheral regions and small communities. As eliminating regional inequalities in economic and

social conditions remain a high priority in regional planning, local governments tend to confront some of these problems by developing effective and appropriate regional event policies (Whitford 2009). As a result, the use of cultural festivals and special events as an instrument for local economic and tourism development has gained worldwide momentum in recent years (Moscardo 2007; Small et al. 2005; Alves et al. 2010; Thrane 2002). Festivals and special events are being encouraged by public sector bodies, as a positive form of community development, and, thus, the need for a deeper understanding of the contribution of events contribution to regional development, place marketing and place-identity has consequently emerged (O'Sullivan et al. 2009).

Much of the relevant literature focuses on evaluating economic or other impacts, with the aid of some form of impact analysis. In most cases, the analysis involves estimating an aggregate measure of income and employment change attributable to the festival and ends with the estimation of local multiplier effects, without further questioning the translation of these figures into local economic development (Kim et al. 1998; Felsenstein & Fleischer 2003). One of the specific areas which has not received much attention in festival research literature is the examination of the perceptions of key interest groups, like festival organizers, local authorities or local tourism agents, of the impacts of festivals and special events on local communities. However, as Gursoy et al. (2004) stress, understanding the perceptions of local key interest groups of the impacts of the event on local communities is of vital importance for the success of any festival.

In this paper, we focus on how international arts festivals impact on tourism, in a medium-sized city by exploring the perceptions of destination residents, festival visitors, cultural stakeholders and the tourism industry. Additionally, we seek to analyze how far the activities generated by the festival contribute to local tourism development and the need to stress the importance of the festivals in both local culture and tourism as central and critical sectors of city life.

The paper firstly provides an overview of the background literature on cultural festivals and their role in tourism development. Next, the case studies of the Kalamata and Drama International Festivals are presented. Thereafter, this article focuses on the research design and methodology, followed by a descriptive analysis of the research results. Finally, the paper closes with concluding remarks, along with identification of areas for future research.

2. Impacts of Festivals on Tourism

Festivals and events have a range of impacts on their host destinations, usually distinguished into economic, socio-cultural, environmental and political impacts (e.g. Allen et al., 2002; Dimmock & Tiyce, 2001; Jackson et al., 2005). In event evaluation research, the main focus has long been on assessing the economic impacts of events (e.g. Chhabra, Sills, & Cabbage, 2003; Dwyer, Forsyth, & Spurr, 2005; Dwyer, Kim, Scott, Thigpen, & Kim, 1998; Tohmo, 2005), with less empirical research on the—more difficult to measure, yet very important—socio-cultural impacts. Great emphasis is often placed on the economic impacts, partly because of the need of event organizers and governments to meet budget goals and justify expenditure, and partly because such impacts are most easily assessed (Allen et al., 2002; Dwyer, Jago & Dwyer, 2006).

Arts festivals are considered as simultaneously “cultural” and “economic” phenomena (Gibson and Kong 2005; McCann 2002), since they entail audiences, use buildings, facilities, and equipment, and depend on some kind of service or entertainment provision. The critical advantages of festivals to localities are based around opportunities for generating income, supporting existing businesses and encouraging new start-ups, as well as generating revenue for governments (Huang et al. 2010; Dwyer et al. 2005).

In recent years, festivals and special events have become some of the fastest growing types of tourism attractions. As a result, the number of relevant conceptual and empirical studies has been steadily growing (Getz (2008). Most of the research examines festivals and special events' contribution to local development focused on economic impact analysis (Dwyer et al. 2005; Crompton et al. 2001; Kim et al. 1998; Thrane 2002). Empirical studies of small, provincial cultural festivals all point to economic benefits, usually concerned with short-term impacts and direct, tangible outcomes, such as increased jobs, hotel rooms and business revenues (Formica and Uysal 1996).

Festivals range from mega, hallmark, key and regional/local events: mega events are designed to reach a global audience and thus make a positive impact upon the national economy of the host country, whereas community events are primarily designed to deliver benefits to local stakeholders. Another festival

typology introduced by O'Sullivan and Jackson (2002) identified three types of festivals, ranging from the small scale, rural or semi-rural 'home-grown' festival, to the medium size, urban 'tourist-tempter' festival, up to the large, urban 'big-bang' festival, promoting numerous related activities, over a large geographical area.

This paper focuses on the role of International Arts Festivals with four main characteristics: a) hosting international professional artists, 2) featuring specific artistic visions and objectives, 3) being publicly funded, and 4) achieving a consecutive long-term (more than two decades) presence, in a medium-sized Greek city. Additionally, we seek to assess if and how international arts festivals act as mechanisms to encourage regional tourism development. More specifically, we seek to explore how a well-established and with a European reputation art festival relates to the host city and offers benefits, both for its residents and visitors. This research approaches and achieves its objectives through an exploration of the perceptions of key interest groups of the tourism impacts of these festivals on their host communities.

Both Kalamata and Drama International festivals were established in 1995, by the Greek Ministry of Culture, under the "National Network of Cultural Capitals" initiative. Among many other Greek cities named capitals of different art genres, Kalamata was named the Capital of Dance and the city of Drama was named the Capital of Short Film. The initiative faded many years ago for most cities, but these two festivals have remained successful and still publicly funded by national and local authorities, despite the country's economic recession of the last decade.

3. Case Study - Kalamata International Dance Festival (KIDF)

The Kalamata International Dance Festival is one of the most important cultural events both at the local and at the national level. The Festival was founded in 1995 with its main objective to support and promote the art of contemporary dance and to increase audience dance awareness through research, education, and numerous artistic activities. After twenty-two consecutive years of a dynamic presence in the contemporary Greek dance scene and, thanks to the support of the local and national authorities, the Kalamata Festival has earned itself a special place on the festival map of the Mediterranean South, and built bridges to international dance creativity.

Several influential international figures, whose work has shaped the history of contemporary dance, made their first Greek appearance at Kalamata. The Festival has also focused on promoting and supporting Greek creativity, by commissioning works from talented Greek choreographers and supporting new companies in their experimental explorations. In recent years, the artistic activities of the festival take place in mid-July every year and last only 8-10 days, due to the socio-economic situation of the country, as opposed to the circumstances of previous years when it used to last 12-15 days. The program also includes dance workshops, seminars, lectures, screenings and exhibitions. Many free public events are held in open central spaces, creating a festive atmosphere throughout the city and bringing contemporary dance closer to the people.

The festival takes place in Kalamata, an important southern Peloponnesian seaside city of about 70,000 inhabitants. Kalamata is renowned for its beaches and mountainous sceneries, its fertile land and products such as Kalamata olives.

4. Case Study- Drama International Short Film Festival (DISFF)

The Short Film Festival in Drama was first held in 1978, at the initiative of the Drama Film Club. The response of filmmakers and of the public was enthusiastic from the very beginning. A few years later, the Festival was adopted by the Municipality of Drama and then, in 1995, the International Festival was added to the National Festival. Since then, the festival has been funded by both the Municipality of Drama and the Greek Ministry of Culture. The main objective of the Festival is to promote and disseminate the art of cinema and develop cooperation with filmmakers from all over the world.

Over 2,000 films are submitted each year, from which the curatorial group selects around 50-60 to screen, for entrance in the competition that is part of the festival. The final selection is approved by the Festival Direction. Short film juries of international film and media professionals select the award-winning films, that are presented and awarded during the closing Awards Ceremony.

The festival runs on a six-day schedule, in mid-September, and its main venues are the Municipal Conservatory and the Olympia Cinema. The festival holds an annual International Competition showing the

best new short films from around the world, as well as parallel events, including interviews, book presentations, panels and networking platforms for filmmakers and professionals. The Drama Festival is the leading Greek and South-Eastern European gateway to the world's most prestigious short film awards nominated filmmakers can qualify for the European Film Awards.

The festival take place in the northeastern city of Drama in the Greek mainland. The picturesque city has about 60,000 inhabitants and it is famous for its springs, forests, vineyards and mountain sceneries.

5. Methodology

For the purposes of this research, primary part data were collected through an (interview) questionnaire, during September 2016, for the Kalamata Festival, and during October 2016 for the Drama Festival. The questionnaire was designed based on theoretical and empirical research findings concerning the tourism impacts of such events around Europe. The data collection method selected for this study consisted of a self-administered online questionnaire. Two different online questionnaires were distributed in each city, but both included the same (case-adapted) questions.

The survey was built using a web-based survey application on Google Forms. Primarily, the questionnaire was addressed to residents and visitors of each city and their greater metropolitan areas and were sent to the relevant populations sample via email. Their email addresses were acquired through the festival's mailing lists, as well as the Municipalities' mailing lists. Dance professionals were reached through the posting of the questionnaire on online dance websites, such as Dancetheater.gr and dancepress.gr. Film professionals were reached by such posting on online film websites, such as cinema.gr and film clubs websites. Tourism professional (hotel and restaurant owners) were reached by email, acquired through the National Directory. Additionally, the questionnaire was published on Kalamata and Drama resident groups' social media and online local newspapers. The questionnaire postings are estimated to have been viewed by hundreds of people. 186 persons answered the Kalamata questionnaire and 130 persons answered the Drama questionnaire.

Participants first read a short introductory text presenting the research purpose and were informed that they would need about 5 minutes to answer the questions. The questionnaire consisted of 28 questions and comprised of three sections: 1) respondents' perceptions of the festivals' tourism impacts, 2) the respondents' tourist profile, and 3) the respondents' demographic characteristics.

To facilitate the expression of respondents' opinions in measurable values of perception, the possible answers were structured in the format of a Likert-type scale of intensity, structured format responses, and one open-ended question, where all the respondents were able to contribute their comments.

6. Survey Findings

Demographic profile

The majority of the sample for both cities consisted of people aged 24-40 years (58.9% for Kalamata International Dance Festival - KIDF and 53.1% Drama International Short Film Festival DISFF) followed by the categories of the 41-60 age groups (24.3% KIDF & 37.7% DISFF). The KIDF sample consisted of 23.8% male and 76.2% female respondents, whereas the DISFF consisted 56.9% male and 43.1% female respondents. Nearly half of the respondents for both cities had a high educational profile, holding an undergraduate degree (KIDF 40% and DISFF 47.7%), followed by those with a post-graduate degree (KIDF 29.7% and DISFF 32.3%). Additionally, most of the respondents were self-employed (KIDF 35.7% and DISFF 43.1%), followed by the category of private sector employees (KIDF 34.1% and DISFF 22.3%). The most popular employment sectors were arts and culture (KIDF 36% and DISFF 47.2%) followed by education (KIDF 19.4% and DISFF 15%). Approximately 15 % work for the tourism industry. Nearly half (48.6%) of the KIDF respondents lived in Athens, while 35.1% lived in Kalamata. Concerning the DISFF respondents, 42.3% also came from Athens, 37.7% came from Drama, and 12.3% of them came from Thessaloniki. Most of the respondents for both cities had visited the festival 1-4 times (KIDF 48% and DISFF 47.3%), during their 22 years of operation.

Table 2. Demographic profile of the respondents

	Kalamata KIDF 2016	Drama DISFF 2016
Age	59% 24-40 age group 24.3% 41-60 age group 10.3% 18-25 age group	53% 24-40 age group 37.7% 41-60 age group 5.4% 18-25 age group
Sex	76 % female & 24% male	43% female, 57% male
Education	40% Undergraduate degrees 29.7% Postgraduate degree	48% Undergraduate degree 32.3% Postgraduate degree
Occupation	36% Self employed 34.1 % Private Sector	43% self employed 22.3% Private sector
Sector of employment	36% Arts & culture 22% Education 5.5% Tourism Industry	47% Arts & culture 15% Education 5% Tourism Industry
Residence	49% Athens & 35% Kalamata 8.6% Abroad	42% Athens & 38% Drama 12.3% Thessaloniki

Visitors' Profile

Kalamata

The majority of Kalamata visitors stayed for 1-3 nights (33.6%), followed by the category of those visitors staying for 3-7 nights (20.9%). Most of them stayed with friends and family (34.8%) or at their own summer houses (25.9%), while only 22.3% chose a hotel. A clear majority (78.2%) went sightseeing around the greater area of Messenia. 90% of them spent around 100€ per day. 38.5% replied that their main motive for visiting the city was that they have friends and relatives there, whereas 35.7% replied that their main motive was to visit the festival, on the basis of its program and showcasing of famous dance companies.

Drama

The majority of Drama visitors (63.3%) stayed in the city for 3-7 days, followed by those (26.6%) who stayed there for only 1-3 days. 74.7% of the total number of visitors stayed in a hotel, while only 21.5% stayed with friends and family. 55.7% did not do any sightseeing in the surrounding metropolitan area. 55.1% spent less than 50€ per day, followed by those (30.4%) who spent less than 100€. 48% responded that attending the festival was their main reason for visiting Drama, while 30.8% responded that they visited the festival because they participated in it, in their capacity as artists.

Table 3. Visitors' profile

	Kalamata KIDF 2016	Drama DISFF 2016
Overnight stays	21% 3-7 nights 34% 1-3 nights	63% 3-7 nights 27% 1-3 nights
Type of accommodation	35% stayed with friends & family 26% own summer house	75% in hotels 22% with friends and family
Sightseeing in the greater area	78% Yes	56% No
Expenditure	90% spent 100 € approx.	55% spent 50€ approx.
Main motive for visiting the city	39% to visit friends and relatives 21% to attend the festival	48% to participate in the festival 24% to attend the festival
Main motive for visiting the festival	45% for its selection of performances 16% for its reputation	31% to participate 23 % for its reputation
Times visited the festival	46% 1-5 times 20% every year	47% 1-5 times 25% every year

Frequency of residents and visitors attending the festival

During the last 23 years of operation of both festivals, they have gradually managed to attract a high number of residents. KIDF attracts regularly a very high percentage of residents visiting the festival every year while a great number have visited the festival up to 10 times during its presence. According to additional information from the festivals records, during the first years of the festival's operation, residents were reluctant to appreciate it even though peripheral Greek cities lack of "high art" international cultural events. However, the quality and reputation of its performances has managed to gradually build a loyal local audience. DISFF has an equally high score of residents visiting yearly the festival while a sizeable number has visited the festival up to 10 times during its 23 years of operation. The city of Drama also lacks all year-round international cultural events so residents find the festival as a great entertainment opportunity.

KIDF has a loyal high number of visitors who has visited up to 17 times while there is a considerable number of first time visitors become repeat visitors. It should be noted that Kalamata is a popular tourist resort and as the festival takes place in July most of the visitors combine attending and festival with holidays. On the other hand, the majority of DISFF visitors have attended up to 5 times followed by those who have attended up to 17 times. Due to the nature of DISFF a substantial number of attendants are invited artists a first-time visitor. Nevertheless, the high score of every year visitors indicates but there is a significant audience development creating repeat visits.

In the first column of the following table the total percentage of the respondents' number of visits is noted. Then, the crosstabulation is used to show the interrelation between residents and visitors of each city. Therefore, each variable can also be viewed horizontally and is divided into the number of visits of residents and visitors in each city.

Table 4. Frequency of residents and visitors attending the festival

	Total number of KIDF respondents % (187)	Kalamata residents - KIDF 2016	Kalamata visitors - KIDF 2016
1-5 times	48%	35.3%	64.7%
6-10 times	15.3%	40.7%	59.3%
11-17 times	11.3%	30.0%	70.0%
Every year	10.2%	72.2%	27.8%
Never	15.2%	11.1%	88.9%
	Total number of DISFF respondents% (130)	Drama residents-DISFF 2016	Drama visitors-DISFF 2016
1-5 times	47%	26.2%	73.8%
6-10 times	12.4%	56.2%	43.8%
11-17 times	4.7%	33.3%	66.7%
Every year	24.8%	59.4%	40.6%
Never	11.1%	21.4%	78.6%

7. Comparing Residents and Visitors' Perceptions on the Tourism Impacts of the Festivals

After a few years of the main researcher's attending the festivals and discussing their impacts with key informants as part of this research, it was observed that even though visitors were quite keen and passionate about the festivals, residents were not as enthusiastic; they were rather sometimes neutral concerning their benefits to the city. Many of the residents were concerned about the festivals' public funding, in times of serious economic recession and cutbacks on public health and education. Therefore, at the outset of this research undertaking, the hypothesis that visitors value the festivals more than the residents was formed.

In order to facilitate the expression of the respondents' opinions in measurable values of perception, the possible alternative answers were structured in a Likert-Type 5-scale of intensity (1='I strongly disagree', to 5='I strongly agree'). The gradation of the answers intended to produce a solid measurement. Most of the

respondents for both festivals agreed or strongly agreed with the statement of positive tourism impacts of the Festivals on the cities.

Aiming to compare statistically the mean values of the residents' and visitors' perceptions, independent sample t-tests were conducted, on a level of $\alpha=5\%$ statistical importance. No statistically significant differences were found with the aid of our data analysis, so this hypothesis was rejected. Specifically, both residents and visitors feel positive and strongly positive about the impacts of the festivals on their respective cities.

Table 5. Comparing residents' and visitors' perceptions of the tourism impacts of the Festivals

Variables	Residents	Visitors	Standard deviation
Tourism impacts of KIDF	Mean		
The festival contributes to the promotion of the city's image and adds value to the destination	4.30	4.37	0.564
The festival is a significant motive for attracting first time visitors to the city	4.06	4.15	0.478
The festival is a significant motive for attracting first time visitors to the greater area of Messenia	3.74	3.70	0.780
During the festival, the number of tourist increases	3.65	3.79	0.301
During the festival tourism and catering businesses benefit significantly	3.90	4.06	0.184
During the festival tourism and catering businesses benefit significantly in the greater area of Messenia	3.55	3.57	0.886
The festival is a catalyst for developing and improving infrastructure in the city	3.61	3.50	0.445
During the festival, visitor have the opportunity to taste the local culture	3.85	4.11	0.040
Tourism impacts DISFF			
The festival contributes to the promotion of the city's image and adds value to the destination	4.40	4.13	0.055
The festival is a significant motive for attracting first time visitors to the city	4.00	3.86	0.374
The festival is a significant motive for attracting first time visitors to the greater area of Drama	3.71	3.32	0.027
During the festival, the number of tourist increases	3.77	4.06	0.070
During the festival tourism and catering businesses benefit significantly	4.20	4.30	0.470
During the festival tourism and catering benefit significantly in the greater area of Drama	3.69	3.44	0.135
The festival is a catalyst for developing and improving infrastructure in the city	3.69	3.86	0.306
During the festival, visitor have the opportunity to taste the local culture	4.00	3.78	0.126

8. Comparing Cultural and Tourism Stakeholders' Perceptions on the Tourism Impacts of the Festivals

Similarly, after the main researcher's festival observation and discussions with key informants as part of this research, it was observed that cultural stakeholders such as choreographers, dancers, lecturers and cultural managers were enthusiastic and supportive about the role of the festivals in the city. On the other hand, tourism stakeholders were not as keen but rather sometimes neutral concerning their benefits of the festival to the city. In the case of Kalamata, tourism stakeholders considered that the city has an already good reputation as destination and as tourist demand peaks during the end of July and August, it was not clear whether the festival adds positively on tourism demand.

In the case of Drama, tourism stakeholders have acknowledged that tourism demand increases during the week of September that the festival takes place. However, other more popular events (i.e the Christmas event of Oniroupoli) are considered more influential on tourism demand and supply. On the contrary, cultural stakeholders such as artists and educators consider the festival as a fantastic opportunity to attract visitors in the city that the visitors contribute both culturally and financially in raising living standards. Consequently, the hypothesis that cultural stakeholders value the festivals more than tourism stakeholders was formed.

In order to facilitate the expression of the respondents' opinions in measurable values of perception, the possible alternative answers were structured in a Likert-Type 5-scale of intensity. The majority of the respondents for both festivals agreed or strongly agreed with the statement of positive tourism impacts of the Festivals on the cities. Additionally, aiming to compare statistically the mean values of the cultural and tourism stakeholder's perceptions, independent sample t-tests were conducted, on a level of $\alpha=5\%$ statistical importance. No statistically significant differences were found with the aid of our data analysis, so the above hypothesis was rejected. Specifically, both cultural and tourism stakeholders feel positive and strongly positive about the impacts of the festivals on their respective cities.

Table 6. Comparing tourism and cultural stakeholder's perceptions of the tourism impacts of the Festivals

Variables	Tourism stakeholders	Cultural stakeholders	Standard deviation
Tourism impacts of KIDF	Mean		
The festival contributes to the promotion of the city's image and adds value to the destination	4.50	4.27	0.478
The festival is a significant motive for attracting first time visitors to the city	4.37	4.01	0.278
The festival is a significant motive for attracting first time visitors to the greater area of Messenia	4.12	3.59	0.174
During the festival, the number of tourist increases	4.00	3.70	0.365
During the festival tourism and catering businesses benefit significantly	4.12	4.08	0.875
During the festival tourism and catering businesses benefit significantly in the greater area of Messenia	3.87	3.38	0.163
The festival is a catalyst for developing and improving infrastructure in the city	4.25	3.39	0.017
During the festival, visitor have the opportunity to taste the local culture	4.12	4.01	0.722
Tourism impacts DISFF			
The festival contributes to the promotion of the city's image and adds value to the destination	4.66	4.08	0.085
The festival is a significant motive for attracting first time visitors to the city	4.00	3.86	0.728
The festival is a significant motive for attracting first time visitors to the greater area of Drama	4.00	3.38	0.129
During the festival, the number of tourist increases	4.16	3.98	0.615
During the festival tourism and catering businesses benefit significantly	4.50	4.25	0.442
During the festival tourism and catering benefit significantly in the greater area of Drama	3.83	3.50	0.405
The festival is a catalyst for developing and improving infrastructure in the city	3.83	3.80	0.934
During the festival, visitor have the opportunity to taste the local culture	3.66	3.76	0.774

9. Discussion

Kalamata KIDF

During the last 22 years of its operation, the KIDF has managed to add significantly to the value of the destination and to promote its image in Greece and abroad. Findings show that the festival constitutes a very important motive for first-time visitors, but most importantly a great number of the attendees seem to become regular attendees, as a significant 20% tend to revisit the festival every year. Furthermore, it is strongly perceived that the festival increases profits for local business. However, as 78% of the attendees go sightseeing around the greater area, the festival also benefits businesses in the greater Prefecture of Messenia. Kalamata is an already established and developed tourist destination, offering a wide range of hotels and accommodation, catering, cultural and sports facilities.

There were some considerable findings, according to our respondents' opinions, indicating that the KIDF impacts considerably on the city's tourism demand. Even though tourism stakeholders considered that the city has an already good reputation as destination and as the tourist season peaks during August, it was stated that the festival adds positively during the month of July for most tourism business.

Additionally, the city significantly benefited from improved cultural infrastructure which a unique asset for the city's image as a destination. The greatest example thereof is the construction of the Kalamata Dance Megaron (Hall), a modern landmark building, the only one of its kind dedicated to the art of dance in Greece and one of the very few such institutions in Europe. Improved cultural infrastructure contributes greatly to raising standards of living and leading to the attraction of more investment, in various economic sectors. Also, the KIDF tends to attract higher profile tourists, relatively young and highly educated, as well as interested in local culture, history and sightseeing, combining the festival visit with holidays or with a weekend break. This could be the reason that Kalamata visitors seem to spend an average of 100€ per day, comparatively more than those in the case of the Drama Festival.

Moreover, KIDF has definitely become a meeting place for both performing arts professionals, as well as for all sorts of arts lovers and cultural tourism. Both tourism and cultural stakeholders value the role of the festivals not only because of increased revenues through tourism but also for increased cultural standards in their cities.

Finally, the main motive for visiting the festival is not only its strong art programs and cutting-edge dance companies but also its tourist attraction and the opportunity to combine culture and holidays. Finally, the KIDF seems to instill feelings of creativity, participation and belonging in its visitors and to feelings of pride, recognition and celebration in its residents.

Drama DSFF

The results of the Drama DISFF case show that respondents' perceptions reveal an overall recognition and appreciation of the Festival's role in upgrading the city's image and enhancing its reputation. The Festival attracts a significant number of first time visitors and their meaningful experience leads 28% of them becoming regular and repeat visitors. Drama, a rural city of Northern Greece, is a relatively new tourism destination, which offers its visitors the chance to enjoy nearby beautiful mountains, springs, forest and famous wineries. Several local cultural festivals also take place during Christmas, spring and summer months. Therefore, the Festival extends the tourism season and attracts visitors in September, considered as a low-tourism season.

Furthermore, the festival considerably contributes to an increase in local business income in the city, though not in its greater area of the Prefecture. Due to the genre of this festival and the fact that the film screenings take place all day long, most of the visitors do not have the time to go sightseeing. Possibly for the same reason, its visitors spend less money per day (50€), as compared to the corresponding Kalamata Festival visitors. Still, the visitors' profile is relatively young and highly educated. Most importantly, the festival has greatly impacted on Drama's tourism infrastructure; while, in 1995, there were only 3 3* hotels, now there are about 8 hotels (3* & 4* hotels), plus the newly-built Hydrama 5* resort and spa hotel in a renovated historical building. Similarly to the KIDF, the DISFF is one of the most important meeting places for Balkan and

European film-makers, with 48% of our respondents revisiting the city, in order to participate as invited artists.

Finally, due to the fact the city of Drama is smaller than Kalamata, the festival organization, its visitors and the event vibes are even more visible for local people and strongly add to a feeling of celebration, community-building and sense of pride in the city. The festival is acknowledged by both cultural and tourism stakeholders as a great asset for their city.

10. Conclusions

In this paper, we sought to explore the question of how a well-established art festival with a European reputation relates to the host city and offers benefits, for its residents and visitors as well as for its cultural and tourism stakeholders. Festivals and events have become a critically key component of the global tourism product, with various impacts on their host communities (Pasanen et al. 2009). Additionally, they offer the possibility to a group of people to express their affinity for arts and culture (Gibson et al. 2010) and professional artists to be promoted and recognized for their work.

The success stories of the KIDF and DISFF rely on their vision and their aim to promote successfully the art they represent, by creating well known, established and respected events, claiming a prominent place on the European map. Their long-term, consecutive and loyal-to-their-art character has established them as significant international festivals, attracting regular visitors, improving their host cities' cultural profiles, and leading them to achieve yearly public funding, despite the country's circumstances of financial recession. In both cases, it is widely recognized that the Festivals have a lot of further untapped potential.

The results of the study highlight the importance of evaluating festival attendants' and stakeholder's perceptions, as a framework for local and national authorities' decision-making in developing strategic tourism planning and policy. This approach may also enable festival organizers to assess audience attitudes and satisfaction and to improve the organization and the promotion of such events, towards a wider audience reach.

This study may be considered as a first step towards understanding how an international art festival is perceived and assessed and how it impacts on the tourism of a city destination. Such a study could also be undertaken at a larger scale and include various socio-demographic groups, at both ends of the supply and demand spectrum. Therefore, future research should also consider a comparison of both cultural and tourism impacts of international arts festivals on their destination cities, in the context of a more holistic approach to overall local development.

At times when art and cultural events become major victims of economic recession and face harsh state funding cutbacks, our conclusions may aid in providing tourism and culture policy-makers with a sounder basis for future planning, programming, developing and implementing international arts festivals.

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