

The Perceived Social Impacts of the EuroBasket 2013 on Koper Residents

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Major sporting events cause many socio-cultural impacts (positive and negative) that go beyond the scope of events and, consequently, affect a variety of aspects of relations of the local community (Cornelissen & Swart, 2006). This study analysed Koper residents' perceptions of socio-cultural impacts on the biggest European sporting event in 2013, EuroBasket 2013. A total of 746 responses were collected, the results of which showed that respondents highly ranked positive cultural impacts, such as exchanges between tourists and residents, opportunities to learn about other cultures and better understanding of other nationalities. Negative social impacts caused by major sporting event, such as crime, vandalism and prostitution were ranked low by the respondents. In contrast, respondents identified traffic congestion and parking issues as highly ranked adverse social impacts caused by EuroBasket 2013. Additionally, the extent to which the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, such as the length of residence in town, living close to the centre of the event, the sport-activity of residents, gender, economic status, education and age, may affect residents' perceptions was also investigated. Based on the results, a future investigation on sport active residents as potential spectators and users of sport infrastructure is recommended. This study will also contribute to filling the research gap and allow further understanding of the nature of socio-cultural impacts caused by specific events and specific host destinations.

Keywords: socio-cultural impacts; major sporting events; EuroBasket 2013; local residents

Introduction

According to the UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization), sport tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of the global tourism industry, worth approximately 600 billion dollars per annum (Davies & Williment, 2008, pp. 222; UNWTO, 2001). The sports-related major tourist events that

have shown rapid growth in recent years (Zhou, 2010) are becoming an increasingly important motivator of tourists, by attracting global audience, improving international place branding, forming tourism promotion, influencing destination competitiveness, overcoming seasonality and creating a lasting legacy for the country, especially the local community (Fou-

rie & Santana-Gallego, 2011; Jeong & Faulkner, 1996; Kang & Perdue, 1994; Getz, 1997; Getz, 2008; Gratton & Preuss, 2008; Preuss, 2007). The strategic integration of major sporting events in the overall range of tourism products of the host destination and the maintaining of positive relationships of the local residents is becoming increasingly challenging for the responsible organizers of sport events throughout the world (Chalip & McGuirty, 2004).

Currently, it is becoming increasingly important for planners to assess the opinions of local residents since the views of the host community are vital for both the short and long-term success of organization of events (Williams & Lawson, 2001; Hernandez, Cohen & Garcia, 1996). A positive attitude of residents towards major sporting event has a decisive influence on the organization and execution of the event (Gursoy, Kim, & Uysal, 2004). While residents with positive attitudes support the event and often actively participate as organizers and spectators, those with the negative attitudes may protest such events and cause the cancelation of them (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006).

A growing amount of research reflects interest in investigating the socio-cultural impacts of major sporting events (Fredline, 2006). However, authors (Pranić, Petrić, & Cetinić, 2012; Zhou, 2010; Kim & Petrick, 2005; Waite, 2003; Zhou & Ap, 2009) note that past studies of local residents' perceptions regarding short-term, one-time, or periodic tourism events were mainly concentrated on the most prominent global sport events (e.g. Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup) in large, well-developed metropolises; therefore, more studies that focus on host destinations' unique historical, cultural, economic and environmental background, as well as on the nature, scale, place, and duration of the events are needed (Barker, 2004). The current study, therefore, seeks to investigate the resident's perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of the EuroBasket 2013 (European Basketball Championship) and the extent to which the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, such as length of residence in the town, living close to the centre of the event, sport-activity lifestyle, gender, economic status, education and age may effect resident's perceptions. EuroBasket 2013, the biggest European sporting event of that year, was organized, in the small coastal town of Koper, Slo-

venia (other locations: Celje, Jesenice and Ljubljana). This study will help to fill the research gap and allow further understanding of the nature of the socio-cultural impacts caused by the specific event and the specific host destination.

Literature Review

Major Sporting Events

Nowadays, organized sport generates planning events that can evolve from local to international in attractiveness if they are planned strategically, thus becoming important generators and determining factors in attracting tourist arrivals for destinations (Getz, 2012). Despite the significant financial investment, the competition for the organization of major sporting events, as well as the expectations of local communities and destinations (cities), are in many cases very high (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002).

The phenomenon of major sporting events in the area of social science research is a relatively new, but has been receiving a great deal of the academic attention over the last 20 years (Antoniou, 2011, p. 1). Major sporting events, as a form of the sport and tourism, are becoming an increasingly popular and important economic and strategic factors for tourist destinations and, consequently, an excellent opportunity or concern to local communities. Consequently, an increasing number of studies have been dealing with the tourism impacts of major sporting events and the attitudes of the residents towards the organization of such events. Many authors recognize that major sporting events have a number of positive and negative economic, social, cultural, environmental (physical), political, media, psychological and other impacts on the local communities (Ritchie, 1984; Nunn & Rosentraub, 1997; Bull & Lovell, 2007; Fredline, Jago, & Deery, 2003; Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Kim & Lee, 2006; Ntloko & Swart, 2008; Mihalič, Šlander Wostner, Rebec & Slak, 2008; Turco, Swart, Bob, & Moodley, 2003; Lorde, Greenidge, & Devonish, 2011; Müller (2011); Prayag, Hosany, & Nunkoo, 2013).

The planning and management of major sporting events is becoming a highly complex factor, affecting the development of tourism destinations and consequently the quality of life of residents. Authors, e.g. Gursoy & Kendall (2006) and Teye, Sirakaya, & Sönmez (2002), have discovered that, especially in developing countries, the integration of local communi-

ties in decision-making and project management of major sporting events is quite limited. In its strategic documents and analyses, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) demonstrates that it is essential to monitor the environmental, socio-cultural and economic impacts and attitudes of the residents to ensure the sustainable development of tourism destinations. Sustainable development provides an acceptable level of relations to the business interests of the residents and visitors (UNWTO, 2004). Andereck & Vogt (2000, p. 17) also note that it is difficult to ensure the sustainable development of tourism destinations without the support and involvement of local communities. The positive attitudes and hospitality of the local community have thus become crucial for the local tourism industry, the aim of which is to operate in accordance with sustainable development and the needs of host communities, Andriotis (2005).

Impacts arising from the organization of major sporting events are short-term as well as long-term, positive or negative on the local community and the environment in which the event is held. Awareness of the balanced assessment of the relationship of local residents and other stakeholders involved in the organization of major sporting events is becoming increasingly important as it includes the integration of socio-cultural, environmental and economic impacts, and the appropriate execution brings the desired sustainable development.

Socio-Cultural Impacts of Major Sporting Events

Major sporting events cause many socio-cultural impacts (positive and negative) that go beyond the scope of events and, consequently, affect a variety of aspects of relations of the local community (Cornelissen & Swart, 2006). Several researchers who have investigated them identify a number of positive and negative socio-cultural influences that are associated with major sporting events (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Pillay & Bass, 2008; Ohmann, Jones, & Wilkes, 2008; Pranić et al., 2012; Ritchie, Shipway, & Cleeve, 2009; Waitt, 2003; Prayag et al., 2013; Zhou & Ap, 2009; Preuss & Solberg, 2008). Delamere (2001) notes that the awareness of the impacts associated with the organization of major sporting events is very important in terms of social-cultural and economic development and must be balanced.

Being less tangible than economic impacts and more difficult to measure, socio-cultural impacts have not received much research attention, (Getz, 2005; Kim & Petrick, 2005). Stakeholders involved in the process of the implementation of major sporting events perceive socio-cultural influences as short term or long term, positive and negative (Higham, 2005). When discussing social and cultural impacts, there is often confusion about the difference between them. Social impacts are seen as short-term consequences having immediate effects on the residents' quality of life, while cultural impacts are long term in nature and include changes in social relationships, norms and standards. Both are often linked to negative outcomes and require local community support (Balduck, Maes, & Buelens, 2011; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Teo, 1994).

Short-term negative impacts include eviction or the displacement of the residents, an increase in rents, allowing only the seasonal employability and poorly paid jobs, disruptions of the daily routine of the residents due to overcrowding, traffic congestion and lack of parking spaces, and increases in the levels of crime, vandalism and prostitution, thus reducing the impact on the safety of the local residents (Chen, 2006; Briedenhann, 2011; Konstantaki & Wickens, 2010).

In addition to negative socio-cultural impacts that are more easily seen, major sporting events also bring positive impacts, such as the increased pride of the local population, improvements to the quality of life, reduced social exclusion, reinforced cultural values and traditions, identity and nation building (Ritchie et al., 2009). They also play an important role in strengthening the sense of belonging to the place and improve the identity of local communities (Moscardo, 2007).

The support of local community when organizing major sporting events is largely dependent on the benefits and costs caused by events. As identified by Ritchie et al. (2009) it is crucial to understand the perceptions of the local residents that can either support or oppose the organization of major sporting events. This is what ultimately determines the success of the implementation and the legacy of a major sporting event in the local community.

Sporting Events in Slovenia

Each year, a number of traditional international sports events are organized in Slovenia that are important in terms of linking sport and tourism. The most recognizable, which attract many visitors and international tourists, causing tourism impacts and interaction with local residents, are the World Cup ski jumping competition in Planica, the Ljubljana Marathon, the World Cup skiing for both men ("Vit-ranc") in Krajnska gora, and for women ("Golden Fox") in Maribor. Since Slovenia rarely hosts major sporting events, such as the EuroBasket 2013 (European Basketball Championship 2013), studying the attitudes of local residents regarding major sporting events enables the launch of an important research field of sustainable development of major sporting events.

EuroBasket 2013

EuroBasket (previously the European Basketball Championship) is a basketball competition contested biennially by the men's national teams under organization by FIBA Europe. (www.fibaeurope.com). Over 19 days, from 4 to 22 September 2013, the biggest sporting event in the history of Slovenia, the 38th EuroBasket with twenty four basketball teams participating, was hosted by four destinations: Koper, Celje, Ljubljana and Jesenice. Based on the organizers' statistics, approximately 55,000 international visitors (persons travelling to the country whose main motive was to attend EuroBasket 2013 matches) visited Slovenia (KZS, 2013) and offered an excellent opportunity for a young country, especially in the field of promotion and integration of tourism and sport. Accredited media representatives from 40 countries produced TV broadcasts and other media in 167 countries around the world, with subsequent impact on the promotion of Slovenia (KZS, 2013). The Municipality of Koper, situated along Slovenia's coastline, with a total population of approximately 47,000 residents (SORS, 2012) was one of the host towns of EuroBasket 2013.

Koper, the economic centre of Slovenia's Istria region, a meeting point of nautical, seaside and sports tourism, is a small town by global standards and does not frequently host international major sporting events. In addition to hosting the group stage of European Handball Championship for men in year

2004, the organization of first round group matches of EuroBasket 2013 in Koper was the biggest sporting event, which offered a great opportunity for better tourism results. However, it did cause several positive and negative economic, environmental, infrastructural, socio-cultural, promotional and other impacts felt by local residents. The focus of the research presented herein will be to investigate residents' perceptions on social-cultural impacts caused by EuroBasket 2013.

Social Exchange Theory (SET)

From planning to the execution of major sporting events, the attitudes of the local residents are divided, since the organization of a major sporting event in the local community brings many positive and negative impacts of tourism. Some expect positive results and benefits from the organization while others are more inclined to negative views and see it as an expense. The predominant theoretical basis for many studies in the field of tourism impacts and attitudes of the local residents to the development of tourism destinations is the Social Exchange Theory (SET).

Most empirical studies in the field of tourism development have been carried out on the basis of the SET and the exploration of the positive and negative impacts (costs and benefits), which reflect the attitude of the local community in relation to the development of tourism (Huttasin, 2008; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Tovar & Lockwood, 2008; Lee, 2013). Ap says that SET is a sociological theory generally concerned with understanding the exchange of resources between individuals and groups in situations of interaction (Ap, 1992, p. 668). Many authors (Oviedo-Garcia, Castellanos-Verdugo, & Martin-Ruiz, 2008; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Wait, 2003; Allen, Hafer, Long, & Perdue, 1993; Lorde et al., 2011; Latkova & Vogt, 2012; Prayag et al., 2013) use this theory in their work for the study and interpretation of the perceptions of tourism impacts and attitudes of the local residents. As Ap (1992) notes, the primary motive for the social exchange of local residents is the process of increasing their socio-cultural and economic well-being. In other studies (Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004; Ritchie et al., 2009; Twynam & Johnston, 2004), it was determined that the local community that receives major economic benefits is more favourable to the or-

ganization of major sporting events from those that do not experience any economic benefits. The same applies to socio-cultural benefits that local population experiences in the form of increased opportunities for sporting activities in order to improve sports infrastructure, increase interaction with tourists and cultural exchanges, and improve the urban environment (Sadd, 2010). Based on research (Sheldon & Var, 1984; Lankford, 1994; McCool & Martin, 1994; Ohmann et al., 2008), it was also found that the length of the residence in the destination and the impacts caused by major sporting events also influence the perceptions of the local residents.

In conclusion, we find that people who identify positive outcomes with the organization of major sporting events, normally support the further development of tourism and sporting events, while those individuals at the organization who feel the negative consequences of this exchange, consequently, do not support it.

Research Methodology

The far most common approach to conducting such research, i.e. the measurement of host residents' perceptions, was used within this study. The data collection instrument used was a socio-cultural impact scale designed for large events, based on prior research (Ohmann et al., 2006; Kim, Gursoy, & Lee, 2006; Gursoy, Jurowski, & Uysal, 2002; Ritchie, 1984; Ritchie et al., 2009), which allows us to make a direct comparison with other findings. The item content was based on the need to create a socio-cultural impacts scale exclusively relevant for major sporting events.

Reflecting on relevant literature, we have discovered that the majority of the investigations of socio-cultural impacts was conducted using questionnaires (Ohmann et al., 2006; Zhou & Ap, 2009; Ntloko & Swart, 2008; Kim et al., 2006; Ritchie et al., 2009; Lorde et al., 2011; Martin & Barth, 2013; Prayag et al., 2013). The perceptions were measured through face-to-face structured interviews among Koper residents using interviewer-completed questionnaires.

The aim of the paper is to test the next research hypotheses:

- *Hypothesis 1: The socio-demographic characteristics of local residents influence the perceived so-*

cio-cultural impacts caused by the organization of a major sporting event.

- *Hypothesis 2: The length of the residency of local residents influences the perceived socio-cultural impacts caused by the organization of a major sporting event.*
- *Hypothesis 3: The sport-activity lifestyle of local residents influences the perceived socio-cultural impacts caused by the organization of a major sporting event.*

Sampling and Data Collection

The survey was conducted in the municipality of Koper in October and November 2013. The questionnaires consisted of two sections. In the first part, a set of statements that were addressed in the literature investigating socio-cultural impacts was covered (Ntloko & Swart, 2008; Ohmann, et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2006; Ritchie et al., 2009; Lorde et al., 2011; Martin & Barth, 2013; Prayag et al., 2013;) using the Likert-type scale (Likert, 1976) where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = totally agree, while in the second part, the demographics of the respondents found in previous literature review (Ohmann et al., 2006; Ritchie et al., 2009; Martin & Barth, 2013) that might influence residents perceptions during the organization of major sporting events (gender, age, education, economic status, length of residence in the town, living close to the centre of event and sport activity lifestyle, etc.) were researched. The survey was pretested on a small sample of fifty residents of Koper to ensure that respondents understood questions properly and to ensure that the survey length was appropriate for such kind of data collection.

The interviewing process of field work started shortly after the final EuroBasket 2013 match, played on 22 September 2013, to ensure that local residents remembered the impacts caused by EuroBasket 2013. A similar approach was used by Ohmann et al. (2006) in researching perceived social impacts on 2006 FIFA World Cup on residents of Munich, Germany. The field work was done by trained master's degree students of the Faculty of Tourism Studies –Turistica who were educated about and familiarized with the content, method and the purpose of research. The population of interest were residents of the municipality of Koper as one of the four hosting towns

(the others were Celje, Ljubljana and Jesenice) of EuroBasket 2013, a major sporting event. Convenience sampling was used as a sampling method, which enabled meeting the needs of research covered of various sections of the local residents. The interviews were conducted at three different locations in the municipality of Koper, the busiest city street (promenade) and at the entrance of largest shopping centres in the town (Supernova and Planet Tuš Koper) where every fifth person was interviewed in the morning from 9 to 12 am and afternoon from 3 to 7 pm. Similar methods and data collection were used in works of Lorde et al. (2011), Martin and Barth (2013) and Prayag et al. (2013). In total, we received 746 valid answers.

The collected data was statistically processed and analysed with IBM SPSS PASW software. We have used descriptive statistics to describe the distribution of variables and their indicators, the correlational coefficients to test the validity of the research instrument, Cronbach's Alpha to test the reliability of the research instrument, the factor analysis to reduce the number of indicators, and the regression analysis to test the research hypotheses.

Results

Table 1 Presentation of the Sample

Gender		
Male	411	55.1%
Female	335	44.9%
Highest level of education		
Elementary school or less	43	5.8%
High school	433	58.0%
College, university, postgraduate	270	36.2%
Economic status ¹		
Below average	146	19.6%
Average	488	65.4%
Above average	112	15.0%

1 In the original question, the respondents were asked about their economic status on a 5-point scale, 1 indicating a lot below average and 5 indicating a lot above average. Since the distribution of such a variable was not normal, we decided to group the answers in three groups: below average, average and above average.

Employment status ²		
Employed	354	47.5%
Not employed	392	52.5%
Geographical location of living		
Centre	249	33.4%
Suburbs	341	45.7%
Surroundings	156	20.9%
Number of years living in Koper ³		
Less than 10	115	15.4%
11 and more	631	84.6%

As can be seen in Table 1, the proportion of male respondents (55.1%) was a bit higher than females (44.9%). The majority (58%) of respondents had completed high school education; 36.2% had completed college, university or postgraduate education and 5.8% of them had completed elementary school or less. Almost two thirds (65.4%) of respondents reported their economic status being as average, 19.6% of them reported their economic status being below average and 15% of them reported their economic status as being above average. The majority (52.5%) of respondents were not employed (students, retired or unemployed) while 47.5% of them were employed or self-employed. A total of 45.7% of respondents were living in the suburbs of Koper (Olmo, Šalara, Pris-oje, Semedela, Markovec); 33.4% of them were from the centre of Koper and 20.9% of them were from surroundings. The majority of respondents (84.6%) were born or living in Koper and its surroundings for 11 years or more while 15.4% of them were living in Koper and its surroundings less than 10 years.

The average age of respondents was 41.28 years.

- In the original question, the respondents were asked about their employment status with four different options: employed, unemployed, retired and student. Since almost half of the respondents were employed, we decided to group the answers in two groups: employed and not employed.
- In the original question, the respondents were asked to write the number of years living in Koper. According to the reviewed literature, we decided to group them into two groups: less than 10 years and more than 11 years.

Table 2 Daily Sport Activity of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
I rarely practice sport (sometimes I go for a walk)	180	24.1	24.1	36.9
I occasionally practice sport (1–2 times a week)	268	35.9	35.9	72.8
I regularly practice sport (organized, at least 3 times a week)	166	22.3	22.3	95.0
I practice sport daily and I compete in sport	37	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	746	100.0	100.0	

A total of 35.9% of respondents stated they practice sport occasionally (one to two times per week), 24.1% of them rarely practice sport (they go for a walk from time to time), 22.3% of them regularly practice sport (organized, at least three times per week), while just 5% of them practice sport daily and also compete in some sport.

Socio-Cultural Impacts Caused by the Organization of a Major Sporting Event

We have measured the positive and negative socio-cultural impacts caused by the organization of a major sporting event on a 5-point Likert-type scale (“1” indicating total disagreement and “5” total agreement). The following statements are derived and

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of the Perceived Socio-Cultural Impacts Caused by the Organization of a Major Sporting Event

EuroBasket 2013	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
resulted in more exchange between tourists and residents.	2.1 %	9.7 %	12.6 %	50.9 %	24.7 %	3.86	.967
encouraged the preservation of local culture.	11.8 %	23.0 %	22.6 %	31.3 %	11.4 %	3.08	1.211
created opportunities to learn about other cultures.	3.1 %	10.9 %	17.6 %	44.6 %	23.9 %	3.75	1.033
encouraged the development of local community cultural events.	8.4 %	22.3 %	20.9 %	36.2 %	12.2 %	3.21	1.169
promoted a better understanding of other nationalities.	4.0 %	15.1 %	16.4 %	44.4 %	20.1 %	3.61	1.089
did not cause parking problems.	22.8 %	29.6 %	18.9 %	19.0 %	9.7 %	2.63	1.285

did not increase the crime rate.	2.4 %	14.2 %	8.6 %	38.5 %	36.3 %	3.92	1.109
did not lead to relocation or resettlement of local residents	0.7 %	5.9 %	6.6 %	26.1 %	60.7 %	4.40	.899
did not increase the level of vandalism in the community.	2.3 %	16.2 %	12.9 %	28.6 %	40.1 %	3.88	1.171
did not increase the level of prostitution in the community.	2.3 %	10.6 %	13.1 %	24.5 %	49.5 %	4.08	1.118
did not create traffic congestion during the event.	25.9 %	35.0 %	17.0 %	15.3 %	6.8 %	2.42	1.216

based upon most relevant literature from the field of socio-cultural impacts caused by major sporting event (Ntloko & Swart, 2008; Ohmann, et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2006; Ritchie et al., 2009; Lorde et al., 2011; Martin & Barth, 2013; Prayag et al., 2013;) were used about EuroBasket 2013 in Koper:

The highly ranked statement with ($M = 4.4$) was that EuroBasket 2013 in Koper has not led to the relocation or resettlement of local residents, meaning that on average residents of Koper do not think that the event not led to their relocation or resettlement. In terms of positive cultural benefits, we can indicate the highly ranked statements, such as that stating that EuroBasket 2013 resulted in more exchange between tourists and residents ($M = 3.86$), created opportunities to learn about other cultures ($M = 3.75$) and promoted better understanding of other nationalities ($M = 3.61$). Based on these results, we can conclude that the organization of major sporting events gave the residents more opportunities for socialization with the spectators who attended EuroBasket 2013. The reason for the positive cultural impact might also be the organization of small intercultural country presentation events. Each evening during the tournament, one of the participating countries presented their culture and gave opportunities for local residents' better understanding of other nationalities. The lowest averages ($M = 2.63$ and $M = 2.42$) can be found for the statements that EuroBasket 2013 in

Koper had not caused parking problems and traffic congestion during the event. Based on that, we can conclude that on average residents saw parking problems and traffic congestion during the event as the biggest short term negative impact caused by EuroBasket 2013. Other negative social impacts felt during the organization of major sporting events, such as increased crime, prostitution and vandalism were ranked low by the respondents, meaning EuroBasket 2013 did not cause more crime, prostitution and vandalism. For the other mentioned statements, neither agreement neither disagreement can be seen for them.

The reliability of all the indicators of the perceived socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event was measured. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient was 0.659, showing a reliable research instrument.

We decided to reduce the number of indicators of the perceived socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event, using the factor analysis. We have used the principal axis factoring method. When using the factor analysis on 11 indicators of perceived socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event, it was clear that the indicator "EuroBasket 2013 in Koper has not led to relocation or resettlement of local residents" had a very low initial and final communality (in both cases 0.093). With all 11 indicators included in the analysis, we can see there are three

factors with eigenvalues higher than 1, explaining 43.896% of total variance. When checking the factor matrix, it is evident that are low factor loadings (even with oblimin and varimax rotation they are lower than |0.4|) on the indicator “EuroBasket 2013 in Koper has not led to relocation or resettlement of local residents”. We decided to repeat the factor analysis without this indicator. In this case, there are again three factors with eigenvalues higher than 1, explain-

ing together 47.413% of total variance. The first two factors have eigenvalues higher than 2 (i.e. 2,669 and 2,373) while the third one has the eigenvalue of 1.204. The scree diagram also suggests a two-factor solution. The factor matrix (no rotation was used) with the factor loadings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Factor Matrix of the Perceived Socio-Cultural Impacts Caused by a Major Sporting Event

EuroBasket 2013	Factor	
	1	2
resulted in more exchange between tourists and residents.	0.661	0.035
encouraged the preservation of local culture.	0.657	-0.107
created opportunities to learn about other cultures.	0.669	-0.058
encouraged the development of local community cultural events.	0.561	0.013
promoted a better understanding of other nationalities.	0.658	-0.060
did not cause parking problems.	-0.045	0.392
did not increase the crime rate.	0.074	0.737
did not increase the level of vandalism in the community.	0.112	0.763
did not increase the level of prostitution in the community.	0.045	0.566
did not create traffic congestion during the event.	-0.070	0.432

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
a. 2 factors extracted. 8 iterations required.

From Table 4, two factors in our solution can be seen. We have decided to save both factors for further statistical analysis, naming the first one “positive socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event” and the second one “negative socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event”.

The factor of negative socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event has a distribution close to a normal one (skewness being -0.605, kurtosis being -0.233).

The Influence of Socio-Demographical Characteristics, Sports Activity and Length of the Residency of Respondents on Socio-Cultural Impacts Caused by a Major Sporting Event

In the final part of the paper, we tested our research hypotheses, using the linear regression analysis, and

the ENTER method. We tested two research models, in both of which the independent variables are the respondents’ socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, educational level, economic status), sports activity, living close to the centre of the sporting event and number of years living in the area. In the first model, the dependent variable was the factor of positive socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event; in the second model, the dependent variable was the factor of negative socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event. The results are presented in the tables below.

First, the determination coefficients and the fit of the regression models was checked.

Table 5 Determination Coefficient and F-test for the Regression Models

	R ²	F	Sig. (F)
Positive socio-cultural impacts (factor)	0.023	2.522	0.014
Negative socio-cultural impacts (factor)	0.017	1.825	0.080

In the first regression model (in which the dependent variable is the positive socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event), 2.7% of the total variance is explained; 97.3% of the total variance is in the external variables. The overall regression model is statistically significant at the 0.05 level (F statistics is 2.957, level of significance is 0.005).

In the second regression model (in which the dependent variable is the negative socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event), 1.6% of the

total variance is explained; 98.4% of the total variance is in the external variables. The overall regression model is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level (F statistics is 1.722, level of significance is 0.101).

In Tables 6 and 7, the regression coefficients for both regression models are presented.

Table 6 Regression Coefficients for Positive Perceived Socio-Cultural Impacts Caused by a Major Sporting Event

Model B		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	-.268	.290		-.925	.355
	Gender	.020	.066	.011	.303	.762
	Age	.007	.002	.130	3.258	.001
	Proximity to the centre of the event	.018	.045	.014	.393	.694
	Years of living in Koper	-.080	.092	-.033	-.864	.388
	Educational level	-.130	.060	-.084	-2.143	.032
	Economic status	.050	.059	.033	.846	.398
	Sport activity	.092	.033	.112	2.815	.005

Dependent Variable: positive socio-cultural impacts (factor)

From Table 6, it is evident that there are three independent variables having a statistically significant influence at the 0.05 level on the dependent variable of positive socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event: the age of respondents ($p=0.001$), educational level ($p=0.032$) and the sports activity of respondents ($p=0.005$). Therefore, we can conclude that those respondents who are older, less educated and more sports active have higher perceptions of the positive socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event. The other independent variables have no statistically significant effect on the 0.05 level

on the positive socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event.

From Table 7, it is evident that there is just one independent variable having a statistically significant influence at the 0.05 level on the dependent variable of positive socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event: the sports activity of respondents ($p=0.036$). Therefore, we can conclude that those respondents who are more sports active have higher perceptions of the negative socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event. The other independent variables have no statistically significant effect

Table 7 Regression Coefficients for Negative Perceived Socio-Cultural Impacts Caused by a Major Sporting Event

	Model B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.040	.290		.138	.890
	Gender	-.045	.066	-.025	-.683	.495
	Age	-.001	.002	-.019	-.481	.631
	Proximity to the centre of the event	-.010	.045	-.008	-.222	.825
	Length of the residency	-.095	.092	-.039	-1.033	.302
	Educational Level	-.062	.060	-.040	-1.025	.306
	Economic status	.108	.059	.072	1.827	.068
	Sport activity	.069	.033	.084	2.106	.036

a. Dependent Variable: negative socio-cultural impacts (factor)

at the 0.05 level on the positive socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event.

Discussion

In the final part of the paper we discuss the results of our research.

Hypothesis 1: The socio-demographic characteristics of local residents influence the perceived socio-cultural impacts caused by the organization of a major sporting event.

The finding of this study about the socio-demographic characteristic of the residents of Koper on the perceived socio-cultural impact caused by the organization of EuroBasket 2013 confirms the studies of Zhou & Ap (2009) who reported that socio-demographic variables have little or no effect on residents' perceptions. Further analysis of the positive and negative socio-cultural impacts revealed that perceptions of local residents of Koper are not influenced by most of the socio-demographic variables measured (gender, financial status, age, education, sport activity, living close to the centre of event and length of the residency). Based on the results, we can confirm that only age, education and sport activity are statistically significant socio-demographic characteristics of local residents of Koper that influence the perceived positive socio-cultural impact caused by EuroBasket 2013, and that only sport activity influenced those who perceived negative socio-cultural impacts.

The other socio-demographic independent variables had no statistically significant effect at the 0.05 level on the positive and negative socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event EuroBasket 2013.

Hypothesis 2: The length of the residency of local residents influences the perceived socio-cultural impacts caused by the organization of a major sporting event.

Adapted from previous studies Lankford (1994) and McCool and Martin (1994), we discovered the length of residency to be a possible influence on residents' impact perception. According to Sheldon and Var (1984), long-term residents were more sensitive to the socio-cultural impacts of tourism than short-term residents were. A study of Ohmann et al. (2006) on the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Munich, Germany, revealed that respondents' perceptions of the positive and negative social impacts appeared to have not been influenced by the respondents' length of the residency. Similar to the results of the study of Ohmann et al. (2006), in our study, the length of the residency as one of socio-demographic characteristic of the respondents had no statistically significant effect at the 0.05 level on either any positive or negative socio-cultural impacts caused by EuroBasket 2013.

Hypothesis 3: The sport-activity lifestyle of local residents influences the perceived socio-cultural impacts caused by the organization of a major sporting event.

Increased opportunities for sporting activities in order to newly build or renovate sports infrastructure and more cultural events are social and cultural benefits that local residents feel when a major sporting event is organized (Sadd, 2010). Based on the results of this study, we determined that participation in sports activities both positively and negatively influenced the perceptions of local residents of Koper when EuroBasket 2013 was organized. Older, less-educated and more sport-active respondents perceive the positive socio-cultural impacts caused by a major sporting event while other sports-active respondents are more likely to perceive the negative socio-cultural impacts. Certainly, it can be seen that different generations have different attitudes towards organization of a major sporting event. The reason for this might be in the lack of alternative sport infrastructure in Koper for younger and middle-aged sport active local residents when organizing a major sporting event. During EuroBasket 2013, the main sport facilities used by local residents (Bonifika) for daily sport and recreation activities were occupied due to organization of the event. This is a clear signal for local authorities and organizers to offer alternatives for sport active local residents during the organization of a major sport event, with substitute sport facilities in the town, for residents' daily sport activity. Since major sporting events are single short events that bring benefits in new or renewed sport infrastructure, sport-active local residents need to find this actions of local authorities as being acceptable since they are the population who benefits on the long term with new and improved sport infrastructure. Strategically sport active residents are those who benefit from the organization of a major sporting event on long period (new sport infrastructure) but local authorities and organizers should also be prepared for short-term solutions and offer such residents alternative sport infrastructure during the period of a major sporting event.

Conclusion

The majority of research on the social impacts of major sporting events has been done in large, well-developed metropolises (Pranić et al., 2012; Zhou, 2010; Kim & Petrick, 2005; Waitt, 2003; Zhou & Ap, 2009). Our study focused on empirically exploring residents' perceptions of a small coastal town Koper, Slo-

venia, on the socio-cultural impacts caused by EuroBasket 2013, the organization of the biggest sporting event in Europe in 2013. Additionally, the extent to which socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, such as gender, education, economic status and age, length of residence in town, proximity of living to the centre of the event and sport-active lifestyle, may effect resident's perceptions was investigated.

Just as tourism impacts cannot be universal (Tosun, 2002), the impacts caused of major sporting events upon host communities also vary and cannot be perceived as a generic set of outcomes (Balduck et al., 2011). Therefore, studies on socio-cultural impacts are an important tool to investigate the perceptions of local residents on socio-cultural impacts caused by major sporting events. This can result in the reinforcement of social and cultural identity and in building strong ties within a community (Martin & Barth, 2013).

This study uses an alternative approach, similar to some of the pre- or pre-/post-major sporting event studies of social impacts (Balduck et al., 2011; Lorde et al., 2011; Martin & Barth, 2013) and documents the socio-cultural impacts during and after the event (Ohmann et al., 2006; Pranić et al., 2012). Since EuroBasket 2013 was by far the biggest sporting event in the history of Slovenia, a retrospective study will serve to clarify what has already happened, promote deeper understanding, and offer impact projection for the future studies. The results will play an important role in reporting on the positive and negative socio-cultural impacts caused by major sporting event on the host community. Based on the empirical study, local authorities and organizers of major sporting events should use the results for the development of future sport tourism strategies to maximize positive socio-cultural impacts and minimize negative ones (Small, Edwards, & Sheridan, 2005; Balduck et al., 2011). The results of research on EuroBasket 2013 will also help local authorities to enhance the social leverage of the local community in Koper.

Nowadays, many major sporting events like EuroBasket 2013 need to be empirically researched, especially when they are organized in specific destination with unique characteristics. Researching the multitude of socio-cultural impacts of major sport

events varies depending on the host destination's unique historical, cultural, economic and environmental background, as well as on the nature, scale, place, and duration of the events (Pranić et al., 2012; Barker, 2004; Fredline, 2006). Ohmann et al. (2006) discovered that it is essential to obtain enough available information to identify the trends and patterns of different impacts of events, and manage them before, during and after the event.

The presented study on perceived socio-cultural impacts is important because, first, it covers an under-researched field of study on major sporting events in Slovenia (rarely organized); secondly, the study offers a snapshot of residents' perceptions of perceived socio-cultural impacts. Based on the results, future research should offer the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, or (as Ohmann et al. (2006)) suggested, a multi-method approach to allow the triangulation of the analysis. Using different data collection methods and the use of triangulation within the data analysis will ensure that the overall level of personal bias will be reduced. Future studies therefore should concentrate not only on socio-cultural but on different tourism impacts (economic, environmental and socio-cultural) caused by major sporting events on specific destinations.

Due to the lack of resources, convenience sampling was used within this study. In order to obtain a reliable sample, future studies of residents' perceptions on the socio-cultural impacts caused by the major sporting events should use a different sampling procedure than that used in our study. We recommend using a random sampling procedure to generalize the obtained results from the sample to the whole population. We also suggest readapting some variables measuring socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. There is an ongoing academic discussion as how to measure the length of residency at the destination. Based on the results, the sport activity of respondents as an independent variable had a statistically significant effect at the 0.05 level on the positive and negative social-cultural impact; therefore, it needs more future research. We suggest including additional variables measuring the sports activity of respondents when organizing major sporting events. We also suggest a comparison of the results of socio-cultural impacts with other impacts caused by a major sporting event.

Since the percentage of the explained variance in our regression model was very low when testing the impacts of the socio-demographic characteristics, the length of the residency and a sport-active lifestyle on the perceived socio-cultural impacts caused by the organization of a major sporting event, we suggest taking other independent variables into analysis. We have determined that the variable that statistically significant influenced the perception of the socio-cultural impacts caused by the organization of a major sporting event was that of the sport-active lifestyle. Our recommendation for future studies would be to include more variables measuring the impacts of the sports activity of residents.

Socio-cultural impacts created by major sporting events are becoming a growing concern of destination tourism development, therefore, strategies need proper research. For organizers and local authorities, it is essential that the impacts of major sporting events be managed effectively and that the benefits are distributed not only to selected stakeholders but all of the host community (Ntloko & Swart, 2008). Engaging the local community in the planning and organization of major sporting events ensures an appropriate legacy of the project and consequently results in a solid foundation in the sustainable development of tourist destinations. The relationship between the major sporting event and local community will therefore determine the nature and scale of the impacts.

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