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An Analysis of Research Topics in Event Management Research

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ABSTRACT

In spite of the increasing number of publication and newly established journals in event management, investigation of research topics by analyzing titles and abstracts of articles did not draw much attention among event scholars. This study is to find the trend of topics of research published in event management journals and suggest for future research. A total of 403 research papers published in the four event management journals were collected. The content analysis was performed with 4,087 words from titles of articles. The most frequently used words in the titles of articles are "event(s)" and "festival(s)" published in event management journals. The frequently used words in different journals and different time periods will be presented. Study limitations and future directions are discussed.

Keywords: *Topics, event management, content analysis*

INTRODUCTION

Events and festivals have increased significantly in scale in recent decades (Jones 2012). According to the increasing market demand, the numbers of academic research in event management are also substantially increasing with diverse topics (Getz 2012; Lee and Back 2005). The field of event management currently hosts quite a few international journals around the world, such as *Event Management*, *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, and *International Journal of Event Management Research*. In spite of the increasing number of publication and newly established journals, investigation of research topics by analyzing titles and abstracts of articles did not draw much attention among event scholars. Monitoring academic journals from time to time is vital to recognize research trends in the discipline. Thus, this study in progress is to find the trend of topics of research published in event management journals and suggest for future research.

METHODOLOGY

Four event management focused academic journals were selected for inclusion in this study: *Event Management*, *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, and *International Journal of Event Management Research*. Key word search of "event," "festival," "convention," "World cup," "exhibit," "wedding," and "Olympic" was conducted in four top tier tourism and hospitality journals (T&H journals here after), *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel Research*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, and *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research* for selecting event related papers. Those titles and abstracts from the four top tier journal publications were used for separate analysis for validity purpose. A total of 506 research papers published in the four event management journals and 78 papers published in the four top tier hospitality and tourism journals were collected. The terms, "event," "festival," "Olympic," "World cup," "convention," "exhibit," and "wedding," were used for searching event management articles published in T&H journals. Note that book reviews, short communications, conference

reports, or editors' notes were excluded in the analysis. There are several methods of analyzing research topics; however, this study focuses on a text analysis with titles and abstracts of articles. A content analysis is performed on the data. As a quantitative methodology, a content analysis emphasizes the frequency with which words appear in a text. The text data was content-analyzed using CATPAC II, a text-mining software program based on artificial neural networks (Woelfel 1993). The content analysis was performed with 4,087 words from titles of articles.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive results show in Table 1. The results show the number of papers have been increased since the first event management journal, Festival Management & Event Tourism (former name of Event Management). Note International Journal of Event and Festival Management has been started to publish in 2005. Seven words on average have been used in each title.

Table 1
Descriptive Results of Event Management Publication

Years published	Number of papers	Number of words in titles	Average number of words in each title
1993-2000	85	646	7.6
2001-2005	82	583	7.1
2006-2010	170	1,183	7.0
2011-2013	126	886	7.0
T&H Journals (1974-2013)	78	507	6.5

It is not surprising that the most frequently used words in the titles of articles in both of event management journals and T&H journals are "event(s)." The results show that "festival," "case," "study," "impact," "sport," "tourism," "management," and "convention" in order are the frequently appeared words in event management journals. In addition, the results show that "tourism," "impact," "destination," "sport," "convention," "festival," "tourist," and "economic" in order are the frequently used words in T&H journals. "Case" and "study" have been frequently appeared in event management journals, which may show that event management journals have widely accepted case study of festival and events. "Tourism" and "tourist(s)" have been frequently appeared in T&H journals, which may indicate that T&H journals have been heavily organized under the theme of tourism subjects. The detailed results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Top 30 words Used in Event Journals and T&H Journals

Event Management Journals		T&H Journals	
Words	Freq.	Words	Freq.
EVENT	227	EVENT	46
FESTIVAL	146	TOURISM	17
CASE	58	IMPACT	16
STUDY	58	DESTINATION	9
IMPACT	51	SPORT	9
SPORT	48	CONVENTION	8
TOURISM	42	FESTIVAL	7
MANAGEMENT	37	TOURIST	7
CONVENTION	35	ECONOMIC	6
VISITOR	34	SPECIAL	6
MOTIVATION	33	STUDY	6
ANALYSIS	29	ROLE	5
SPECIAL	29	ANALYSIS	4

ECONOMIC	28	CULTURAL	4
MEETING	28	DECISION	4
SATISFACTION	23	EFFECTS	4
PERCEPTIONS	22	EMPIRICAL	4
DEVELOPMENT	21	HOTEL	4
EXPERIENCE	21	IMAGE	4
CULTURAL	20	INVOLVEMENT	4
MEGA	20	MAJOR	4
SOCIAL	20	OLYMPIC	4
ATTENDANCE	18	SERVICE	4
COMMUNITY	18	ASSESSING	3
GAMES	18	AUTHENTICITY	3
INDUSTRY	18	CASE	3
OLYMPIC	17	ENVIRONMENTA	3
SPONSORSHIP	17	ESTIMATING	3
DESTINATION	16	EXAMINATION	3
FACTORS	16	EXPLORING	3

The words in the titles of articles across the years show that “event(s)” and “festival(s)” have been heavily used, while “impact,” “economic,” “special,” and “sponsorship” seem to be less frequently used as time goes. However, “satisfaction,” “social,” “perceptions,” “meeting” have been increasingly used in the titles. Further detailed results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Top 30 Words Used in Event Journals

1993-2000		2001-2005		2006-2010		2011-2013	
Words	Freq.	Words	Freq.	Words	Freq.	Words	Freq.
EVENT	52	EVENT	40	EVENT	70	EVENT	65
FESTIVAL	29	FESTIVAL	35	FESTIVAL	49	FESTIVAL	33
SPECIAL	19	IMPACT	15	CONVENTION	21	STUDY	15
CASE	17	MANAGEMENT	13	STUDY	20	TOURISM	14
IMPACT	14	CASE	10	CASE	18	CASE	13
ECONOMIC	14	STUDY	9	SPORT	17	SPORT	13
STUDY	14	OLYMPIC	7	MOTIVATION	17	MEETING	10
TOURISM	13	CULTURAL	7	VISITOR	16	SATISFACTION	10
SPONSORSHIP	10	ECONOMIC	6	ANALYSIS	13	CONVENTION	9
MEGA	7	SCALE	6	MANAGEMENT	13	FACTORS	9
MOTIVATIONS	6	COMMUNITY	5	IMPACT	13	SOCIAL	9
VISITOR	6	GAMES	5	MEETING	13	IMPACT	9
SPORT	6	MAJOR	5	EXPERIENCE	10	VISITOR	9
ANALYSIS	5	SPORT	5	TOURISM	10	PERCEPTIONS	8
COMMUNITY	5	TOURISM	5	CONFERENCE	9	MOTIVATION	8
GAMES	5	ANALYSIS	4	SATISFACTION	9	ANALYSIS	7
MANAGEMENT	5	ATTENDANCE	4	ATTENDANCE	8	DEVELOPMENT	7
ARTS	4	DESTINATION	4	EXHIBITION	8	EXPLORATORY	7
BUSINESS	4	FRAMEWORK	4	INDUSTRY	8	DESTINATION	6
DEVELOPMENT	4	MEASURE	4	DEVELOPMENT	7	ECONOMIC	6
MARKETING	4	NEW	4	GAMES	7	INDUSTRY	6
OLYMPIC	4	SYDNEY	4	MEGA	7	MANAGEMENT	6
PERCEPTIONS	4	ATTITUDES	3	PERCEPTIONS	7	PERCEIVED	6
EFFECT	4	AUSTRALIAN	3	SOCIAL	7	FUTURE	5
BENEFITS	3	DEVELOPMENT	3	SPECIAL	7	MEGA	5
BRITISH	3	EVALUATION	3	CULTURAL	6	RESIDENTS	5
CULTURAL	3	INTERNATIONAL	3	DESTINATION	6	SHANGHAI	5
EXAMINATION	3	ISSUES	3	EXAMINING	6	SUSTAINABLE	5
LOCAL	3	MARKET	3	FRAMEWORK	6	VENUES	5
MAJOR	3	MUSIC	3	INFLUENCE	6	ATTENDANCE	4

This study provides an overview of the topic trend in the event management articles. The results show that “event(s)” and “festival(s)” have been predominantly used, while some words have been less frequently used or been increasingly used as time goes. Event management researchers may consider this trend for developing future research topic. In

addition, the results show that event management journals have widely accepted case study of festival and events, while T&H journals have been heavily organized under the theme of tourism subjects. This result will help event management researchers decide target journals.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Study limitations and suggestions for future direction will be noted in this section. Although four event management focused journals were included in this study as of representing event management research, the exclusion of other multi-disciplinary journals may unreasonably downplay the accurate investigating of current hot topics in event management. Thus, other peer-reviewed and multi-disciplinary journals could be collected to allow for better understanding of the broad range of event management research topics. Further, thematic coding techniques can be applied to mine meaningful results, since content analysis based only on frequency of words was used in this study. The extent to which independent coders evaluate a theme of an article and reach the same conclusion will be obtained by inviting intercoders (Neuendorf, 2002). Future data collection may consider other variables, such as, statistical method, number of authors, sampling method, size of sample (if applicable), and regions.

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