SUCCESS FACTORS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS OF THE CARNIVALS: THE CASE OF INTERNATIONAL ADANA ORANGE BLOSSOM CARNIVAL

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Abstract

The International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival, held in the Mediterranean Region of Turkey, has become a successful event that attracts more attention every year. This study aims to identify the critical success factors of the carnival, its contributions to the city, and the requirements for its sustainability from stakeholders' perspectives. In this context, qualitative data were collected through interviews with 194 stakeholders. Qualitative data were subjected to content analysis to determine the codes and categories. Chi-square tests were used to examine relationships between the content analysis categories and stakeholder groups. Highlighting symbols specific to Adana and the diversity of activities were determined as the success factors of the carnival. The stakeholders had some disagreements regarding various aspects of the carnival, but there was consensus that it contributed to the city's economy, promotion, socio-cultural structure, and social cohesion. Strengthening cooperation among all stakeholders was emphasized for the sustainability of the carnival.

Keywords: Success factors; Contributions; Sustainability requirements; Stakeholders; International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival; Türkiye.

FATORES DE SUCESSO, CONTRIBUIÇÕES E REQUISITOS DE SUSTENTABILIDADE DOS CARNAVAIS: O CASO DO CARNAVAL INTERNACIONAL ADANA FLOR DE LARANJEIRA

Resumo

O Carnaval Internacional Adana Orange Blossom, realizado na região mediterrânica da Turquia, tornou-se um evento de sucesso que atrai cada vez mais atenção a cada ano. Este estudo tem como objetivo conhecer os fatores críticos de sucesso do carnaval, os seus contributos para a cidade e os requisitos para a sua sustentabilidade com base na perspetiva dos stakeholders. Neste âmbito, foram recolhidos dados qualitativos por meio de entrevistas com 194 intervenientes. Os dados qualitativos foram submetidos à análise de conteúdo para a identificação de códigos e categorias. Foram utilizados testes de qui-quadrado para avaliar as associações entre as categorias obtidas na análise de conteúdo e os grupos de stakeholders. O destaque dos símbolos específicos de Adana e a diversidade de atividades foram apontados como fatores de sucesso do carnaval. As partes interessadas tiveram algumas divergências quanto a diferentes aspetos do carnaval, mas houve consenso quanto ao facto do carnaval contribuir para a economia, a promoção, a estrutura sociocultural e a coesão social da cidade. O reforço da cooperação entre todas as partes interessadas foi enfatizado para a sustentabilidade do carnaval.

Palavras-chave: Fatores de sucesso; Contribuições; Requisitos de sustentabilidade; Partes interessadas; Carnaval Internacional Adana Orange Blossom; Turquia.

FACTORES DE ÉXITO, CONTRIBUCIONES Y REQUISITOS DE SOSTENIBILIDAD DE LOS CARNAVALES: EL CASO DEL CARNAVAL INTERNACIONAL DEL AZAHAR DE ADANA

Resumen

El Carnaval Internacional de la Flor de Azahar de Adana, que se celebra en la región mediterránea de Turquía, se ha convertido en un evento de éxito que cada año atrae cada vez más atención. Este estudio tiene como objetivo identificar, a partir de las perspectivas de las partes interesadas, los factores críticos de éxito del carnaval, sus contribuciones a la ciudad y los requisitos para su sostenibilidad. En este contexto, se recopilaron datos cualitativos mediante entrevistas a 194 partes interesadas. Los datos cualitativos se sometieron a un análisis de contenido para identificar códigos y categorías. Se utilizaron pruebas de chi-cuadrado para identificar las relaciones entre las categorías obtenidas del análisis de contenido y los grupos de partes interesadas. Destacar los símbolos específicos de Adana y la diversidad de actividades se determinaron como factores de éxito del carnaval. Las partes interesadas tuvieron algunos desacuerdos respecto de diferentes aspectos del carnaval, pero hubo consenso en que contribuyó a la economía, a la promoción, a la estructura sociocultural y a la cohesión social de la ciudad. Se hizo hincapié en el fortalecimiento de la cooperación entre todas las partes interesadas para la sostenibilidad del carnaval.

Palabras clave: Factores de éxito; Contribuciones; Requisitos de sostenibilidad; Partes interesadas; Carnaval Internacional del Azahar de Adana; Turquía.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Event tourism is one of the fastest-growing areas of the tourism industry (Getz & Page, 2016). In recent years, it has become an essential element in the economic and socio-cultural development, promotion, and marketing of destinations (Viol et al., 2018). Events increase the attractiveness of the destinations in an increasingly global, competitive environment and attract visitor spending. It also enables the tourism potential of destinations to expand beyond a narrow focus on leisure-based tourism (Getz & Page, 2016).

Events can contribute to economic and social development goals and ensure the sustainability of rural areas (Dredge & Whitford, 2011). In addition, it is a powerful tool to attract tourists in off-season periods (Connell et al.,

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2015), to promote and create a positive image of the region/city and to raise awareness (Getz & Page, 2016). Ethnic and cultural events specific to destinations are among the most interesting, revealing and highlighting the differences among destinations (Raj et al., 2009). In this context, cultural events have always been an excellent source of income for the cities (Richards & Palmer, 2010; Koukopoulos & Koukopoulos, 2017). Carnivals, which are part of cultural events, have the potential to attract large numbers of tourists and can provide economic contributions to the destination. They also provide visitors with information about the destination's cultural, social, and historical textures (Getz, 2008).

The most important element of the relationship between tourism and events is the potential of events to change, strengthen and support the destination or the city image (Kim et al., 2014; Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2018; Pahrudin et al., 2023). Another essential element is that festivals/carnivals are powerful socio-cultural events with significant social benefits. They create opportunities for individuals to express themselves and to discover and develop their skills and abilities (Getz & Page, 2016).

Events also provide showcases for new ideas in music, art, theatre, handicrafts, and sports. In addition, while festivals/carnivals increase cultural and entertainment opportunities in the region, they enhance the society's excitement and pride (Ferris, 2010; Kulkarni, 2013; Croose, 2017). In the 1990s, the cultural units of local governments in England recognized the ability of carnivals to cross the borders of race, class, and space and to foster new forms of public participation. The policymakers also recognized the economic potential of these events. For example, the Bridgwater Carnival contributes an estimated £ 2 million to the local economy (Croose, 2017). Many governmental or non-governmental organizations organize periodic cultural events to attract more visitors to their cities and generate commercial activity in regional markets (Koukopoulos & Koukopoulos, 2017; Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2018; Wang & Kao, 2023). The International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival was born from such an idea. The carnival, which takes its name from the orange, an important agricultural product for the region, is a street carnival that aims to create a brand city by highlighting the orange blossom, which is a part of the city's culture. The carnival has quickly become an event where local people and other stakeholders work together, wait with excitement, and celebrate with great enthusiasm. Since it emerged in 2013, the number of participants increased every year, and it continues to attract attention from outside the city (International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival, 2022).

On the other hand, events can have both positive and negative impacts on host destinations and stakeholders, including social, cultural, physical, environmental, political, and economic factors (Raj et al., 2009). The resulting impacts and benefits can affect participants, local businesses, society, and other stakeholders. It is the duty and responsibility of local administrators to anticipate all these impacts, to ensure that the event's impacts are positive in total. For this reason, the current study aims to determine the success factors of the Adana International Orange Blossom Carnival, its contributions to the city and the requirements for

its sustainability. Thus, it is intended to guide decision-makers and increase the support and benefits society provides by highlighting the key issues for the carnival to continue its success.

2 THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 Event Tourism and Carnivals

Event tourism contributes in several ways, such as extending the tourism season, increasing tourist visits, diversifying tourism, creating new income sources for the regions, raising awareness by attracting media attention to the destination, and helping brand the destination by creating strong, active images. It improves the infrastructure and services provided in the destination (Mason & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009: 314; Richards & Palmer, 2010). In light of these developments, the roles of government, the private sector, and society in relation to events and tourism have changed significantly in recent years. Today, governments support and promote events as part of strategies for economic development, nation-building, and cultural tourism (Backman et al., 2011).

Events are divided into different types based on their themes: political, arts and entertainment, business, educational and scientific, sports, recreational, private, and cultural events. Festivals/carnivals are among the cultural events (Buczkowska, 2009; Getz, 2008, 2010). Kulkarni (2013) stated that local festivals contribute to the creation of a cultural environment and the development of tourism in the region. Carnivals are among the most effective event types for attracting tourists. For example, the Notting Hill Carnival attracts more than two million people over two days and is considered Europe's largest popular cultural festival (Ferris, 2010). Croose (2017) and Denissa et al. (2015) emphasized that carnivals held in local towns are highly creative, and that communities in those regions also show great creativity. Clary Salandy, one of London's leading carnival designers, insists the carnival is an art (Ferris, 2010). Therefore, carnivals are considered an important type of event tourism that should be on destinations' agendas.

Researchers examined the events from various perspectives after the 1980s (Getz & Page, 2016). One of these areas is event tourism (Kim et al., 2013). Studies on event tourism generally focus on socio-cultural (Balduck et al., 2011; Chien et al., 2012; Robertson et al., 2009; Woosnam et al., 2013), socio-economic (Gürsoy et al., 2004; Getz, 2008; Davies et al., 2013; Peeters et al., 2014; Saayman & Saayman, 2012), political (Henderson, 2007), psychological (Benckendorff & Pearce, 2012) and tourism effects (Getz, 2008; Woo Jun & Lee, 2008) of events. There are also studies on destination marketing and image (Pahrudin et al., 2023; Pechlaner et al., 2013) and urban development (Di Giovine, 2009; Wang & Kao, 2023). Mair and Whitford (2013) concluded that event studies mainly focused on economic impacts and stated that the priority issues to be investigated were socio-cultural and community impacts, followed by environmental impacts and sustainability issues. Based on this finding, the researchers aimed to determine the contributions of The International

Orange Blossom Carnival to the city, its success factors, and what needs to be done to ensure its sustainability.

2.2 Contributions, Success Factors and Sustainability Requirements of Events

Many studies support the idea that events contribute to cities. Getz (2008, 2012a, 2012b) considers events as an area of activity that makes a significant contribution to the development of tourism in the commercial field. Getz and Page (2016) stated that events can create economic benefits and positive images for destinations and help brands or reposition cities. According to Mackellar (2014) and Mendes et al. (2011), events can be used to promote the destination and build its brand. Hernández-Mogollón et al. (2018) support this view and reveal that cultural events support tourism and contribute to the development of the destination image. Events can attract tourists who might not usually visit the destination (Viol et al., 2018).

Allen et al. (2002) considered the effects of events as social and cultural, physical and environmental, and political and economic. Positive socio-cultural impacts of events can be exemplified by sharing experiences, reintegrating traditions, fostering social dignity, and enriching cultural experiences. Positive environmental impacts include increased environmental awareness, infrastructure development, improved transportation and communication systems, and urbanization. The positive political effects of the events were reflected in international prestige and a stronger city profile. In contrast, the positive economic effects were reflected in increased job opportunities, higher earnings, and higher tax revenue.

On the other hand, events have negative environmental impacts, including traffic congestion and noise pollution. Additionally, a lack of propaganda and social control is among the negative political and cultural impacts. In contrast, loss of authenticity and rising prices are among the negative economic impacts. Gürsoy et al. (2004) grouped socio-economic impacts under four categories: social solidarity, economic gains, social benefits and social costs.

Minimizing the adverse effects of events on cities and society and further increasing their positive effects is extremely important for the institutionalization and success of the event. Events that ensure success and socio-cultural sustainability can promote equality, cultural diversity, participation, good community relations, and human rights (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2016). In this context, the success factors of the events need to be determined. The success, sustainability and institutionalization of local festivals depend on the harmonious and practical work of various stakeholders.

Stakeholders such as Government officials, sponsors, vendors, volunteers, visitors, and media have different levels of power. The event committee should use its power to ensure that each stakeholder works together in a way that makes them feel that their contribution to community development is vital and appreciated. It should ensure that groups with low legitimacy, such as vendors, actively participate in events. All stakeholder groups should be represented on committees (Adongo & Kim, 2018).

Organizers must create a stable, consistent, and sustained event culture. This culture requires careful planning and design of the festival program and content, as well as the festival environment (Liu, 2014). Authenticity, sincerity, and a sense of community are critical to the success of cultural festivals. Having various activities for target audience groups, such as families, young adults, and children, is also effective in achieving success. Volunteers need to be involved in the organization, as do key stakeholders who provide funding. Thus, there will be a feeling that the festival was created together, which will strengthen social participation (McGuckin, 2023). It should reflect the culture and identity of the local people and be embraced by them (Jani, 2023). Events developed without prior consultation with the local community lead to community opposition and undermine the event's success (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Case Study: International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival

Adana is the fifth-largest city in the country, located in the Mediterranean Region in southern Turkey, and is known for its history and fertile lands. The International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival is held in April, when the orange trees bloom, and the scent of orange blossoms fills the city. It is Turkey's first street carnival with broad participation, held as a civil initiative since 2013. The carnival has been included in the scope of "Turkey Culture Road Festivals" since 2023 by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The most important event of the carnival, whose motto is "in Adana in April" and which includes many concerts, cultural and artistic events, costume contests, exhibitions, and performances, is the parade, where participants wear colourful costumes (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Images from the Carnival

Source:
https://www.facebook.com/nisandaadanada/photos_stream

The carnival is also the first collaborative event organized by local governments, non-governmental organizations, opinion leaders, media, celebrities, and the private sector. The number of participants in the parade and carnival activities from 2013 to 2023 is shown in Table 1

Table 1. The Number of Participants in the Parade and Carnival Activities

Year	Number of activities	Number of parade participants	Number of people following the activities
2013	39	15,000	100,000
2014	87	30,000	140,000
2015	188	90,000	350,000
2016*	76	-	1,000,000
2017*	59	-	1,500,000
2018	120	50,000	1,500,000
2019**	112	-	1,500,000
2020	It was only celebrated on the balconies due to the closing of COVID-19.		
2021	21	The activities were held digitally due to the COVID-19.	
2022**	120	-	1,100,000
2023	Cancelled due to the earthquake on 6 February 2023.		

Source: Günsel, 2022

*Accurate data could not be collected for the parade in 2016-2017.
**The parade was held only with demonstration teams, without the participation of the public

The primary purpose of the carnival is to create a brand city, promote recognition of the carnival worldwide, and contribute to the economy and social life of Adana province, which has historical, traditional, and cultural values (International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival, 2022). Local people have developed orange-themed tourist products specifically for the carnival (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. Orange-Themed Touristic Products Developed for Carnival

Photos: Taken by O. B. Karaca

The world's largest peace-themed mosaic painting was created in 2013 by combining 24.000 pictures produced by more than 10.000 children. With this study, Adana entered the Guinness World Records List (International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival, 2022). In 2015, the carnival won the Grand Prize at the TÜHİD (Golden Compass Public Relations Awards) Competition. It became one of the top three finalists in the Golden Globe Awards category organized by the International Public Relations Association (IPRA). In addition, the carnival received the "Silver Stevie" award in the "Communications and PR Campaign of the Year- Art and Entertainment" category at the Stevie International Business Awards in 2015 (Günsel, 2022). The Stevie International Business Awards are among the most prestigious in the world, with more than 3,700 applications submitted from 60 countries and regions, evaluated by more than 200 experts.

3.2 Research Model

This study was designed as a case study, which is a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is a method that investigates the meaning that individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem, and involves collecting data in a natural setting, analyzing it with inductive and deductive methods, and creating themes (Creswell, 2013: 37). In a case study, the researcher investigates a bounded system or multiple bounded systems over time through in-depth data collection using multiple sources of information and reports a case description or themes based on the case (Creswell, 2013: 73).

In this context, at first interviews were held with the stakeholders of the International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival. In addition, the researchers participated in carnival events that lasted about a week. Thus, data diversification was attempted through participant observation (Yildirim & Simsek, 2011). Information obtained via the interview was subjected to content analysis. In content analysis, data such as preexisting text, images, or video are used. Researcher codes for the words, categories and themes (Kleinheksel et al., 2020; Hair, Page & Brunsveld, 2020). Through observation, the researcher experiences what it is like to be in a particular social situation (Willig, 2013). The researchers' participation in the carnival and their observations strengthened the research and coding process.

Even content analysis has been stated that it was at first introduced as a quantitative method (Kleinheksel et al., 2020), and the words, codes, categories, or themes may or may not be quantitatively analyzed based on the size of the data set and the research purpose (Hair, Page & Brunsveld, 2020). In the second phase, given the appropriate size of the data set, the codes and categories produced via content analysis were used for quantitative analysis, including frequency distributions and chi-square tests.

3.3 Sampling and Data Collection

The study population comprised stakeholders who took part in organizing the carnival and those affected by it. Local people were the consumers of the carnival and had no role in the organization; therefore, they were excluded from the scope. A purposeful sampling method was used in the study. Sponsor companies that support the organization of the carnival, businesses operating in the carnival region and institutional authorities were determined as samples.

In qualitative research, a sample size of 12-30 people (Saunders, 2012) or at least 15 people (Mason, 2010) is considered sufficient to explain the phenomenon under study. In any carnival, institutional organizations and sponsors, besides business establishments, may play significant roles. Therefore, the study endeavoured to collect as much data as possible from these three different stakeholders. At the end of the sampling process in 2022, 27 people from institutions, 44 from sponsors and 123 business managers were interviewed.

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Among the business managers group, food and beverage companies with 76 people were the largest subgroup, since the food and beverage industry was broad, ranging from casual kebab restaurants to street vendors of şalgam (a drink made from turnips and purple carrots). Interviews took between 30 and 40 minutes.

The data were obtained using a semi-structured interview form developed for the research. In the interview form, there were three open-ended questions serving research aims, in addition to some demographic ones. These three questions were about (1) the critical success factors of the carnival, (2) the contributions of the carnival to Adana, and (3) sustainability requirements for the carnival.

3.4 Data Analysis

In content analysis, the process of organizing the data, reviewing, note-taking, creating codes through interpretation, and creating themes through categorization was followed (Creswell, 2013: 156). Firstly, with the participants' consent, the recorded responses were transcribed on the computer. Then, the data were examined and interpreted separately by the first two authors of the study, and codes were determined for each research question and stakeholder group. The codes with associations were then grouped into meaningful categories. After this stage, an academician working in the field of event tourism was invited to evaluate the determined codes and categories. The third researcher and the categories evaluated the resulting disagreements and uncertainties, which were finalized.

Since content analysis data can be quantitatively analyzed (Hair, Page & Brunsveld, 2020), we used chi-square tests to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between the categories and stakeholder groups. If the chi-square test result was statistically significant, the contingency coefficient of C was calculated. Since C cannot be interpreted directly as the Pearson correlation coefficient (r), r was calculated by multiplying the C value by the inverse of the maximum value of the contingency coefficient of C that could take (Alpar, 2011: 278). Thus, we could interpret the level of relationship between stakeholders and the categories.

4 RESULTS ANALYSIS

4.1 Profile of the Respondents

The stakeholders interviewed were classified into three groups: institutional authorities (IA), sponsors (S), and business managers (BM), based on their fields of activity and responsibilities (Table 2). The high participation of businesses, especially given that they feel the effects of the event the most, is important for research results.

A moderate statistical relationship (x^2 = 58.856; df = 14; p < 0.001; r = 0.443) was found between the stakeholder groups and the success factors. Since the number of cells with an expected value below 5 exceeds 20%, caution is warranted when interpreting the detected relationship. Accordingly, the institution's authorities consider highlighting City-specific symbols as the most important aspect (40.9%).

They also consider 'variety of activities' (22.7%), 'cooperation of stakeholders' (13.6%) and 'parade' (13.6%) as important elements of success. Institutional Authority-1's (IA-1) statement proves this.

Table 2. The Profile of the Respondents

Institutional Authorities (IA) (n:27)	f	%	Gender	f	%
Municipality	16	59,3	Female	5	18,5
Chamber of artisans	4	14,8	Male	22	81,5
Governorship	3	11,1			
District governorship	2	7,4			
Chamber of industry	1	3,7			
Provincial directorate of culture and tourism	1	3,7			
Sponsors (S) (n:44)	**f**	**%**	**Gender**	**f**	**%**
Press	4	9,1	Female	12	27,3
Hotel	4	9,1	Male	32	72,7
Food	5	11,4			
Local government	6	13,6			
Building	3	6,8			
Automotive	5	11,4			
Communication	4	9,1			
Other	13	29,5			
Business Managers (BM) (n:123)	**f**	**%**	**Gender**	**f**	**%**
Travel agency	13	10,6	Female	26	21,1
F& B business	76	61,9	Male	97	78,9
Transportation	14	11,3			
Hotel	6	4,9			
Souvenir shop	14	11,3			

Source: own elaboration.

4.2 Success Factors of the Carnival

The International Orange Blossom Carnival quickly turned into an event embraced by the entire city, held with the support of all stakeholders, and celebrated with enthusiasm. Tours from outside the city began to be organized for the carnival, attracting the attention of foreign tourists. To answer the first research question, stakeholders were asked what factors made carnival successful. Eight codes were obtained via content analysis, and a crosstab based on stakeholder groups was produced and presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Success Factors of the Carnival

Success Factors	IA	S	BM	Total
Highlighting of City-specific symbols	9	21	45	75
Advertisement and promotional activities	1	20	39	60
Stakeholder cooperation	3	19	19	41
Variety of activities	5	13	62	80
Safety and security	0	11	28	39
Parade	3	9	44	56
Kebab counters	1	6	0	7
Using of colorful costumes	0	0	32	32
Total	22	99	269	390

x^2:58.856; df:14; p<0.001; The ratio of cells with an expected value less than 5: %41.70; the smallest expected value: 0.39; contingency coefficient of C:0.362; C_{max}: 0.816; 1/C_{max}:1.225; r type of C: 0.443
Source: own elaboration.

IA-1: *Performing 80 different activities in 80 different places without any problems is a great success. Orange flowers, citrus fruits, kebabs, and turnips were recognized as our specific symbols.*

The same issue is of primary importance for sponsors, followed by advertisement and promotional activities (20.2%) and stakeholder cooperation (19.2%). Sponsor-2 (S-2) and S-22's opinions on the subject are given below.

S-2: *What I find most successful is that such an organization can be organized entirely voluntarily and with the contribution of all stakeholders. Social media is used very successfully for advertising.*

S-22: *The carnival reflects Adana culture on the street, with everything from people to kebab, oranges, and turnips…*

Business managers stated that the most successful factor of the carnival is the variety of activities (23%). Success factors include the use of symbols specific to the City (17%), parade (16%) and advertising and promotional activities (15%). Business Manager-32 (BM-32) and BM-9's statements prove this.

BM-32: *This carnival introduced historical symbols such as Taşköprü, Büyüksaat, and Küçüksaat, as well as local flavours and products such as cotton and orange blossom. Therefore, I think that the city contributed significantly to the sustainability of its cultural heritage.*

BM-9: *Having a wide variety of activities was important for appealing to different groups. The concerts were successful. The trips to the orange gardens were pleasant. They were well promoted. This year was excellent compared to previous years. The carnival parade was crowded, colourful, and eye-catching.*

On the other hand, sponsors and businesses highlighted a safe environment as one of the success factors of the carnival, whereas the authorities did not address this issue. The opinions of S-6 and BM-47 prove this.

S-6: *The carnival had excellent coordination. The start and end points were correct. Ninety thousand people participated in the parade without any security problems. They had fun together and experienced solidarity.*

BM-47: *Although there were too many participants, there was no problem or chaos; people enjoyed a peaceful and safe environment.*

While businesses considered the 'use of colourful costumes' an important contributor to the carnival's success, the authorities and sponsors did not mention it.

4.3 Carnival Contributions to the City

Secondly, participants were asked what contributions the carnival made to the city. Codes were categorized into economic, promotional, and social contributions, and a cross-tab was produced by stakeholder group (Table 4). Later, each category was separately investigated under the sub-titles.

All interviewed stakeholders think that the most important contribution of the carnival is in the economic field (S: 44%; BM: 44%; IA: 39%). It was found out that there was a very low level of relationship between the stakeholder groups and categories of carnival contribution (x^2:15.179; df:4; p=0.004; r:0.140). While the promotional contributions

were expressed mainly by businesses (38%), the sponsors accounted for 32% and the institutional authorities for 29%. Those who emphasized social contributions the most were the authorities (33%).

Table 4. Categorizations of Carnival Contributions to the City

Categories	IA	S	BM	Total
Economic	50	122	322	494
Promotional	37	89	281	407
Social	42	65	138	245
Total	129	276	741	1146

x^2:15.179; df:4; p=0.004; The ratio of cells with an expected value less than 5: %0.0; the smallest expected value: 27.58; Contingency coefficient of C:0.114; C_{max} 0.816; $1/C_{max}$:1.225; r type of C: 0.140
Source: own elaboration.

Thus, it had been understood that managers focused on the economic and promotional effects of the Carnival, while the authorities emphasized the social contributions. It should be noted, however, that this relationship remains low (r = 0.140). Evaluations regarding these three dimensions are explained in detail below.

4.3.1 The Economic Contributions of the Carnival

There is a low level of relationship between the stakeholders' groups and the perception of the carnival's economic contributions (x^2 (6) = 21.28; df = 6; p = 0.002; r = 0.249). While 38% of institutions and businesses think that the carnival increases the number of tourists and provides economic vitality, this ratio is around 25% among sponsors. Nearly 25% of the sponsors stated that the carnival made a positive contribution to tourism and increased the occupancy rates. This result may be related to the presence of hotels directly affected by "economic vitality and occupancy rate" among the interviewed sponsors. Institutions and businesses remained at lower rates on these issues (Table 5). Below are the participant opinions regarding this (IA-15, S-6, BM-4).

IA-15: *Carnival contributed to the economic vitality. It increased recognition of Adana in the field of tourism, both in the country and abroad. It also improved local people's perceptions of tourism and tourists positively.*

S-6: *This carnival attracted people who had never visited Adana. The occupancy rates for flights and hotels increased as many people attending the carnival came from outside the province.*

BM-4: *It contributed to the economy and enabled the sale of local products. There was an increase in airline ticket sales; even the hotels on the outskirts were fully booked.*

Table 5. Economic Contributions of the Carnival

Economic Contributions	IA	S	BM	Total
Increasing of the number of tourists	19	33	119	171
Economic vitality	19	31	120	170
Contribution to the tourism	7	29	44	80
Increasing of occupancy rate	5	29	39	73
Total	50	122	322	494

x^2:21.28; df:6; p=0.002; The ratio of cells with an expected value less than 5: %0.0; the smallest expected value: 7.39; coefficient of contingency of C:0.203; C_{max}: 0.816; $1/C_{max}$:1.225; r type of C: 0.249
Source: own elaboration.

4.3.2 The Promotional Contributions of the Carnival

The second important contribution of the carnival to the city was determined as a promotional contribution, and the results are given in Table 6. Four fundamental promotional contributions are mentioned. The first of these is to contribute to the "promotion of the city," and all stakeholder groups agree on this issue. In addition, the carnival contributes to the "promotion of city culture" and to "reversing the negative perception towards the city". The opinions of the participants coded IA-7, S-4 and BM-10 supporting this result are given below.

IA-7: *The name of Adana, already a city of art and culture, is announced to Turkey and the world through the carnival. You would not be able to do such a promotion without a carnival. Carnival contributes to the social and cultural fabric of Adana and accelerates the city's promotion. It also stands out for being the first and only street carnival in Turkey.*

S-4: *Adana has a negative perception, and carnival helps reverse this. The carnival contributes to reviving Adana's spirit and helping people living outside the city and abroad remember their city. It creates solidarity and synergy.*

BM-10: *The carnival improved Adana's image and showcased the city's warm nature. It also promoted the city's historical and cultural heritage.*

Table 6. Promotional Contributions of the Carnival

Promotional Contributions	IA	S	BM	Total
Promoting of city	19	34	105	158
Reversing negative image of city	6	17	64	87
Branding identity of city	0	15	36	51
Promoting of city culture	12	23	76	111
Total	37	89	281	407

x^2:9.007; df.:6; p:0.173; The ratio of cells with an expected value less than 5: %8.3; the smallest expected value: 4.64

Source: own elaboration.

It was determined that there was no statistically significant relationship between the carnival's promotional contributions to the city and the stakeholder's groups. This meant that all stakeholder groups appreciated the carnival's promotional contributions at roughly the same level.

It is an interesting finding that the authorities believe the carnival makes no contribution to the city's brand identity. Branding contributions of carnival were only reported by only 16.9% of the sponsors and 12.8% of the managers. Some sponsors' thoughts are given below:

S-38: *It is important to remind that Adana is a brand city that has trained many artists, such as Yasar Kemal, Orhan Kemal, Yılmaz Güney, Abidin Dino, and Suna Kan.*

BM-91: *Carnival brings together the music, local artists, and traditional cuisine of Adana with the participants, thereby increasing the city's brand value.*

At the same time, business managers (22.8%) think that carnival contributes to 'reversing the negative image of the city'. Participant number 56's opinion regarding this finding is as follows.

BM-56: *The carnival changed the perception that Adana is only famous for its kebabs. It highlighted the city's*

cultural heritage, values, and nature, and showed that it has many artistic facilities.

4.3.3 The Social Contributions of the Carnival

It is possible to talk about a low level of statistically significant relationship between the groups of the stakeholders and the social contributions of the carnival (x^2:13.060; df:4; p=0.011; r:0.276) (Table 7). Accordingly, institutions and businesses believe that the carnival increases social solidarity (45% - 48%) and the revival of social life (36% - 37%), with close ratios. Participant opinions on the subject are given below.

Table 7. Social Contributions of the Carnival

Social Contributions	IA	S	BM	Total
Increasing of the social solidarity	19	26	66	111
Increasing of the sense of belonging	8	24	21	53
Revitalizing of social life	15	15	51	81
Total	42	65	138	245

x^2:13.060; df:4; p=0.011; The ratio of cells with an expected value less than 5: %0.0; the smallest expected value: 9.09; Contingency coefficient of C :0.225; C_{max}: 0.816; $1/C_{max}$:1.225; r type of C:0.276

Source: own elaboration.

IA-18: *All people embracing the carnival together contribute to strengthening the culture of togetherness in Adana. Furthermore, this organization made it possible to show hospitality and the fact that different cultures can live together in peace.*

IA-25: *It is a great success that the city's economic and social life is brought to life by ensuring that Adana's values meet the people.*

BM-37: *Carnival increases the local people's love and loyalty to their city. Especially, people living outside Adana come to their city for the carnival and are proud of their city.*

On the other hand, sponsors reported a greater contribution to increasing a sense of belonging (37%) than institutions (19%) and business managers (15%).

S-1: *Carnival does not have a political agenda and addresses all the dynamics of the city. It is very nice to reach all layers of society. It enabled people to have fun together with enthusiasm.*

S-4: *This organization is a source of inspiration for promoting the city, attracting tourists, raising motivation, developing the society's culture, demonstrating the community's solidarity, reviving the spirit of Adana, and contributing to the city.*

4.4 Sustainability Requirements of the Carnival

The third research question was on the sustainability requirements of the carnival. The categories were summarized in Table 8. It is possible to discuss a low-level, meaningful statistical relationship between stakeholders' status and the carnival's sustainability requirements (x^2:73.509; df:22; p<0.001; r:0.369). Accordingly, the main sustainability requirement of the authorities (18,3%) and the sponsors (17%) is stakeholder cooperation.

IA-26: *Concerts and other cultural and artistic activities that appeal to all segments of the public should be increased; folk dances should be performed; local costumes should be exhibited; and cooperation and solidarity among institutions should be more substantial. The feeling of solidarity should go on.*

S-7: *For a more effective organization, all volunteers, NGOs, universities, municipalities and individuals in our city should collaborate.*

Table 8. Sustainability Requirements of the Carnival

Sustainability Requirements	IA	S	BM	Total
Cooperation of stakeholders	15	19	32	66
Art activities	14	17	94	125
Participation of celebrities	4	15	50	69
Traditional cultural products	12	15	58	85
Active use of the media	11	13	92	116
Increasing financial and sponsor support	8	11	38	57
Parade	12	9	28	49
Cleanliness, safety and security	0	6	43	49
Holding events all over the city	6	5	28	39
Carnival costumes	0	2	22	24
Traffic regulation and free transportation	0	0	28	28
Activities for children	0	0	30	30
Total	82	112	543	737

x^2:73.509; df:22; p<0.001; The ratio of cells with an expected value less than 5: %19.4; the smallest expected value: 2.67; Contingency coefficient of C:0.301; C_{max}: 0.884; $1/C_{max}$:1.225; r type of C: 0.369

Source: own elaboration.

Businesses emphasize the active use of the media (16.9%) and art activities (17.3%). Other sustainability requirements include traditional cultural products and a parade. While businesses emphasized the importance of traffic regulations/free transportation, and children's activities, the authorities and sponsors did not mention these issues.

BM-40: *Sponsoring should be increased, promotions should be more effective, and local, national, and international media support should be expanded.*

Sponsors and businesses find the 'participation of the celebrities' important, who will contribute to the sustainability of the carnival, whereas the authorities stress that the 'parade' has become the symbol of the carnival.

IA-7: *The highlight of the carnival court was the parade. Guests from outside Adana attend the parade in large numbers and change the city's atmosphere. In this respect, the carnival, which makes a significant contribution to the city through its activities, takes on another aspect with the parade.*

The sponsors also express similar concerns:

S-12: *The parade is significant. There must be a well-organized parade in a carnival.*

It is noteworthy that the officials and sponsors consider "cleanliness, safety and security" and "traffic regulation and free transportation" to be of low importance among the carnival's sustainability requirements.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Adana Orange Blossom Carnival has attracted attention since its inception, is attended by residents as well as visitors from other regions, and is celebrated with interest and enthusiasm; in this sense, it can be considered successful. However, it has not yet been able to carry this national success to the international arena adequately. The earthquake on February 6, 2023, and the COVID-19-related closures were effective in this regard. Moreover, identifying and strengthening the carnival's critical success factors, contributions and sustainability requirements will be effective in achieving this goal.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

According to the research findings, the highlighting of city-specific symbols and the diversity of activities were recognized as the most important factors in the carnival's success. In parallel with these findings, Quinn (2006) states that festivals create 'products' and contribute to the revitalization and unique culture of a destination. Congcong (2014: 54) also discusses the characteristics of festival tourism, emphasizing locality, experiential, cultural, comprehensive, and sustainable benefits of the event. Therefore, the carnival will continue to be successful as long as it protects local values and does not move away from those that reflect regional culture in an environment of intense globalization. McGuckin (2023) supports this by emphasizing authenticity, sincerity and a sense of community. Based on the experiential characteristics of the activities mentioned by Congcong (2014), it is a critical success factor that the carnival offers participants of all ages the opportunity to experience a variety of activities.

Another critical success factor is that all stakeholders support and own the carnival together. Carnival should be a supra-political event in the city. This approach needs to be continued in order to sustain its success. Advertising and promotional activities, parade and security are the other success factors. It is understood that the carnival committee used social media well for promotion. At the first carnival, the "Carnival Newspaper" was distributed to 150,000 people in Adana and the Çukurova region. The Guardian shared a frame from Carnival with its readers under the "Best Photos of the Day" category. During the ten years (2013-2022), under the influence of the Carnival, a total of 23919 written, TV, and digital news items were produced, with 655 million interactions. The advertisement value of all written, TV, and digital news was 52190813.86 USD (Günsel, 2022).

The colourful costumes and various performances in the parade are the most popular events among participants and symbolize the carnival. The carnival, which has been organized for 10 years and attracts thousands of people, has not experienced any security problems, even minor ones. Careful organization of these critical issues was instrumental to the carnival's success.

Additionally, a relationship was identified between stakeholders' status and the success factors of the carnival. For example, while business managers strongly agree with all success factors, they do not consider the presence of kebab counters to be very important. This may be due to competition. Kebab counters set up in the carnival area may negatively affect the sales of other businesses. On the other hand, while business managers and sponsors emphasize the importance of safety and security, Institutional authorities

have not addressed this issue. However, they are primarily responsible for this issue and should be aware of its sensitivity. Accordingly, although stakeholders share similar views on the success factors of the carnival, they disagree on some issues. This result can be interpreted as all stakeholders do not clearly understand the success factors. However, it is necessary for all stakeholders contributing to the carnival to understand the factors that are effective in success very well in order to put these elements into practice. The most important suggestion of the study may be that stakeholders come together and evaluate the success factors in detail.

Stakeholders participating in the research think that the most important contribution of the carnival to the city is in the economic dimension. These results are similar to those of McClinchey (2021) and O'Sullivan and Jackson (2002). McClinchey (2021) refers to festivals as cultural phenomena that serve as popular means of initiating economic renewal and encouraging social inclusion. In addition, they can have a positive impact on a sustainable local economy by extending the tourist season, supporting existing businesses and encouraging new ventures (O'Sullivan & Jackson, 2002). Festivals and events play an increasingly important role in the tourism industry due to direct visitor expenditure, increased employment opportunities, improved place image, and economic effects arising from their socio-cultural benefits (Collins & Potoglou, 2019). It has been reported that, due to the influence of the carnival, the number of tourists visiting the city has more than doubled, and the city's total 12811 bed capacity has been filled (Günsel, 2022). Additionally, it has been observed that the hotels in Mersin, a neighbouring city, were fully occupied.

At the same time, it is thought that the carnival has a promotional impact and contributes to the city's social life. When the carnival is evaluated on social media, the number of Instagram followers increases year by year. During the 2018 Carnival, 20000 photos were shared with the "#NisandaAdanada" hashtag, and 37 thousand photos were shared with the hashtags "#PortakalCicegiKarnavalı" and "#PortakalÇiçeğiKarnavalı". Carnival has 43800 Instagram, 29000 Facebook and 7000 Twitter followers in 2022. At the carnival, which last took place in 2022, between 1st December 2021 and 6th April 2023, 655 print media, 245 TV, and 2726 internet news & broadcasts were reached, with 107620156 reach and 3120744.49 USD advertising equivalent (Günsel, 2022). This result supports the idea of Allen et al. (2002: 14) that local activities are organized to increase social honour and strengthen the sense of belonging.

Therefore, these activities should be given importance by local governments. It is also in line with Adongo & Kim (2018) and McClinchey's (2021) claims about festivals; it contributes to the formation of an image in open spaces and a sense of togetherness, belonging, sharing and community. Nguyen et al. (2024) have determined that even small-scale events provide numerous social benefits after the COVID-19 pandemic, such as strengthening the sense of community, (re)connecting people, and improving mental health. Although there is a low-level relationship between the stakeholder groups and the categories of contribution to the carnival, this relationship shows that businesses focus on

economic and promotional contributions, while officials focus on social contributions. This result may be due to the difference in the activities and responsibilities of the stakeholders. However, stakeholders must not focus solely on their own areas of responsibility; they must also evaluate the benefits for all stakeholders when assessing the event's contribution and ensure this perspective is taken into account in their practices.

There is a statistically significant relationship between the stakeholder groups and the carnival's sustainability requirements. All stakeholders agreed that increasing 'art activities' and prioritizing 'traditional cultural products' in the carnival are of great importance to the project's sustainability. The officials and sponsors also stressed that 'the cooperation of stakeholders' is essential for the sustainability of the carnival. Although not included in this study's sample, one of the most important stakeholder groups is the local community. Jani (2023) identified local ownership of festivals as a key component of festival sustainability. People perceive festivals in two ways: their own and others'. Festivals perceived as "ours" reflect people's culture and identity and are embraced by them. This is necessary for the festival's sustainability. Therefore, for the carnival's sustainability, it is appropriate for the carnival to maintain its integration with the local community and for the local community to be represented on the carnival committee.

All stakeholder groups agree that the carnival should emphasize products reflecting traditional culture and strong media support for sustainability. However, sponsors find celebrity participation necessary. McGuckin (2023: 529) also emphasizes that the participation of well-known people in festivals is important in attracting audiences. The institutional authorities have remained silent on issues for which they are responsible, such as cleanliness, security, traffic regulations and free transport. However, it is not possible to sustain the carnival without these measures.

5.2 Practical Implications

This article focuses on what needs to be done to continue the success of the International Adana Orange Blossom Carnival, an important event for the region. The findings from the interviews, supported by the literature review, provide valuable new insights for all stakeholders into the event's contribution to the city and its successful continuation. This information can help decision-makers plan and manage the event. It also offers each stakeholder group the opportunity to evaluate the activity from others' perspectives and gain a different perspective.

Another important factor in the success of the carnival is that it started with a civil initiative and is a supra-political event embraced by all stakeholders. The article shows the importance of continuing this co-operation between stakeholders. The carnival, which began as a civil initiative, should continue in this way with the voluntary participation of all parties. The common assumption about the success of events is that stakeholders should co-operate voluntarily, share common goals, and have equal power (Kelly & Fairley, 2018). Therefore, the carnival should continue to be organized in a civil manner, without state intervention.

The stakeholders had some disagreements regarding

various aspects of the carnival, but there was consensus that it contributed to the city's economy, promotion, socio-cultural structure, and social cohesion. In particular, businesses believe that the carnival is effective in reversing the city's negative perception and creating a positive image. The sponsors believe that the carnival contributes to the city's and state's brand identity and that they will continue to support it in the coming years. These results may encourage more sponsors to support the carnival.

When all the results of the research are evaluated, it is recommended to bring traditional values, such as the city's culinary culture, to the fore, increase cultural and artistic activities, strengthen cooperation among all stakeholders, and use the media actively to ensure the sustainability of the carnival. It is also recommended to get support from influencers in promotion.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

This study was carried out with stakeholders who experienced the effects of the carnival. In future studies, it is recommended that researchers examine the demands of foreign tourists visiting the city for the carnival. Another recommendation for researchers would be to use quantitative methods, including economic and financial data from companies and local authorities.

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CRediT author statement

Term	Definition	Author 1	2	3
Conceptualization	Ideas; formulation or evolution of overarching research goals and aims	x	x	
Methodology	Development or design of methodology; creation of models			x
Software	Programming, software development; designing computer programs; implementation of the computer code and supporting algorithms; testing of existing code components			x
Validation	Verification, whether as a part of the activity or separate, of the overall replication/ reproducibility of results/experiments and other research outputs	x	x	x
Formal analysis	Application of statistical, mathematical, computational, or other formal techniques to analyze or synthesize study data	x	x	x
Investigation	Conducting a research and investigation process, specifically performing the experiments, or data/evidence collection	x	x	
Resources	Provision of study materials, reagents, materials, patients, laboratory samples, animals, instrumentation, computing resources, or other analysis tools	x	x	
Data Curation	Management activities to annotate (produce metadata), scrub data and maintain research data (including software code, where it is necessary for interpreting the data itself) for initial use and later reuse	x	x	x
Writing - Original Draft	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically writing the initial draft (including substantive translation)	x	x	x
Writing - Review & Editing	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work by those from the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary or revision – including pre-or post-publication stages	x		
Visualization	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically visualization/ data presentation	x		x
Supervision	Oversight and leadership responsibility for the research activity planning and execution, including mentorship external to the core team			x
Project administration	Management and coordination responsibility for the research activity planning and execution	x	x	
Funding acquisition	Acquisition of the financial support for the project leading to this publication			

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