RESEARCH NOTE

TOPIC TREND OF EVENT MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

KWANGSOO PARK* AND SEUNGHYUN "BRIAN" PARK†

*Department of Apparel, Design, and Hospitality Management, North Dakota State University,
Fargo, ND, USA
†Department of Management, University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg, MO, USA

In spite of increasing numbers of publications and newly established journals in event management, research topics and themes have not drawn much attention among event scholars. This research note reports on research trends in event management journals and makes suggestions for future research. A total of 463 research articles published in the four event management journals and 78 event management articles in the leading hospitality and tourism journals were collected. The results showed that topics for event studies have changed over time. Recent studies heavily focus on visitor experiences, investigating motivation, satisfaction, and behavioral intention, while past studies paid more attention to the economic impact of events or volunteer motivation.

Key words: Research topics; Event management; Content analysis

Introduction

The scale of both events and festivals has increased significantly in recent decades (Jones, 2012). Increasing market demand means a substantial increase in academic research on event management with increasingly diverse topics (Getz, 2012; Lee & Back, 2005). The field of event management currently has several international journals in English: *Event Management, Journal of Convention & Event Tourism, International Journal of Event and Festival Management,* and *International Journal of Event Management Research.*

Reviewing past research efforts can help identify the boundaries of a discipline by revealing research practices and techniques (Baloglu & Assante, 1999). Reid and Andereck (1989) noted that review articles are particularly valuable in a developing field. Thus, a review of current research efforts in event management should help us determine how event management research topics have evolved and consider what future research is needed. Accordingly, a number of review articles with varying perspectives have been published in hospitality and tourism management.

Review articles in hospitality and tourism management use content analysis to assess the state of

Address correspondence to Kwangsoo Park, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Apparel, Design, and Hospitality Management, North Dakota State University, 178(B) E. Morrow Lebedeff Hall, Dept 2610, PO Box 6050, Fargo, ND 58108, USA.
Tel: (701) 231-7355; E-mail: kwangsoo.park@ndsu.edu

hospitality and tourism research. For example, Chon, Evans, and Sutherlin (1989) investigated hospitality management research trends from 1967 to 1987 through content analysis of published articles in four hospitality journals focusing on topics and methodologies. Crawford-Welch and McCleary (1992) also conducted a content analysis of articles in leading hospitality journals. The dominant topic of research in the hospitality industry is human resources. In addition, Bowen and Sparks (1998) reviewed articles in hospitality journals from 1990 to 1997 focusing specifically on hospitality marketing research. Their results indicated key topical areas in consumer behavior, market segmentation, product policy, internal marketing, promotion, personal selling, database marketing, pricing, and distribution.

In spite of increasing numbers of publications and newly emerged journals, only a handful of review articles have evaluated event-, meeting-, and convention-related research. Yoo and Weber (2005) assessed progress in convention tourism research, using content analysis to identify research trends over time and found marketing was the most frequently researched area. Lee and Back (2005) also used content analysis to reveal several other important topics among researchers: association site selection processes, destination marketing, and the economic impact of convention activities. Mair (2012) identified meeting planners, meeting suppliers, attendees, destination, industry general, research reviews, attendees, and types of meeting among articles published in 10 different journals. Previous reviews of research in event management focus on conventions or meetings while relatively few reviews examine topic trends in event management journals. Moreover, data have been collected primarily through computer database searches (e.g., EBSCOhost Research Database, ProQuest, and Google Scholar) with selected key words to identify relevant research in event management.

Investigations of research themes in articles published in event management journals and topic trends apparently have not drawn the attention of event scholars. Thus, this study examined trends in research topics of articles published in event management journals; the authors also make recommendations for future research directions, ultimately suggesting a need for research focused on event management for practitioners who want to better understand current and future trends in planning events.

Methodology

Data

This study analyzed the titles of articles published in event management journals. Four event management academic journals were selected for the study: *Event Management, Journal of Convention & Event Tourism, International Journal of Event and Festival Management,* and *International Journal of Event Management Research*. In addition, titles from the four top-tier journal publications in tourism and hospitality (hereafter called T&H journals include *Annals of Tourism Research, Journal of Travel Research, International Journal of Hospitality Management,* and *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*) were analyzed for comparison. In these four journals, we used a key word search of "event," "festival," "convention," "World cup," "exhibit," "wedding," and "Olympic" to find event-related articles. We collected 463 research articles from the four event management journals and 78 articles from the T&H journals. Book reviews, short communications, conference reports, and editors' notes were excluded. Data collection was completed in April 2013, so articles published after that date are not included in the analysis. This study focuses on the titles of collected articles.

Procedure and Analysis

The data were created by copying titles of all 541 articles and pasting them into a text file to be analyzed. The content analysis was performed using 4,087 words from these 541 titles. Quantitative methodology emphasizes the frequency with which words appear in text. The text data were analyzed using CATPAC II, a text-mining software program based on artificial neural networks (Woelfel, 1993). Ultimately, a series of content analyses by frequency was performed on the data.

Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive results. Note that the period (8, 5, or 3 years) was set by considering the number of articles published, introduction of new journals, and the time of data collection. The results show the total number of articles has increased since the first event management journal,

Table 1

Descriptive Results of Event Management Publication

Years Published	Number of Articles	Number of Words in Titles	Average Number of Words in Each Title
1993–2000 (8 years)	85	646	7.6
2001–2005 (5 years)	82	583	7.1
2006–2010 (5 years)	170	1,183	7.0
2011–2013 (2.25 years)	126	886	7.0
T&H journals 1974–2013 (39.25 years)	78	507	6.5

Festival Management & Event Tourism (former name of *Event Management*), was initially published. Only 10 to 15 event management articles were published annually before 2006. Although the period from 2011 to 2013 is quite limited, the number of articles published annually has increased significantly. The number of articles published annually has increased substantially since 2006, reaching 50 annually in recent years. Seven words on average have been used consistently in titles over the years. Only 78 event management articles were published in the four major T&H journals.

It is not surprising that the most frequently used word in the titles of articles in both event management journals and T&H journals is "event(s)." The words "festival," "case," "study," "impact," "sport," "tourism," "management," and "convention" in that order frequently appear in event management journals as well. In addition, the words "tourism," "impact," "destination," "sport," "convention," "festival," "tourist," and "economic" in that order are also frequently used in T&H journals. "Case" and "study" frequently appear in event management journals, which may show that event management journals have accepted case studies of festivals and events. "Tourism" and "tourist(s)" frequently appear in T&H journals, which may indicate that T&H journals are heavily organized around the theme of tourism. Table 2 shows detailed results. Common words like "the," "is," "of," "that," or "to" were not included in the analyses and tables.

The results from analyzing words in article titles across the years show that "event(s)" and "festival(s)" are heavily used, while "impact," "economic," "special," and "sponsorship" seem to be less frequent recently. However, "satisfaction," "social," "perceptions," and "meeting" are increasingly used in titles. Table 3 presents further results. Figure 1 illustrates topic trends. Words in white boxes are continuously used topics while words in black boxes have newly emerged. Many words like "events," "festival," "special," and "impact" are continuously used. In addition,

Table 2

Comparison of Top 30 Words Used in Event Journals and T&H Journals

Event Management Journals		T&H Journals	
Words	Freq. (%)	Words	Freq. (%)
Event	227 (19.43)	Event	46 (22.22)
Festival	146 (12.50)	Tourism	17 (8.21)
Case	58 (4.97)	Impact	16 (7.73)
Study	58 (4.97)	Destination	9 (4.35)
Impact	51 (4.37)	Sport	9 (4.35)
Sport	48 (4.11)	Convention	8 (3.86)
Tourism	42 (3.60)	Festival	7 (3.38)
Management	37 (3.17)	Tourist	7 (3.38)
Convention	35 (3.00)	Economic	6 (2.90)
Visitor	34 (2.91)	Special	6 (2.90)
Motivation	33 (2.83)	Study	6 (2.90)
Analysis	29 (2.48)	Role	5 (2.42)
Special	29 (2.48)	Analysis	4 (1.93)
Economic	28 (2.40)	Cultural	4 (1.93)
Meeting	28 (2.40)	Decision	4 (1.93)
Satisfaction	23 (1.97)	Effects	4 (1.93)
Perceptions	22 (1.88)	Empirical	4 (1.93)
Development	21 (1.80)	Hotel	4 (1.93)
Experience	21 (1.80)	Image	4 (1.93)
Cultural	20 (1.71)	Involvement	4 (1.93)
Mega	20 (1.71)	Major	4 (1.93)
Social	20 (1.71)	Olympic	4 (1.93)
Attendance	18 (1.54)	Service	4 (1.93)
Community	18 (1.54)	Assessing	3 (1.45)
Games	18 (1.54)	Authenticity	3 (1.45)
Industry	18 (1.54)	Case	3 (1.45)
Olympic	17 (1.46)	Environmental	3 (1.45)
Sponsorship	17 (1.46)	Estimating	3 (1.45)
Destination	16 (1.37)	Examination	3 (1.45)
Factors	16 (1.37)	Exploring	3 (1.45)

Table 3
Trend of 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 (19.05)	Event	40 (17.78)	Event	70 (16.91)	Event	65 (20.38)
Festival	29 (10.62)	Festival	35 (15.56)	Festival	49 (11.84)	Festival	33 (10.34)
Special	19 (6.96)	Impact	15 (6.67)	Convention	21 (5.07)	Study	15 (4.70)
Case	17 (6.23)	Management	13 (5.78)	Study	20 (4.83)	Tourism	14 (4.39)
Impact	14 (5.13)	Case	10 (4.44)	Case	18 (4.35)	Case	13 (4.08)
Economic	14 (5.13)	Study	9 (4.00)	Sport	17 (4.11)	Sport	13 (4.08)
Study	14 (5.13)	Olympic	7 (3.11)	Motivation	17 (4.11)	Meeting	10 (3.13)
Tourism	13 (4.76)	Cultural	7 (3.11)	Visitor	16 (3.86)	Satisfaction	10 (3.13)
Sponsorship	10 (3.66)	Economic	6 (2.67)	Analysis	13 (3.14)	Convention	9 (2.82)
Mega	7 (2.56)	Scale	6 (2.67)	Management	13 (3.14)	Factors	9 (2.82)
Motivation	6 (2.20)	Community	5 (2.22)	Impact	13 (3.14)	Social	9 (2.82)
Visitor	6 (2.20)	Games	5 (2.22)	Meeting	13 (3.14)	Impact	9 (2.82)
Sport	6 (2.20)	Major	5 (2.22)	Experience	10 (2.42)	Visitor	9 (2.82)
Analysis	5 (1.83)	Sport	5 (2.22)	Tourism	10 (2.42)	Perceptions	8 (2.51)
Community	5 (1.83)	Tourism	5 (2.22)	Conference	9 (2.17)	Motivation	8 (2.51)
Games	5 (1.83)	Analysis	4 (1.78)	Satisfaction	9 (2.17)	Analysis	7 (2.19)
Management	5 (1.83)	Attendance	4 (1.78)	Attendance	8 (1.93)	Development	7 (2.19)
Arts	4 (1.47)	Destination	4 (1.78)	Exhibition	8 (1.93)	Exploratory	7 (2.19)
Business	4 (1.47)	Framework	4 (1.78)	Industry	8 (1.93)	Destination	6 (1.88)
Development	4 (1.47)	Measure	4 (1.78)	Development	7 (1.69)	Economic	6 (1.88)
Marketing	4 (1.47)	New	4 (1.78)	Games	7 (1.69)	Industry	6 (1.88)
Olympic	4 (1.47)	Sydney	4 (1.78)	Mega	7 (1.69)	Management	6 (1.88)
Perceptions	4 (1.47)	Attitudes	3 (1.33)	Perceptions	7 (1.69)	Perceived	6 (1.88)
Effect	4 (1.47)	Australian	3 (1.33)	Social	7 (1.69)	Future	5 (1.57)
Benefits	3 (1.10)	Development	3 (1.33)	Special	7 (1.69)	Mega	5 (1.57)
British	3 (1.10)	Evaluation	3 (1.33)	Cultural	6 (1.45)	Residents	5 (1.57)
Cultural	3 (1.10)	International	3 (1.33)	Destination	6 (1.45)	Shanghai	5 (1.57)
Examination	3 (1.10)	Issues	3 (1.33)	Examining	6 (1.45)	Sustainable	5 (1.57)
Local	3 (1.10)	Market	3 (1.33)	Framework	6 (1.45)	Venues	5 (1.57)
Major	3 (1.10)	Music	3 (1.33)	Influence	6 (1.45)	Attendance	4 (1.25)
Total	273 (100.00)	Total	225 (100.00)	Total	414 (100.00)	Total	319 (100.00)

"attendance," "destination," "convention," "satisfaction," "industry," "social," "factors," "exploratory," "perceived," "Shanghai," "residents," "venue," "sustainable," and "future" have begun to appear and continue to be used in current research. The words in the grey colored boxes have not been used, which suggests that these words either are no longer used or synonyms have taken their place.

Discussion

This study provides an overview of the topic trends in event management articles. The results showed that the number of articles have substantially increased over recent decades, a result of increasing market demand for event management research (Getz, 2012; Lee & Back, 2005). In addition, new event management journals have

emerged in recent years (e.g., *International Journal of Event and Festival Management* started to publish in 2005), so the number of published articles has also increased, reflecting an increasing amount of research into event management.

The results also showed that only 78 event management articles were published in the four major T&H journals for the last 40 years. Of course, these T&H journals do not primarily focus on event management but on comprehensive tourism and hospitality subjects. The results indicated that event management journals have published case studies of festivals and events, while T&H journals are heavily organized around the theme of tourism (Barron & Rihova, 2011; Frisby & Getz, 1989; Uysal, Gahan, & Martin, 1993; Xie, 2003). Event management journals focus more on microlevel investigations like case studies. Macrolevel event management
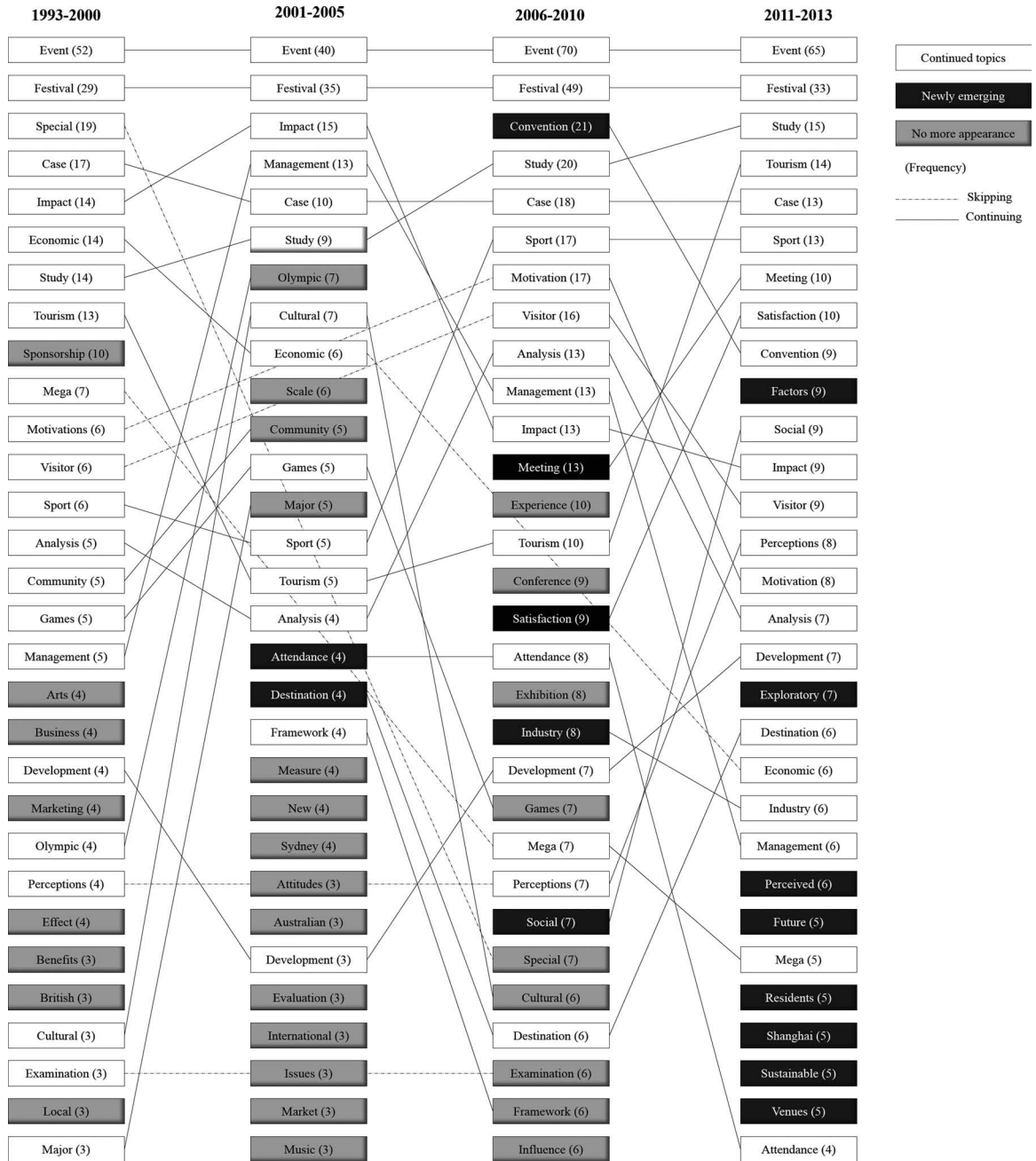
Figure 1. Emerging and disappeared topics.

research is often considered for T&H journals. In addition, the results demonstrated that topics for case studies have changed over time. Recent case studies heavily focus on visitor experiences, investigating motivation, satisfaction, and behavioral intention, while past case studies paid more attention to the economic impact of events or volunteer motivation (e.g., Krohn & Backman, 2011; Papadimitriou, 2013; Ryu, Um, & Lee, 2012; Zhang, Qu, & Ma, 2010). Event management scholars may consider

this trend to decide on topics for research and appropriate target journals. Publishing more event management research in leading T&H journals should help establish multidisciplinary research opportunities for event management research.

The study results also indicated that "event(s)" and "festival(s)" have been predominantly used, while some words have been less frequently used or been increasingly used over time. For example, future authors in event management may want to pay more attention to sports, meetings, and conventions. Newly emerging topics tend to be exploratory or focus on perceptions, residents, sustainability, and venues, and thus suggest directions for future research. Thus, exploring supportive relationships among providers, residents, and visitors could be a possible research idea for the sustainability of an event. Interestingly, "Shanghai," the currently selected Olympic Games city, was a frequently occurring word in this study. Thus, destinations for mega-events could be useful in designing research for publication. In addition, case study methods are useful in investigating event management; it is unlikely that the tradition will be discontinued. Thus, a variety of topics using case study methodology could be for a focus of future studies.

Although "impact," "social," "economic," and "management" have been commonly used, visitor experience is a newly emerging concept, according to our results. Although some research published in the early years of event management focused heavily on the impact of an event, more recent articles from 2006 to 2013 more frequently examine visitor behavior and experience; visitor perceptions and satisfaction have been specifically researched in recent years. In addition, to better understand an event visitor's experiences, scholars in event management may want to consider more interdisciplinary research. As Getz (2010, 2012) recommended, the fundamental concepts of social or cultural impact should get more attention in research as scholars move beyond volunteer motivations and economic impact. Working with anthropology, management, sociology, psychology, and other disciplines could be useful in exploring issues in event and festival research.

In addition, research findings are critical for practitioners in event management. Our findings indicate trends in event management research, but those trends affect how practitioners organize events and festivals to better serve their delegates. Practitioners could gain valuable insight by reviewing these trends in research topics. On the other hand, managers or officials who operate a business related to the Olympic Games, conferences, or exhibitions may want to reframe the terms to follow the trends. Practitioners who seek benchmarks for their venue may want to read event-focused journals. T&H journals are heavily organized to follow tourism subjects, so practitioners may find more theoretical research in event management under destination planning perspectives.

Recommendations for Additional Reviews

Although four event management journals were included in this study to represent event management research, other multidisciplinary journals were excluded, which may disregard accurately investigating current hot topics in event management. Thus, other peer-reviewed and multidisciplinary journals could also be used to allow better explanations of the broad range of event management research topics. Future data collection could consider other variables, such as statistical method, number of authors, sampling method, size of sample (if applicable), and regions where events were held. This study only focuses on a text analysis using titles of articles. Little has been done to determine the research stream in event management despite the proliferation of research in the field, so more reviews using different approaches might be useful for event management scholars. Thematic coding might better explain subject trends. Independent coders could also evaluate the themes of articles to substantiate our conclusions (Neuendorf, 2002). Although the reliability of the analysis of content is important (Mair, 2012), intercoder reliability has barely been mentioned in previous review articles. Eventually, multiple methods may enhance intercoder reliability in review articles.

References

Baloglu, S., & Assante, L. M. (1999). A content analysis of subject areas and research methods used in five hospitality management journals. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, *23*(1), 53–70.

Barron, P., & Rihova, I. (2011). Motivation to volunteer: A case study of the Edinburgh International Magic Festival. *International Journal of Event & Festival Management*, *2*(3), 202–217.

Bowen, J. T., & Sparks, B. A. (1998). Hospitality marketing research: A content analysis and implications for future research. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *17*(2), 125–144.

Crawford-Welch, S., & McCleary, K. W. (1992). An identification of the subject areas and research techniques used in five hospitality-related journals. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *11*(2), 155–167.

Chon, K. S., Evans, M. R., & Sutherlin, D. (1989). Trends in hospitality management literature: A content analysis. *Hospitality Education and Research Journal*, *13*(3), 483–491.

Frisby, W., & Getz, D. (1989). Festival management: A case study perspective. *Journal of Travel Research*, *28*(1), 7–11.

Getz, D. (2010). The nature and scope of festival studies. *International Journal of Event Management Research*, *5*(1), 1–47.

Getz, D. (2012). Event studies: Discourses and future directions. *Event Management*, *16*, 171–187.

Jones, C. (2012). Events and festivals: Fit for the future? *Event Management*, *16*, 107–118.

Krohn, B. D., & Backman, S. J. (2011). Event attributes and the structure of satisfaction: A case study of golf spectators. *Event Management*, *15*(3), 267–277.

Lee, M. J., & Back, K. J. (2005). A review of convention and meeting management research 1990–2003: Identification of statistical methods and subject areas. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, *7*, 1–20.

Mair, J. (2012). A review of business events literature. *Event Management*, *16*(2), 133–141.

Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Papadimitriou, D. (2013). Service quality components as antecedents of satisfaction and behavioral intentions: The case of a Greek Carnival Festival. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, *14*(1), 42–64.

Reid, L. J., & Andereck, K. L. (1989). Statistical analyses use in tourism research. *Journal of Travel Research*, *28*(2), 21–24.

Ryu, S., Um, S., & Lee, T. J. (2012). Antecedents and consequences of tourist satisfaction and dissatisfaction: A case study of a festival in Korea. *Event Management*, *16*(1), 65–76.

Uysal, M., Gahan, L., & Martin, B. S. (1993). An examination of event motivations: A case study. *Festival Management & Event Tourism*, *1*(1), 5–10.

Woelfel, J. (1993). Artificial neural networks in policy research: A current assessment. *Journal of Communication*, *43*(1), 63–80.

Xie, P. F. (2003). Visitors' perceptions of authenticity at a rural heritage festival: A case study. *Event Management*, *8*(3), 151–160.

Yoo, J., & Weber, K. (2005). Progress in convention tourism research. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, *29*, 194–222.

Zhang, L., Qu, H., & Ma, J. (2010). Examining the relationship of exhibition attendees' satisfaction and expenditure: The case of two major exhibitions in China. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, *11*(2), 100–118.