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# Planning and Leveraging Event Portfolios: Towards a Holistic Theory

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## ABSTRACT

This conceptual paper seeks to advance the discourse on the leveraging and legacies of events by examining the planning, management, and leveraging of event portfolios. This examination shifts the common focus from analyzing single events towards multiple events and purposes that can enable cross-leveraging among different events in pursuit of attainment and magnification of specific ends. The following frameworks are proposed: (1) event portfolio planning and leveraging, and (2) analyzing events networks and inter-organizational linkages. These frameworks are intended to provide, at this infancy stage of event portfolios research, a solid ground for building theory on the management of different types and scales of events within the context of a portfolio aimed to obtain, optimize and sustain tourism, as well as broader community benefits.

Keywords: event portfolio, holistic approach, event leverage, multi-purpose development, event policy, sustainability

## 1. Introduction

Although there is a burgeoning literature on the use of events in tourism development, the predominant interest of event tourism research focuses on singular mega-events and their capacity to generate a flow of impacts/benefits to destinations (e.g., Dansero & Puttilli, 2010; Florek & Insch, 2011; Fourie & Santana-Gallego, 2011; Hall, 1992; Ritchie & Smith, 1991; Smith, 2012; Weed, 2008). This extensive interest is broadly framed within the notion of legacy, which has brought into the fore the positive and negative impacts or legacies of major events (Mangan & Dyreson, 2009; Preuss, 2007).

While this discourse continues to grow advocating for conceptions of planned legacies (Leopkey & Parent, 2012), it is often overlooked that the sustainability of benefits derived from one-off mega-events is inherently limited because of their one-time temporal character. Conversely, the massive investment and construction of facilities may have long-term detrimental implications for the host city and surrounding communities (Hall & Hodges, 1996; Prasad, 1999; Roche, 1994; Searle, 2002). This stresses the need to find the means for cross-leveraging mega-events with other smaller-scale events and elements of the host city's product and service mix so that benefits are sustained and an integrated set of resources is used optimally.

From this standpoint, it is imperative to reconsider the common focus on single events and purposes that they serve and draw attention to multiple events and purposes that can enable cross-leveraging by fostering synergies among different events and their stakeholders in pursuit of attainment and magnification of specific ends (Ziakas & Costa, 2011a). To do so, the development of an event portfolio capable of reaching a wide range

of audiences (Chalip, 2004; Getz, 2008) and serving multiple purposes (Ziakas, 2013) constitutes a fruitful strategy for attaining the sustainability of event benefits and optimal use of resources in the provision that each event in the portfolio complements or reinforces the benefits bestowed by other events (Ziakas & Costa, 2011b). This can enable destinations to diversify and enrich their tourism product, build their image/brand, tackle seasonality, foster social networks supporting tourism, and generally, help achieve sustainable tourism development. The potential of event portfolios has yet to be demonstrated, as they represent a relatively novel conception within the field of tourism, and subsequently, there is scant research in examining the role of event portfolios as a means for tourism development.

Destinations, however, gradually are adopting an event portfolio approach. For example, Edinburgh in Scotland explicitly follows a portfolio strategy in managing its calendar of events, which aims to establish the city as one of the most prominent festival destinations in the world. Likewise, the Gold Coast in Australia has developed a formal event portfolio comprised of different genres in order to achieve economic, tourism and community benefits. On the other hand, Innsbruck in Austria follows a more specialized strategy capitalizing on its infrastructure to host a portfolio of large-scale sport events, while Gainesville in Florida and Auckland in New Zealand appear to both have informal but well-supported portfolios of sport and cultural events that are leveraged for their tourism development. These examples illustrate the diversity of approaches taken by cities to manage and leverage their series of events. How can we understand these emerging event portfolios and optimize their management? Given the prominence and capacities of mega-events, critical inquiry on event portfolios has to be mindful of them

and seek to integrate them into portfolios.

The ensuing purpose of this conceptual paper is to advance the discourse by focusing on the holistic planning and management of event portfolios. This holistic approach shifts the focus from the singular examination of events towards the potential of creating and harnessing cross-leveraging opportunities among different events. The first investigation of an event portfolio in the academic literature is the ethnographic research by Ziakas (2007). This research generated a series of studies examining the ways that the organic event portfolio of the rural community Fort Stockton in Texas serves community, tourism and economic objectives (Ziakas, 2010, 2013; Ziakas & Costa, 2010a, 2011b). Based on this research, the following conceptual frameworks are proposed: (1) event portfolio planning and leveraging, and (2) analyzing events networks and inter-organizational linkages. As such, this paper constitutes a basis towards generating a holistic theory for the study of event portfolios. The proposed frameworks help explain the event portfolio as a phenomenon and theorize in practical terms, its planning and management. Thus, the frameworks are intended to provide, at this infancy stage of event portfolios research, a solid ground for building distinctive event-based theory that explains this phenomenon and guides practitioners in its effective management. To illustrate the versatile opportunities of event portfolios, the paper discusses as a case in point the potential of cross-leveraging sport mega-events with smaller-scale events, also drawing implications for cross-leveraging the planned legacies of mega-events in synergy with portfolios.

## 2. Event Portfolio as a Multi-faceted Phenomenon

But what exactly is an event portfolio? An event portfolio is a strategic tool rather than a random collection of miscellaneous events that are hosted in a community. It is the assemblage of a series of interrelated events in terms of resources, theming, and markets, which are strategically patterned on the basis of their operational and thematic relatedness. In particular, relatedness refers to the ways that events complement one another. As Ziakas (2010, 2013) demonstrated, relatedness may occur through: i) capitalization on capacity of an array of events to engender markets, ii) transfer of knowledge in organizing events effectively and efficiently, iii) utilization of theming that is symbiotically connected among different events to maximize their impact, and iv) the mobilization of shared resources, as well as v) volunteer pools that can facilitate event implementations.

In general, the potential benefits of an event portfolio versus single or one-off large-scale events do not concern only the sustainability of event impacts. As Ziakas and Costa (2011b) explained, they also concern the variety of different events in a portfolio, which can target and reach diverse market segments, hence, increasing the size of a host community's events market. Furthermore, the inclusion of different event types in a portfolio can help event organizers respond to different community issues and reach varied segments of the population by appealing to people's different interests. In addition, different events when bundled in a portfolio can act as hooks for one another and hence bring together segments of the population that might not otherwise meet. On the whole, an event portfolio incorporated in the development policies of cities and regions can yield a range of social and economic benefits (Ziakas & Costa, 2011b). Accordingly, an

increasing academic interest emerges underscoring that if cities employ a balanced event portfolio strategy, they can move from being cities with events to become ‘eventful cities’ (Richards & Palmer, 2010). Within this context, the tourism objectives of event portfolios should be embedded into a broader sustainable development agenda so that cross-sectoral synergies are fostered, thereby enabling the attainment of multiple goals.

A balanced event portfolio strategy can be sustained by the reach and frequency of events and the various target markets (i.e., local, regional, national, international) among events of different magnitudes (Ziakas & Costa, 2011a). Specifically, small-scale events can be built in a portfolio reinforcing the benefits of large-scale events and fostering the human capital that is necessary for them. In addition, one-off events can be included in the destination’s portfolio to foster repeat visitation and flow-on tourism (Taks, Chalip, Green, Kesenne, & Martyn, 2009). This means that sport mega-events can play a strategic role within a host city’s portfolio as long as they are cross-leveraged with other events in the portfolio and the host community’s overall product mix.

The concept of leverage within the event management literature shifts the focus from event impacts to event strategies. It refers to those activities, which need to be undertaken around the event itself, and those which seek to maximize the long-term benefits from events (Chalip, 2004). This strategic approach entails an ex ante and analytic mindset focusing on why and how intended event outcomes can occur, thereby explaining the processes and strategic means that can enable their attainment. From this perspective, events should be seen as opportunities for interventions; not interventions in themselves (Chalip, 2004). As O’Brien (2006) suggests, events and their opportunities are merely the seed capital; what hosts do with that capital is the key to realizing sustainable

long-term legacies. Recognizing that events are assets brings forth the need to cross-leverage them with the set of a host destination's assets and resources.

On the whole, event portfolio cross-leveraging may be distinguished into three basic types: (a) cross-leveraging the different recurring events of the portfolio, (b) cross-leveraging the whole portfolio with one-off mega- or large-scale events, and (c) cross-leveraging the portfolio of recurring events and/or one-off events with the host community's product and service mix. The overarching goal of all types of cross-leveraging is to enable the development of synergistic means that aim to attain, magnify, and sustain the benefits and planned legacies of events.

Despite the potential that an event portfolio strategy holds, there is a paucity of research on how to develop, manage and leverage event portfolios. This lack of knowledge inhibits the understanding of the ways that disparate events (of different type and scale) can co-exist and effectively be incorporated into a portfolio. The lack of understanding concerns primarily the dichotomy between sport and cultural events. For example, Garcia (2012) explained the challenges for using the arts and creating synergy with sport events. Nevertheless, as Ziakas and Costa (2011b) noted, the line of demarcation between sport and cultural events is, perhaps, drawn more distinctly within the academic literature rather than in host communities, which view both as having a valuable contribution to their development strategies. To achieve the integration of events in development strategies, Ziakas and Costa (2010b) suggested that attention needs to be shifted from merely demarcating insulated taxonomies of events toward capitalizing on what is valued by local people in different event performances, as well as examining ways in which the experience can be expressed differently through the synergy of



different genres. In doing so, the academic study of events would do well to transcend current taxonomies and focus on the event meanings for local people.

Similarly, events are divided in the literature in terms of their scale and magnitude demarcating large-scale and small-scale events without however prompting the development of synergies between them. Another dichotomy is between the economic and social development purposes sought through events. Nevertheless as it has been argued, the employment of cross-leveraging strategies within the context of a portfolio can integrate the economic and social purposes (Ziakas, 2013). To do so, however, academic research needs to shed light on the planning, management and leveraging of event portfolios.

### 3. Conceptual Grounds

Getz (2005, 2008) was the first scholar who advocated the need for a balanced portfolio strategy. Drawing upon a business perspective (e.g., Day, 1977; Elton, Gruber, Brown, & Goetzmann, 2006; Henderson, 1970) originating from Markowitz's (1952) pioneering work on portfolio selection of financial investments, Getz contended that the event portfolio approach is similar to how a company strategically evaluates and develops its line of products. From this standpoint, Getz suggested a comprehensive model to describe an event tourism portfolio approach based on the functionality of different events (i.e., mega, hallmark, regional and local events) and their evaluation of the extent to which each event can achieve certain economic and tourism goals. While this is instrumentally a prudent goal-driven and value-based approach, as Getz admitted, it tends to overemphasize 'the degree to which certain economic, tourism or political goals can be

met through hosting events, hence representing a discourse dominated by specific developmental and political assumptions that might run counter to an events strategy based on fostering community development, culture, sport, leisure, health or other aims' (Getz, 2008, p. 408).

Along the same lines, Chalip (2004) ensued by developing the general economic leverage model of sport events and envisaging the leveraging of an event portfolio to optimize the host community benefits. In terms of destination marketing, Chalip and Costa (2005) claimed that the strategic incorporation of sport events into destination branding requires that each event be cross-leveraged with others in the destination's event portfolio. In this regard, the value of an event portfolio can be measured by the capacity to build its brand for residents and tourists alike (Chalip, 2005). Although these conceptual developments echo the predominant economic and business orientation of events, the leveraging approach puts forward the need to employ certain strategies for using multiple events in order to achieve multiple purposes. In this vein, the pressing issue is how the economic and social purposes of events can be equally represented and balanced.

In addressing this problem, Ziakas and Costa (2011a) built on the above discourse seeking to integrate the different perspectives that epitomize the various dimensions and subsequent aims of events. Thus, they conceptualized event portfolios as multi-purpose developmental tools, which are capable of generating economic, socio-cultural and other benefits for host communities by assembling different event stakeholders in a network and serving multiple purposes through the employment of joint strategies. As they emphasized, this requires that the different events be cross-leveraged within the portfolio

for multi-purpose development. The challenge then for event planners is to find the ways that disparate events in a portfolio can be synergized in order to balance and optimize intended economic and social outcomes. On this basis, Ziakas and Costa highlighted the instrumental value of a holistic planning approach that incorporates as well as balances the economic and social goals of different events and proposed a comprehensive research framework for studying event portfolios. The conceptualization of event portfolios as a tool for multi-purpose development departs essentially from the common business-oriented approach that views events predominantly as products. Instead, it embraces the socio-cultural character of events appreciating their capacity to serve the existential and ontological needs of people and host communities.

The major implication of a holistic planning approach is that it can enable the strategic integration of events in a host community's product/service mix and incorporation into sustainable development strategies through the creation of alliances aimed at maximizing event outcomes. Ziakas and Costa (2011a) stressed the need for building a multi-dimensional comprehensive framework for the study of event portfolios by integrating specialized areas such as marketing, policy, leverage, and tourism-related aspects of event portfolios. Given that the literature on events derives from distinct lines of inquiry, the theoretical foundations of studying event portfolios need to be built upon an integrative framework. Moreover, since event portfolios are a non-institutionalized phenomenon within the innate fragmentation of events, if viewed from insulated foci, they will perpetuate the current divisions such as sport versus cultural events. These dichotomies constrain the understanding of complementarities, interdependencies and subsequent cultivation of synergies between seemingly disparate events.

To study events holistically in a portfolio, two schools of thought are pertinent: the socio-cultural anthropological perspective (e.g., Geertz, 1973; Handelman, 1990; Turner, 1974) and the managerial-economic perspective (e.g., Chalip, 2004, 2006; Getz 2005, 2008; Hede, 2008). The integration of these perspectives can bridge the gap between processes and outcomes of events revealing their interconnections (Quinn, 2009), and building knowledge on the ways that events can be utilized to generate social and economic benefits. The notion of social capital can enable the connection between social and economic purposes of events on the basis that an investment in social relations may derive expected returns in the market place (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 2001). From this perspective, the objectives for tourism/economic or social development can be part of a comprehensive and sustainable policy that employs joint strategies to strengthen the social networks of the host community and foster inter-organizational cooperation among different event stakeholders.

Consequently, the incorporation of different events into a portfolio needs to be driven by an integrative scope that plans community, economic, sport and tourism development in unison. This can enable cross-leveraging efforts for each of the above purposes and foster synergies between them. As Ziakas and Costa (2011a) underlined, the primary strategic opportunity that an event portfolio offers is that it lays a foundation where a common approach may be undertaken among different policy communities and stakeholders by working together to cross-leverage all the different events that are included in a host community's portfolio. Hence, the optimum potential of an event portfolio is to function as a mechanism of integration bringing together the different event stakeholders. To realize this potential, academic research should seek to identify the

means by which host communities can adopt and implement a holistic event portfolio strategy.

Towards this direction, the anthropological work on events reveals the dynamic socio-cultural processes that ground and drive the universal human need for expression through events affecting their meaning, implementation, and outcomes. In particular, Geertz (1973) contended that events are dramatic stories that people tell themselves about themselves. Turner (1974) argued that events can be conceptualized as commentaries and critiques on, or as celebrations of, different dimensions of human relatedness and may constitute various levels of verbal and nonverbal codes, a set of meta-languages whereby a group of community not merely expresses itself but, more actively, tries to understand itself in order to change itself. Likewise, Handelman (1990) theorized events as dense concentrations of symbols and locations of communication that convey participants into versions of social order.

On these grounds, a series of events in a portfolio can be viewed as symbolic meta-commentaries that convey versions of the social order. Such an understanding can help event planners and host communities to build and epitomize in a portfolio the multiple realities, meanings, and layers of social order that different events represent. In this respect, the development and leveraging of an event portfolio should be pertinent to the host community's public discourse addressing salient community issues and providing, through joint strategies, opportunities for the expression of different versions of social order (Ziakas & Costa, 2011a, 2011b). In other words, the outcomes and sustainability of an event portfolio can be determined from the extent to which it fits in the host community's public discourse and socio-cultural fabric.

#### 4. Event Portfolio Planning and Leveraging

The planning and leveraging of event portfolios is a complex undertaking since the involvement of multiple stakeholders who have different or conflicting needs, interests and expectations (Buch, Milne, & Dickson, 2011; Crespi-Vallbona & Richards, 2007; Getz, Andersson, & Larson, 2007; Parent, 2008) may create serious challenges for their management. The main challenge is to assemble a web of fragmented event stakeholders and to foster collaboration towards devising common strategies for a series of different events (Ziakas & Costa, 2011b). For example, the fragmentation of the sport and tourism sectors challenges the development of synergies for sport tourism development (Devine, Boyd, & Boyle, 2010; Weed, 2001, 2003). Ziakas and Costa (2011b) argued that the number of risk factors and issues affecting an event portfolio can be dramatically increased as the number of events grows and many stakeholders are involved. When this occurs, it is possible that the antithetical values and interests may compromise the authentic character of events (Chalip, 2006; Sack & Johnson, 1996; Whitson & Macintosh, 1996). The continuing discourse on the authenticity of events addresses the effects of politicalization, commercialization and modernization and directs attention on the event characteristics that can foster their authenticity (Boorstin, 1961; Getz, 2008; Hinch & Higham, 2005; McCartney & Osti, 2007; Picard & Robinson, 2006).

Although the aforementioned challenges constrain the development, management and leveraging of event portfolios, there is great potential for formulating and implementing joint cross-leveraging strategies and tactics to enhance synergies among

different events to serve multiple purposes. For instance, the case of Fort Stockton's organic event portfolio (Ziakas, 2007) as well as the event strategies of the Scottish capital Edinburgh (City of Edinburgh, 2007) and the Australian premier resort Gold Coast (City of Gold Coast, 2011) exemplify that the emerging portfolios of these host communities are based on their commonly accepted vision about strategically harnessing the economic and social value of events, which enables disparate events (and their stakeholders) to be brought together to achieve multiple policy purposes. Accordingly, Ziakas and Costa (2011a) argued that the common ground for building community capacity to capitalize on an event portfolio is to develop an internal logic that allows assembling events as well as facilitating inter-organizational collaboration among different event stakeholders. Moreover, Ziakas and Costa (2011b) noted that strategic planning is required to prevent the inherent risks of events' relatedness such as exhausting local resources, hosting monotonously repetitive event elements or exceeding demand for events. Finally, the triple bottom line (Hede, 2008; O'Brien & Chalip, 2008) should be at the core of an event portfolio strategy in order to balance the economic and social outcomes of events and facilitate the fair distribution of benefits and harmonious dispersal of economic, social and environmental impacts.

To tackle the challenges that constrain the development and management of event portfolios, a comprehensive planning and leveraging framework is needed. To this end, a number of underlying issues are put forward in this section following a realist approach or adaptive theory (Layder, 1990, 1993) that addresses the critical portfolio processes and gradually builds on the identified issues as it develops the proposed framework. This theorization was guided by the existing empirical evidence (Ziakas, 2007), rather than

limited by it, since more data are needed to be collected through future research in order to test, substantiate and generalize the suggested theoretical insights. Thus, the theoretical approach employed in this paper seeks to explain the phenomenon of event portfolio planning and leveraging by drawing inferences to the best explanation (Haig, 1995). In short, the proposed conceptual frameworks of this paper are ever-developing entities, and not perfected products, as they were generated and appraised by an abductive reasoning process of a realist and explanatory inferentialism (Haig, 1995) that focuses on understanding common causes and patterns by making inference to the best explanation (Lipton, 2001).

#### 4.1 Issue No. 1: Factors Affecting Event Portfolio Planning and Leveraging

A starting point is to identify the main factors that determine the processes and outcomes of strategic planning and leveraging. The contextual dynamics of a host community can organically synthesize the event portfolio and the conditions that facilitate or constrain event implementations and cross-leveraging of events in the portfolio. It is thus proposed that the context comprises a standard set of factors, which affect event portfolio planning. These include the institutional structures, patterns of social relations, local resources, and market demand, as shown in Figure 1.

[Figure 1]

In particular, an institutional structure establishes the formal organizational framework where events are planned, implemented and leveraged. The patterns of social relations shape the informal relationships of social networks and the character of social interaction that may foster the essence, cooperation, and leveraging efforts of events. Local resources comprise the host community's capitals (i.e., human, social, natural,



financial, etc.) that can be deployed on event hosting and cross-leveraging strategies. Market demand exhibits the existence of interest in local or non-local markets where audiences have been identified as potential event attendees. Based on these main factors, host communities should devise suitable event portfolio strategies compatible with their generic policy objectives. In doing so, however, it is essential to understand the event portfolio planning and policy-making processes. In other words, under what conditions does the interaction of event planners and policy-makers foster the synergistic goals and scope of an event portfolio?

#### 4.2 Issue No. 2: Event Portfolio Planning and Policy-Making

As shown in Figure 2, the generic policy-making of a host community is at the interface with event planning. The concepts of policy universe and policy community are particularly useful to delineate the interacting domains of event planning and generic policy-making. The realm of intersecting responsibilities and common interests shapes an informal network that influences event portfolio leveraging. The policy universe is the large population of actors and independent interest groups interacting and competing with each other for influence over policy (Weed, 2001). The interaction and interdependencies between event stakeholders and the policy community that deals with sectoral issues comprise the event policy network. The policy network can be understood as the linking process, the outcome of those exchanges within a policy community or between a number of policy communities (Weed, 2001).

[Figure 2]

Within this context, it is proposed that the event policy network should view and treat an event portfolio as a strategic opportunity capable of promoting joint tactical

planning and enhancing mutual relationships in order to accomplish multiple policy purposes. On this basis, the integrated strategic planning for leveraging an event portfolio can set common policy purposes for economic, tourism, social and sport development. Nevertheless, the question arising at this point is how the integrated strategic planning can be effectively applied?

#### 4.3 Issue No. 3: Event Portfolio Implementation

The organization of events and implementation of cross-leveraging strategies entails the co-ordination of a complex web of structural interdependencies. To shed light on these grounds that an event policy network operates, it is necessary to identify the major constituents that impact on event portfolio implementation. It is thus proposed that event portfolio implementation entails a number of organizational antecedents and involves a series of implementation parameters (Ziakas, 2007, 2013), as shown in Figure 3.

[Figure 3]

##### 4.3.1 Organizational Antecedents

The organizational antecedents that a host community should seek to build and foster in order to effectively and efficiently leverage its event portfolio include the following: 1) event-network embeddedness, 2) inter-organizational reciprocity, 3) event integrity, and 4) participatory inter-connectedness.

##### 1) Event-Network Embeddedness

An event policy network must have strong, enduring relationships between event stakeholders and the policy universe. As Granovetter (1985) argued, economic action is embedded in the structure of social relations between actors including kinship links, and

hence, the organizations operate embedded within a broad social nexus. Consequently, in the business context, firms are embedded in local relationships. In this regard, embeddedness is seen as the degree to which firms are embedded in local economies through relationships with competitors, customers, suppliers, regional business organizations, and public-sector forums (Markusen, 1994).

On these grounds alike, the event-network embeddedness refers to either the overlap between social and economic linkages that influence event implementations and leveraging strategies or the nesting of event-related linkages within other social relationships. In this context, actors' behaviors are embedded to the extent that they tend to deal with partners who have common interests, or if their exchange partners tend to deal with each other. In other words, this means practically that event organizations should be embedded into the socio-cultural, political, and economic structures of a host community so that they are given the power and autonomy to act on problems, distribute funds, and design as well as implement event policy programs.

## 2) Inter-organizational Reciprocity

On the basis that event organizations are embedded into the social structures, it would be easier for a host community to achieve the deployment and common utilization of resources, facilities, skills, knowledge, and human labor when it comes to organize its event portfolio. In other words, this means that different organizations should help each other and have access to information and resources in the hosting of events. As evidenced in the organization studies literature, the establishment of trust and moral obligation is identified as a critical component in the development of inter-organizational relationships (Uzzi, 1997; Zaheer, McEvily, & Perrone, 1998). This fosters reciprocity among

organizations and ensures mutually beneficial and long-standing relationships, thereby, strengthening their collaborative relationships (Oliver, 1990; Podolny & Page, 1998; Provan, Veazie, Staten, & Teufel-Shone, 2005).

The enhancement of collaboration patterns by the existing levels of trust and reciprocity (Provan, Nakama, Veazie, Teufel-Shone, & Huddleston, 2003) functions as a means to generate social capital (Podolny & Page, 1998). Likewise, the event portfolio can become a space for the generation of social capital by developing and enhancing relationships of trust, mutual recognition and obligation as well as assistance among organizations. To do so, inter-organizational linkages should promote collaboration and reciprocity that supports joint decision-making and problem-solving in event implementations and cross-leveraging strategies.

### 3) Event Integrity

Events are both expressive practices with civic value and collective products with commercial value. As such, an event portfolio can be viewed as a platform of assorted products that add civic or economic value to each other. What may add distinctive value to a series of events is the integrity that characterizes their essence, activities and implementation processes. For tangible commercial products, product integrity has both an internal and an external dimension. Internal integrity refers to the consistency between a product's function and its structure. External integrity refers to the consistency between a product's performance and customers' expectations (Clark & Fujimoto, 1990).

The integrity of an event portfolio refers to the consistency of all events expressing authentic community values and responding to participants' needs. Such a consistency should be maintained in the planning, design and implementation of the

different events by setting the same quality standards. The internal dimension means that events should seek to have consistent cultural fit with the host community. Organizationally, internal integrity across the event portfolio can be achieved mainly through inter-organizational coordination within the event policy network. Efforts to enhance internal integrity should be at the core of every policy by event organizers and host communities when organizing an event portfolio. The external dimension of event integrity means that event implementations must consistently seek to meet the expectations of participants. Similarly, external integrity should be at the core of every effort by event organizers and host communities to accommodate and satisfy the needs of potential audiences across an event portfolio.

#### 4) Participatory Inter-connectedness

The hosting of recurring events can foster an enhanced sense of pride and quality of life for the host community's residents (Chalip, 2006; Gibson, Kaplanidou, & Kang, 2012). Capitalizing on this capacity, event organizers should seek to provide opportunities for event participants and volunteers to experience esoteric development and to (re)construct a shared meaning through their active and reflexive participatory inter-connectedness with each other in the events' activities. Within this context, relationships should be fostered among event organizers, volunteers and participants creating more meaningful and deep social ties.

Since an event portfolio may comprise events with different themes and activities appealing to diverse target markets, in the same respect, the input from community for these events should seek to involve volunteers from diverse segments of the host community's population. Such an approach may mobilize residents to volunteer for the

organization of events, helping to make them feel an integral part of the events, and improving them overall. In turn, this may contribute to the revitalization and enhancement of a host community's social capital.

Participatory inter-connectedness across an event portfolio may foster the social value of events by enhancing civic engagement. The extent to which autonomous individuals participate in creating their leisure, rather than simply consuming it, the more likely it is that the resulting social capital will contribute to strong citizenship (Hemingway, 1999). Thus, the transferability of the social capital generated in events to active citizenship is possible. The link between social capital and citizenship lies in the norms of behavior, the set of socially constructed practices learned in one context and then generalized to other contexts (Glover & Hemingway, 2005).

Connections among individuals and the social networks and norms that arise from them will be more powerful when embedded in a dense network of reciprocal social relations (Putnam, 2001). Reciprocity exists not as a general cultural norm, but rather as an expectation attached to membership in a specific network (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). The creation and enhancement of social capital depends on the strengthening of social ties by building relationships among people. What really matters is not merely nominal membership but active and involved membership (Putnam, 2001). The positive consequences of sociability (Portes, 1998) can be leveraged by enhancing the participatory inter-connectedness throughout events in a portfolio. Leisure can be a significant arena for the sociability on which social capital depends (Green & Haines, 2002; Rohe, 2004). Therefore, an event portfolio should provide opportunities for more unfettered social interaction and the creation of potentially richer social ties in which

social capital can be generated.

#### 4.3.2 Implementation Parameters

The existence and cultivation of organizational antecedents in an event policy network does not automatically enable it to strategically organize and leverage an event portfolio with an integrated policy mindset. There are a number of implementation parameters affecting integrated strategic planning. These need to be meticulously managed in order to foster and operationalize a holistic approach. As it has been illustrated (Ziakas, 2007, 2013), the implementation parameters for the strategic planning and leveraging of an event portfolio are the following: 1) utilitarian scope, 2) dialectical expressivity, 3) symbiotic polymorphism, and 4) resource inter-changeability.

##### 1) Utilitarian Scope

The implementation of an event portfolio needs a driving force capable of bringing together an event policy network where event stakeholders can meet their individual interests by accomplishing a collective purpose. Utilitarian scope refers to the common sense of purpose that guides the formulation of event leveraging strategies and legitimizes them to the public discourse. It is an expression of the host communities' needs and problems and its conscious effort to utilize different events for a defined set of purposes. The policy universe defines the purposes but since events require participation of the whole community, the effectiveness of policies to cross-leverage events depends on the extent to which the utilitarian scope is understood and relates to the vast majority of the host community. When this happens, it is easier for stakeholders of different events in the network to work together towards the accomplishment of a common purpose. In other words, utilitarian scope is the unifying factor that puts an event policy network to work

by bringing event stakeholders together from different policy communities to cross-leverage events for a common purpose.

## 2) Dialectical Expressivity

The extent to which a grounding ontological essence permeates the series of events, an event portfolio can become something more than the functional appendage of a host community's policy universe that serves its respective policy purposes. Dialectical expressivity refers to the set of meta-languages that event participants communicate through the series of events symbolically enunciating a dialogic meta-voice on issues of existential nature. Events thus appeal to the existential needs of their participants and a host community at large. The expressive practices that take place in events help to continue the ongoing metaphoric discourse in the host community. This allows a community to express itself symbolically through the variety of events appealing to audiences with different interest. In turn, this metaphoric expression may affirm, contest or transform social conditions. In other words, the dialectical expressivity conveys a set of meta-messages that frame a metaphoric dialogue through a series of events. This invokes what constitutes the host community and reflects the network of stakeholders that are involved in events. As long as the dialectical expressivity represents all the event stakeholders who are in the network, the implementation of common cross-leveraging strategies for different events within the portfolio is possible since these can be grounded on the stakeholders' ontological needs and concerns.

## 3) Symbiotic Polymorphism

The implementation of an event portfolio requires the provision of relational linkages that may connect a series of events and their stakeholders to be in mutual



relation to one another. Symbiotic polymorphism refers to the salubrious and sustainable multiformity of events in the portfolio that links different event elements, themes, and metaphoric meanings into a coherent whole, hence, representing and connecting the respective functional domains. The different elements of events may coexist in line with a core of common elements that feature in different events. These can help establish continuities between different events while appealing to diverse target audiences. The common elements can also reinforce polysemy as they exist in a series of events and can help people instantiate the meaning of events. In this respect, the relational substance of events may connect people's experiences through a central idea and the themes that the events convey. In essence, the different themes, elements, and subsequent target audiences shape the polymorphism of an event portfolio. The common elements and relational meanings enable the symbiosis within the portfolio and event policy network where different event stakeholders take part.

#### 4) Resource Inter-Changeability

The effective and efficient management of an integrated set of host community's resources plays a critical role in the implementation of an event portfolio. Resource interchangeability refers to the capacity of using the same resources for different events within the portfolio. This requires communication, flexibility and common understanding of resource interdependencies. The availability of scarce resources for a number of different events may put pressure on resource allocation and lead event stakeholders to conflicts. For this reason, the inter-changeability of resources among different events in the portfolio should be grounded on the utilitarian scope, dialectical expressivity, and symbiotic polymorphism that characterize an event portfolio and bring different

stakeholders together. The understanding of multifaceted and intersecting purposes, interests, and needs apparent in an event policy network is the basis to guide and facilitate the common utilization of a host community's scarce resources for hosting events.

#### 4.4 Event Portfolio Planning and Leveraging Framework

In bringing together the factors and processes that affect the implementation of event portfolios, Figure 4 illustrates a composite conceptual framework of event portfolio planning and leveraging. This framework integrates into a coherent whole the key functional, societal and policy aspects of event portfolios, thereby explaining how their interrelationships can shape the planning, implementation and leveraging of portfolios. Clearly, this theorization in order to thoroughly substantiate its claims needs deductive research for empirically testing the hypothesized factors, processes and interrelationships. Thus, each of the posited conceptions and viewpoints needs further examination especially with regard to the strategic means and tactics that can be initiated to accomplish event-leveraging objectives. This line of inquiry should seek to explain and inform event planners for the possibilities and tools that they can utilize to optimize benefits derived from event portfolios, to possibly prevent any unintended consequences, and to resolve emerging conflicts.

[Figure 4]

The complexity of this research endeavor is challenging, especially if we consider the fragmented landscape of leisure, sport, recreation, arts and culture and the diverse array of planned events that they represent, in many cases, with opposing values. But perhaps, here is where the core function of an event portfolio lies, bringing the different events of a host community closer and incorporating them into an inclusionary

framework of self-representation and collaboration. This can provide the diverse segments of the population a space for expression so that they can co-exist and understand each other rather than being entrenched in logics of antipathies.

#### 5. Analyzing Events Networks and Inter-Organizational Linkages

As it has been emphasized in this paper, the planning, management, and leveraging of an event portfolio is affected and ultimately shaped by relationships among a range of stakeholders that include organizing entities, supporting public sector bodies, businesses, voluntary groups, and community alliances. All these groups of event stakeholders interact within a complex inter-organizational network (Getz *et al.*, 2007; Stokes, 2007) and often collaborate in their effort to mobilize community resources and create synergies among different organizations. As such, host communities seeking to capitalize on an event portfolio should be capable of fostering the patterns of collaboration in inter-organizational relationships that facilitate the implementation of the portfolio and the attainment of its objectives. For example, in the case of Fort Stockton it was shown that the development and operation of its event portfolio is enabled by an informal inter-organizational network comprised of local organizations and entities (e.g., tourism board, recreation and athletic departments, chamber of commerce, museums, etc.) that collaborate and share common resources to support the staging of different events (Ziakas, 2007; Ziakas & Costa, 2010a).

In general, networks refer to the development of linkages between actors where linkages become more formalized towards maintaining mutual interests (Nelson, 1989). The nature of such linkages exists on a continuum ranging from loose linkages to

coalitions and more lasting structural arrangements and relationships (Roberts & Hall, 2001). To understand the ways that networks can enable collaboration and shape or embed an event portfolio in the host community's structures for tourism, economic, social or sport development, it is useful to delineate and explicate the inter-organizational linkages of an event portfolio network. Such an events network is randomly formed as organizations interact to stage and cross-leverage events. Due to the informal nature of events networks, it is difficult to demarcate their scope, and in turn, understand the way they operate. To start investigating event portfolio networks, Ziakas and Costa (2011a, p. 414) suggested the following definition:

An events network is the non-institutionalized array of organizations that make decisions and take actions regarding planning and implementation of events in a host community as well as tend to engage in relationships that facilitate their goals. To the extent that collaboration patterns among the participating organizations are characterized by reciprocity and trust, synergies among events can be developed and strengthened within the portfolio in order to maximize the benefits attained for the host community.

The above definition takes into account that an events network is an informal group of organizations that are integral to a core process and establish informal relationships with other members of that group in order to achieve their individual goals. This understanding of an event portfolio network is important for the leisure, sport, and tourism domains, since all of them operate in an invisible and complex network of actors that engage in different types of relationships in order to provide their services. The definition also recognizes that an events network is a serendipitous system characterized by individual interests, which make the process of establishing ties arduous. As Kilduff and Tsai (2003) explain, in serendipitous network processes, individual actors make

choices about who to connect with and what to transact without guidance from any central network agent concerning goals or strategy and form ties or partnerships based on their own interests. Consequently, events networks have decentralized structure with no single leader and the growth is based on dyadic relationships that are built on interpersonal trust; collaboration provides conduits through which information and other resources flow, hence, shaping the whole system of event organizations within the portfolio. From this perspective, network analysis can be used to examine the web of inter-organizational linkages and patterns that shape an event portfolio.

Broadly, the objective of network analysis is to understand the pattern and content of the interactions that take place within and among social units and defines networks as sets of ties linking several individuals (Nelson, 1989). Social network analysis is an orientation towards the social world and it is not a specific body of formal or substantive social theory (Scott, 2000). The network approach offers the possibility of helping us understand how individual actors create, maintain, exploit and are constrained by social structures at several levels of analysis such as the inter-organizational linkages (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003) and the ways in which networks of relationships are embedded within social structures (Granovetter, 1985; Laumann & Pappi, 1976).

In the context of an event portfolio, an understanding of how collaborating events networks are structured can enhance a host community's capacity to draw on the broad range of resources and expertise provided by other agencies, hence, cultivating critical complementarities among events. From this standpoint, it is essential to analyze the ways that the formal and informal organizational systems of a host community are interrelated and affect event outcomes laying the foundation for its capacity to capitalize on its event

portfolio for multiple purposes. In terms of implementing cross-leveraging strategies, coordination among different organizations is critical for facilitating the timely and synchronized implementation of activities and related tactics.

Ziakas and Costa (2010a) in examining the inter-organizational patterns of an events network that shape a host community's capacity for capitalizing on its event portfolio suggested that an events network can be studied as a measurable mechanism to assess community capacity in event portfolio management and to explicate the collaboration patterns that facilitate the joint use of an integrated set of resources for an event portfolio. From this perspective, specifically, we can examine the strength of relationships among event-related organizations based on communication, exchange of resources, and assistance. Also, we can identify the most important actors within the events network and their relationships with other organizations. Further, we can determine whether collaboration within the events network is consistent and whether attitudes toward collaboration are altered by assessing the cooperative interaction in terms of trust, benefits, and drawbacks. Finally, we can investigate the structure of the events network and overall evaluate the community's capacity to capitalize on its event portfolio via a collaborative events network.

The model presented in Figure 5 delineates the event portfolio network as a mechanism that can be measured and assessed through network analysis. As it is shown, inter-organizational collaboration within a portfolio's events network mainly takes the form of information exchange, resource sharing, joint initiatives and joint problem-solving that can ultimately build community capacity to implement events. These relationships represent links respectively that can be measured to explicate inter-

organizational linkages and collaboration patterns. On this basis, inter-organizational collaboration patterns can be assessed by measuring the reciprocity and trust of collaborating organizations. Since relationships are not static, but instead constantly changing and evolving, this model can be used to additionally provide an assessment of the collaborating network status across time and different circumstances (Ziakas & Costa, 2010a). On the whole, this model provides a quantitative and practical way to assess events networks and to explicate the inter-organizational linkages that bolster the capacity of a community to manage and leverage an event portfolio. Of course, community capacity entails a range of more complex processes than this model assumes, and therefore, its future application should be complemented with other approaches, such as stakeholder theory and network management in order to identify the salience of particular stakeholders, induce cooperation and resolve conflict as well as increase the commitment of stakeholders to the events network.

[Figure 5]

Overall, it is essential that event managers and planners involved in collaborating efforts know how network relationships are functioning within an event portfolio. Such an understanding can enable a host community to combine diverse knowledge, skills and integrated sets of resources in the management and leveraging of an event portfolio. As such, a network perspective can enhance the building of community capacity to effectively undertake the planning, management and leveraging of an event portfolio by helping organizations be more responsive to community needs, arriving at consensus across community divisions, organizing collective tasks, and coordinating services efficiently. In this regard, collaboration among agencies is a catalyst for the organization

of an event portfolio by assembling diverse actors in the events network and enabling them to deploy an integrated set of resources. The challenge then is to induce cooperation, and in doing so, future empirical insights need to explore the nature, determinants, and consequences of events networks.

## 6. Implications for Cross-Leveraging the Legacies of Sport Mega-Events with Event Portfolios

At first glance, one-off mega-events and enduring event portfolios may seem to be incompatible, since mega-events require a massive investment and intensive focus on a one-time event, while portfolios balance resources across different events for a long time horizon. It is out of the scope of this paper to discuss all the types of events such as conventions, expos or business events. To illustrate the fruitful relationship between mega-events and portfolios, the example of sport mega-events is discussed with particular reference to the Olympic Games.

The employment of a holistic approach to the study of event portfolios generates a new ground for maximizing and sustaining the benefits of sport mega-events. In this context, one-off events should be viewed as opportunities to enhance a host community's event portfolio and optimize the overall benefits derived. For mega-event organizing committees, the event portfolio should represent a strategic community asset where they can draw resources and capitalize on the host city's (and surrounding region's) capacity to stage events. The recognized leveraging strategies (for a detailed description see: Chalip, 2004; O'Brien & Chalip, 2008) should be employed in the pre- and during- event



periods of mega-events to cross-leverage them with the host city's event portfolio and thus create synergy among economic, social and environmental leverage.

The resulting legacy of mega-events is positioned as a valuable leverageable resource, which can magnify and sustain the benefits of a mega-event. To do so, it is essential to draw attention towards leveraging the legacies of mega-events. A mega-event is a one-off ephemeral intervention but its legacy is long-term as is the host city's event portfolio. In this respect, Boukas, Ziakas and Boustras (2013) in examining the Olympic heritage of Athens, stressed the need for developing a post-event leveraging framework to enable the leverage of Olympic-related tourism in the post-Games period. From this standpoint, the cultivation of Olympic heritage and subsequent development of cultural heritage tourism is viewed as an opportunity that needs to be cross-leveraged in synergy with the sport-related structures and elements of the Olympics. This form of leverage focuses on the post-event period where the leverageable resource is not the event itself but its legacy. Post-event leverage involves the cross-leveraging of sport, heritage, culture, and tourism assets, which can be cultivated in other events of the host city's portfolio in order to magnify and sustain the benefits of the Olympics in the post-Games period.

Based on Chalip's (2004) general event leveraging model and Weed's (2008) Olympic tourism leveraging model, Boukas *et al.* (2013) developed a strategic planning framework for leveraging post-Games Olympic tourism. According to this framework, the two opportunities for leverage after the Olympics are the legacy of the Games and its effects on the cultural heritage of the host city. As such, an Olympic host city may choose to capitalize on its Olympic legacy and rich heritage assets by implementing cross-

leveraging strategies aimed at optimizing sport-related and culture-related tourism benefits. These strategies can encompass the manifold dimensions of Olympic heritage while enriching the city's tourism product by integrating its sport and cultural tourism offerings.

This framework suggests two grounding strategies: (1) the utilization of the Olympic venues for organizing new events in order to take advantage of the structures built for the Olympics and the associated prestige embodied in the collective memory from previously having hosted events in the Olympics; (2) the use of the Olympic legacy and heritage themes in media to reinforce destination images by transferring a host city's Olympic association sets to its destination image and thus promoting its attributes in the post-Games period. Based on the above grounding strategies, the following derivative strategies can be implemented to enrich an Olympic host city's tourism product: (a) design Olympic-related attractions; (b) develop an event portfolio; (c) package sport and cultural attractions; and (d) attract conferences/exhibitions in the Olympic venues. As Boukas *et al.* (2013) note, these strategies can sustain the value of Olympic legacy incorporated in the development of cultural heritage tourism, transferring thus the 'glory' of the Olympics to the attractions, events, and conferences/exhibitions of the city's tourism product mix.

The importance of the above post-Games leveraging framework lies in its interdisciplinary and holistic lens. From this prism, it shifts attention from leveraging a sport mega-event itself in the temporally limited pre- and during-event periods, and extends the objectives of leverage beyond sport to cultural heritage tourism. Such an interdisciplinary approach may facilitate the development and implementation of a range

of cross-leveraging initiatives that previously were not seen or did not receive sufficient attention and/or support to be initiated. In this context, the series of a portfolio's sport and cultural events needs to be cross-leveraged with a mega-event's legacy engendering a range of sustainable economic and social outcomes in the post-event period.

Furthermore, post-event leveraging provides insights for Olympic cities that aim to harness their legacy of Olympic facilities and assets in the post-Games period for the sustainable development of tourism. In this regard, Sharpley's (2009) destination capitals approach on sustainability provides a framework for optimizing those benefits within locally determined environmental parameters and where sustainability is inherent in the process of assessing the potential contribution of destination capitals (e.g., human, social, material, etc.) to generate a flow of benefits to the destination according to the desired outcomes of tourism development. This approach concurs with cross-leveraging a host city's event portfolio with its Olympic legacy as well as with other synergistic or complementary assets in order to attain, magnify, and sustain their outcomes for a destination on a sustainable basis as years pass after the hosting of an Olympic Games.

As Ziakas and Boukas (2012) argue from a sport tourism standpoint, the development of a sustainable Olympic tourism product depends on the efficacy with which the Olympic legacy and the destination capitals are cross-leveraged in the post-Games period. Within this context, sustainability can become the core constituent in the process of leveraging the event legacy and destination capitals providing that negotiated trade-offs among all stakeholders form a consensus for the distribution of event outcomes/impacts that accrue from the implementation of cross-leveraging strategies. The consensus can be realistically reached if post-event leverage is based on the

employment of joint strategies that aim to engender and magnify event benefits in accordance with the objectives of tourism development contingent upon the destination's environmental carrying capacity as well as economic and social needs. From this perspective, policies for sport and tourism development can develop and use an event portfolio to create synergies with other forms of tourism that optimize their benefits to the destination.

## 7. Concluding Remarks

The emergence of event portfolios engenders opportunities for the development of new forms of leveraging that extend beyond the singular focus on events and economic or social benefits. In particular, the cross-leveraging of different events for a variety of purposes fosters the multiplicity of an event portfolio, that is, its capacity to engender and convey multiple meanings and serve multiple purposes (Ziakas, 2013). To realize this potential, however, future research should find the set of means for the effective cross-leveraging of events in a portfolio.

The relationship between sport mega-events and event portfolios can be mutually beneficial in the provision that synergies are established to cross-leverage a mega-event with the host community's portfolio. To do so, it is imperative to identify the cross-leveraging means in the pre- during- and post-event periods of a mega-event and incorporate them into a broader leveraging framework. In the context of the Olympic Games, their planned legacy can be built on the host city's event portfolio assets and resources. In turn, the investment in Olympic projects and infrastructure can substantially

enhance the host city's event portfolio. For example, the legacy of the Olympics can be associated and transferred to the host city's portfolio, hence fostering post-Games tourism (Boukas *et al.*, 2013). This brings forth the need to extend our focus on post-Games leveraging of the Olympics, and generally, on post-event leverage in order to enhance and sustain the planned legacies of sport mega events.

The instrumental value of an event portfolio for a host community can be summarized on the following grounds: First, an event portfolio can bring together in a network the event stakeholders of seemingly disparate events with the purpose to cross-leverage them and thus it may also foster collaboration. Second, an event portfolio can integrate different purposes in a comprehensive strategy and incorporate different events into a coherent whole that is more than the sum of its parts. Third, an event portfolio can sustain the benefits of events that alone have an ephemeral lifespan. Fourth, an event portfolio can help in the optimal use of a host community's integrated set of resources. Within this context, tourism and community development can be balanced while diversifying and enriching a destination's tourism product.

The proposed frameworks of this paper provide an inter-disciplinary analysis that integrates the functional, societal, policy and community capacity-building processes for enabling the strategic assemblage of disparate events in a portfolio and their cross-leveraging aimed to achieve multiple purposes. This holistic approach recognizes the multi-faceted value of events and the subsequent potential of a portfolio to synergize the economic and social outcomes of events, thereby balancing as well as optimizing their overall benefits to a host community. The holistic approach brings into the fore the need to start integrating the fragmented realm of different event genres and extend the focus on

multiple events and purposes. Consequently, the proposed frameworks seek to advance the discourse in event management and ground future inter-disciplinary research towards building knowledge about how event managers can synergize different events in a portfolio in order to attain, magnify and sustain their outcomes. Whereas this paper posits the basic tenets of a holistic event portfolio approach, its main limitation is the hitherto scant empirical investigation on event portfolios. Thus, the elements and parameters of this approach need to be extensively examined, empirically tested, and conceptually elaborated in future research. In so doing, it is expected that the proposed frameworks will encourage researchers to further study this phenomenon and find the means for leveraging the benefits obtained from event portfolios in their effort to serve and meet the needs of host communities. Towards this direction, this paper will hopefully build a robust foundation for future systematic inquiries on event portfolios and their potential incorporation into sustainable development strategies.

There is no doubt that the planning, management and leveraging of an event portfolio is a complex and challenging task. Above all, it requires a holistic approach on events, which can enable the development of an event portfolio strategy. In this regard, event typologies are not useful if they are employed to merely study event genres separately from each other, hence, perpetuating their innate fragmentation. Conversely, event typologies can be used profitably to delineate the particular characteristics of different type and scale events so that they can be synergized and cross-leveraged. From this prism, academic research can be of assistance and provide guidance by overcoming the current divisions and exploring the means for developing comprehensive policies that capitalize on event portfolios. On this basis, the formulation and implementation of joint

strategies should respond to community issues and operate within the limits of a host community's resource capacity according to its policy objectives. While this is not a panacea for resolving the nexus of issues and problems emerging on event portfolios, it is a viable path towards fostering the sustainability of event portfolios and easing the challenges for their effective management and leveraging.

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Figure 1: Main Factors Affecting Event Portfolio Planning and Leveraging

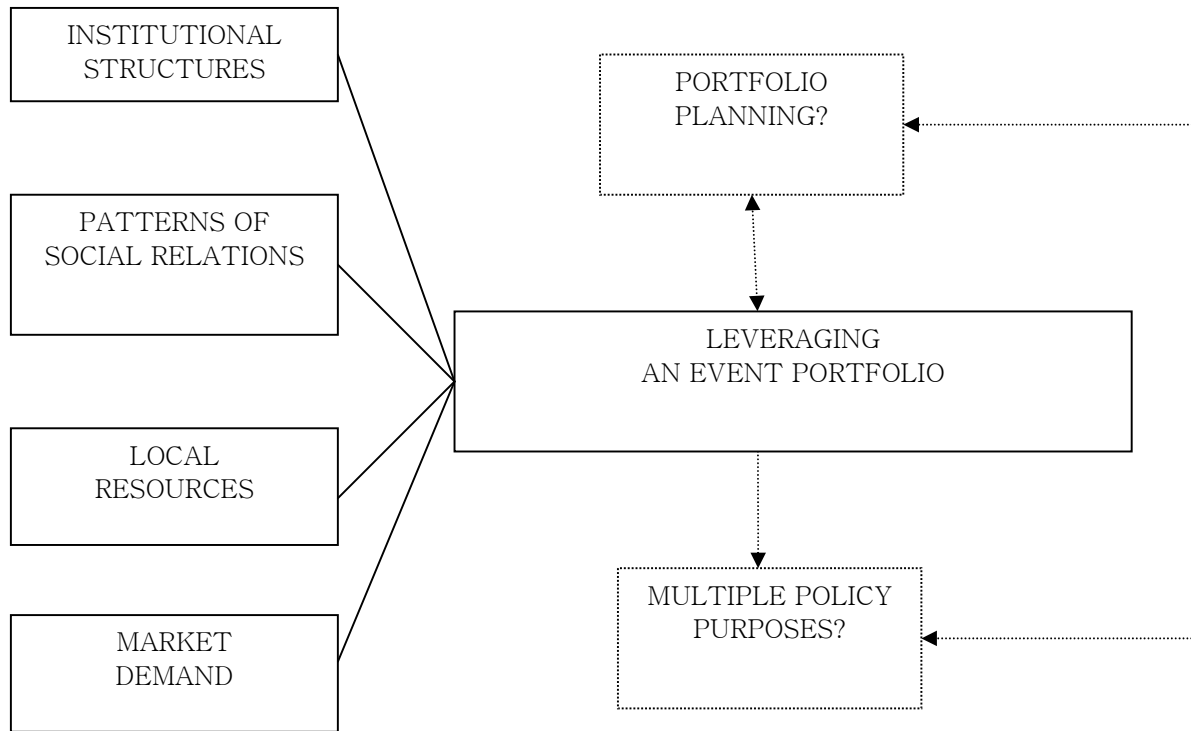




Figure 2: Event Portfolio Planning and Policy-Making

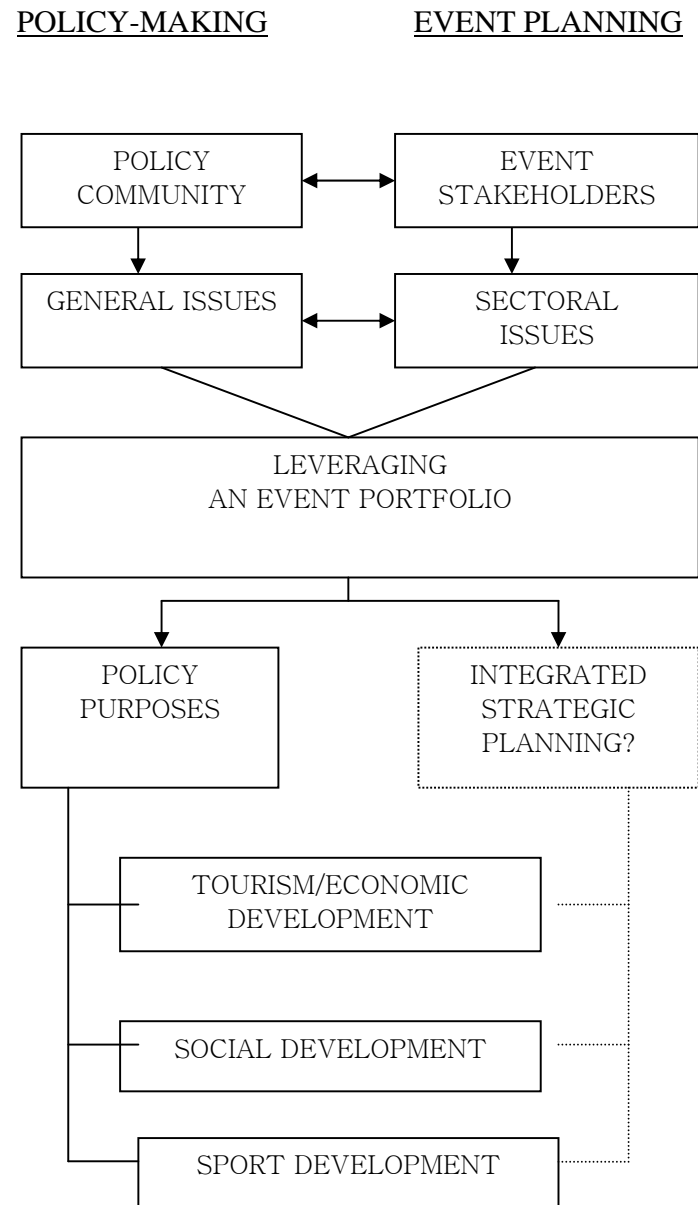


Figure 3: Event Portfolio Implementation

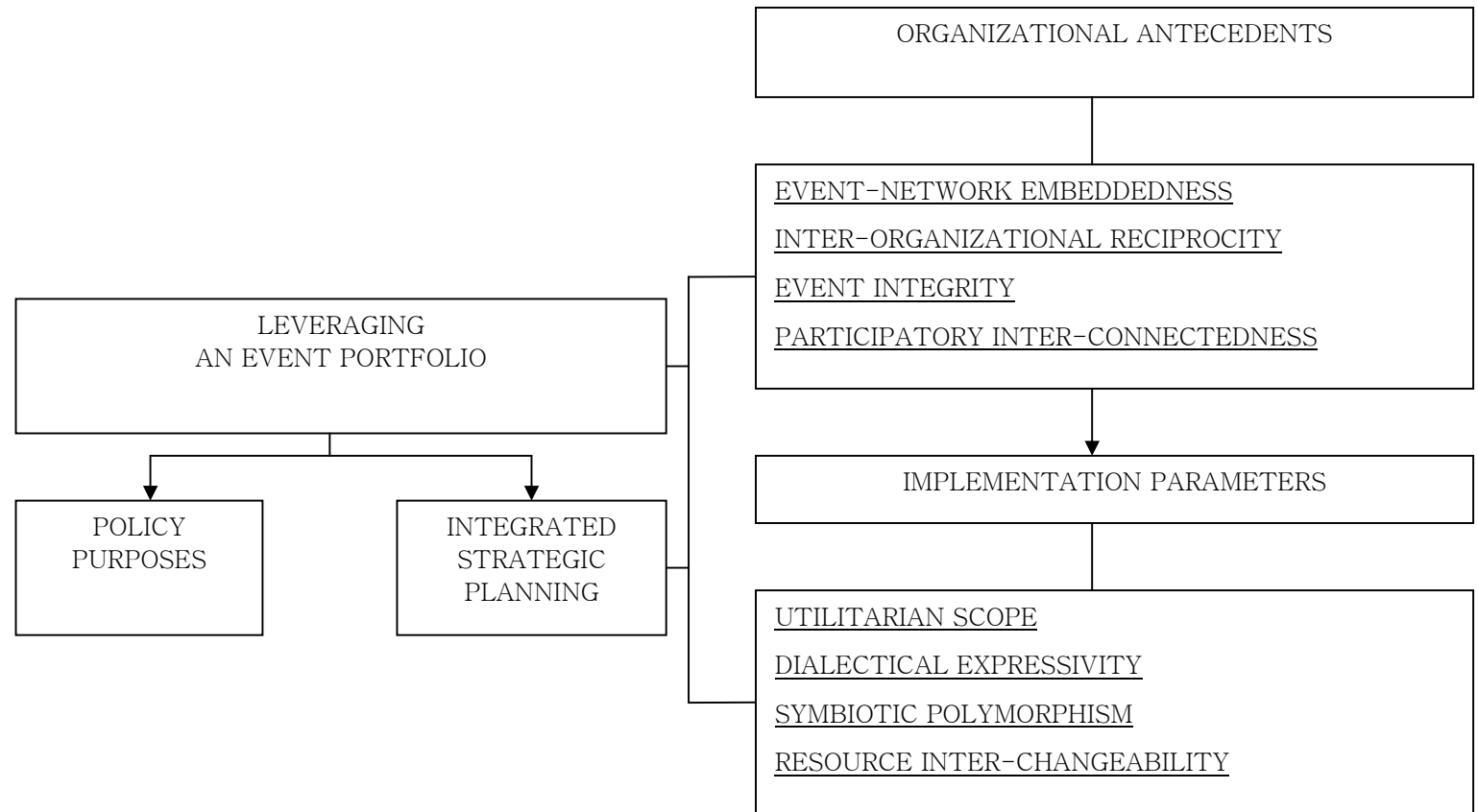


Figure 4: Event Portfolio Planning and Leveraging

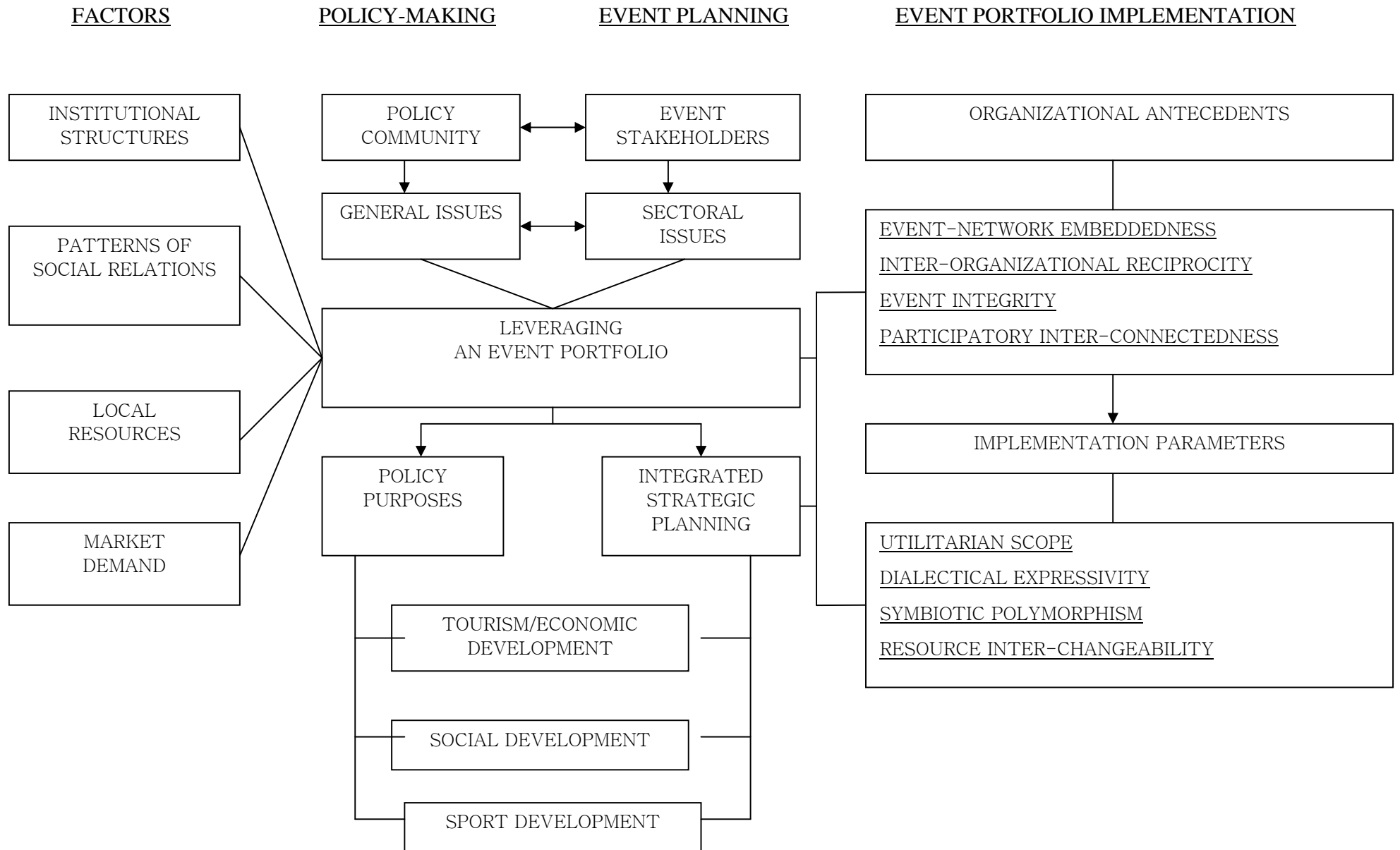
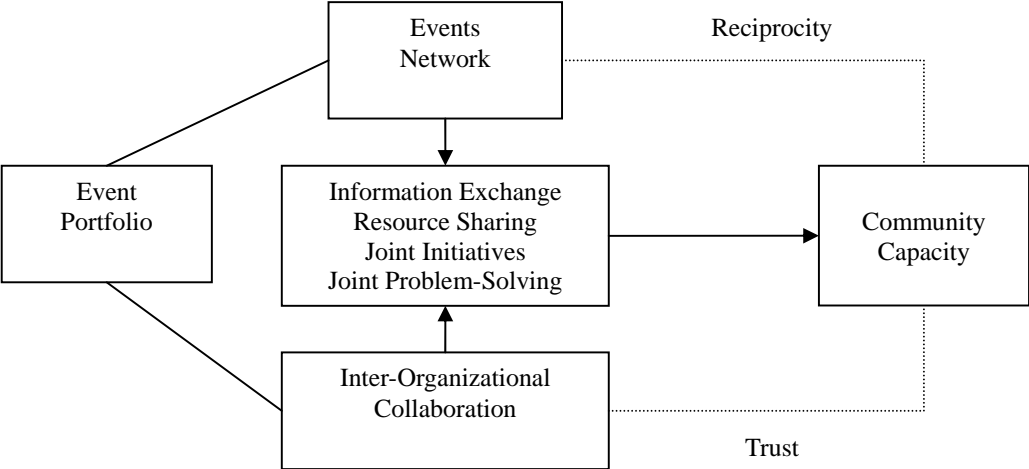


Figure 5: Event Portfolio Network and Community Capacity Building



Adapted from: Ziakas & Costa (2010a).