

**School of Marketing**

**Stakeholder Salience and Strategy in Event Tourism**

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## DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

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# ABSTRACT

This thesis advances understanding of event stakeholders' salience, interests and influence strategies in event tourism settings. It builds on existing stakeholder theory (Freeman 1984), applying the theory of stakeholder identification and salience (TSIS) (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997) and stakeholder influence typology (Frooman 1999) — which are theories largely developed in the western context — to tourism events in Borneo, an eastern context. An event organiser is normally a dependent co-producer within a network of organisations and individuals. These individuals and groups are event stakeholders, who could affect or be affected by the events (cf. Freeman 1984). Due to the large number of potential stakeholders involved and time scarcity, event managers find it difficult to distinguish among all actors claiming a stake and to manage their conflicting aims and interests in an event. Based on these issues, three research questions were developed:

RQ1. How do managers identify and prioritise salient stakeholders of tourism events in Borneo?

RQ2. What are the stakeholders' interests in the tourism events, and how do those interests diverge from or converge towards the interests of event organisers?

RQ3. What are the different influence strategies used by stakeholders to achieve their interests in events, and how do these strategies affect the events?

Given the topic is relatively under-researched, a qualitative multiple-case study design situated within an interpretivist paradigm was adopted. Six case studies were selected, comprising two musical events, two community events, and two sports events. The primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 23 event managers and 38 stakeholders. Other documentary evidence and on-site observations were also used to allow triangulation of data sources. Within-case and then cross-case analysis were conducted to find similar constructs and relationships across multiple cases, and to answer the research questions.

The TSIS suggests that the presence of attributes of power, legitimacy and urgency in the minds of managers will affect the salience of stakeholders (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997). The case study found that when the theory was extended into event settings, finer distinctions among stakeholder salience attributes were discovered. It seems that event stakeholders with various large, non-substitutable and critical resources, who are also highly dependable, are perceived to be more powerful, and that resource power alone could create stakeholder

salience. Governments were found to be the most salient stakeholder across all cases, given their political and economic power.

The study also found that managers prioritise stakeholders according to the event life-cycle – from planning and implementation, through staging to conclusion, as opposed to responding to stakeholders' urgent claims. At each stage, different stakeholders were getting relatively more managerial attention than another, depending on the relative criticality of the event's organisational and operational needs. In other words, event stakeholder salience is impermanent, and time-based. The findings suggested that event stakeholder salience varies due to different types of stakeholder power, legitimacy and event implementation priority, as well as being subject to an individual manager's perceptions.

Findings about stakeholders' interests in tourism events show that economic and social interest is a significant motivation behind stakeholders' involvement in events. Fewer stakeholders appear to be interested in the environmental aspects of events. In some cases, tourism and economic value tend to supersede sociocultural and environmental interests. In relation to stakeholder influence strategies, the study found that salient stakeholders were largely collaborative, cooperative and supportive of events, as manifested by their continuous supply of the resources needed to sustain event production on an annual basis, to bring about common good for the community as well as enhance their own interests. Frooman's (1999) stakeholder influence typology was not supported in this study.

From a theoretical viewpoint, the thesis contributes to both the body of stakeholder identification and salience literature (Mitchell et al. 1997) and the body of event stakeholder literature, in three primary ways. First, it provides new insights into stakeholder salience attributes, and results in the conceptualisation of a new 'event life-cycle urgency' concept. Second, it establishes an empirical and a more complete framework of stakeholder interests in tourism events across economic, social, cultural, environmental and political dimensions, which no prior study has done. Third, it sheds new light on event stakeholder influence strategies, revealing them as largely positive in nature. The multiple case study design also contributes to the methodology by bringing different types of events into one study.

From a managerial viewpoint, the findings indicate that event managers tend to pay attention to those stakeholders necessary for event implementation or those with whom they have direct working relationships, and potentially neglect or dismiss important local community stakeholders, who are largely diffused. Event-stakeholder relationships are tightly clustered around a few key strong players. Such a tradition of singularly dominant stakeholders might

stabilise the event network, but it limits event innovation and creativity, and affects event sustainability. Having a limited number of resource contributors is a definite risk, as it leaves the event vulnerable, should those salient stakeholders withdraw support.

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## PUBLICATION FROM THESIS

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

AIMS	Association of International Marathons and Distance Races
CEO	chief executive officer
CSR	corporate social responsibility
DMO	destination-marketing organisation
GNI	gross national income
IOC	International Olympic Committee
KPI	key performance indicator
MNCs	multinational corporations
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGOs	non-government organisations
NPOs	not-for-profit organisations
NT	network theory
NTP	National Transformation Programme
PEMANDU	Performance Management & Delivery Unit ( <i>Malaysian government agency</i> )
RDT	resource dependency theory
RM	Ringgit Malaysia ( <i>Malaysian currency</i> )
SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises
TBL	triple bottom line
TRADEX	Trade and Exhibition ( <i>in case 3 - CE3</i> )
TSIS	theory of stakeholder identification and salience
WOM	word-of-mouth
YOG	Youth Olympic Games



## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The terms usually used in this study are now provided and defined as below. All these terms will be explained further in the literature review chapter.

**Events** – refers to all types of planned events such as festivals, sports, recreation, arts, entertainment, cultural celebrations, and business events, created to achieve specific outcomes, including those related to tourism (Getz and Page 2016).

**Event tourism** – means using events as instruments of tourism policy, strategy, and development... individual events taking a marketing orientation to attract tourists, sometimes as an additional segment and sometimes as the core business (Getz 2013, 5).

**Stakeholders** – are people or organisations that can affect or be affected by (Freeman 1984) the events and event tourism.

**Salience** – is defined as the degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997, 869).

**Power** – is about the probability that one actor within a social relationship would be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance (Mitchell et al. 1997, 865).

**Legitimacy** – is defined as a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions (Suchman 1995, 574).

**Pragmatic legitimacy** – is centred on resource exchange-based relationships, and based on the focal organisation self-interest (Suchman 1995).

**Moral legitimacy** – reflects a favourable normative evaluation of the organisation and its activities, believes that the actions of an organisation are moral as well as legal within a social system (Suchman 1995).

**Cognitive legitimacy** – suggests that an organisation and its activity are predictable, plausible, inevitable, and permanent in a social system (Suchman 1995).

**Urgency** – refers to the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention. Time sensitivity and criticality are the bases of urgency (Mitchell et al. 1997, 867).

**Proximity** – implies nearness and embeddedness in space, time, concept or practice (Driscoll and Starik 2004, 64). It can be physical or non-physical proximity. To distinguish it from time sensitivity in the urgency attribute, proximity in this study only implies nearness in geographical location, which is physical proximity.

**Interests** – are the goals, values, desires and expectations that lead a person to act in one direction rather than another (Morgan 1986, 149).

**Influence strategy** – is a set of actions/behaviour that a stakeholder uses to influence (Frooman 1999) the event organisation.

**Resource** – is any attribute, circumstance, or possession that increases the ability of its holder to influence a person or group (Rogers 1974, 1425).

**Resource dependency** – describes organisations that are not self-sufficient but depend on the external environment to provide needed resources to survive and function. An unequal resource exchange relationship results in asymmetric forms of dependence and power differentials between two organisations (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978).

**Network structure** – explains the complex system of inter-organisational relationships using two network concepts (density and centrality). ‘Density’ refers to the number of links that exist in a network and ‘centrality’ measures a stakeholder’s number of direct/independent links to others in the network. Stakeholders’ position in the network give them the structural constraints and opportunities for accessing/controlling other players as another source of power (Rowley 1997).

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Chapter Overview

This thesis investigates stakeholders' salience, interests and influence strategies in tourism events, provides an understanding of event-stakeholder relationships, and advances theory development in event stakeholder literature. It is important that tourism events cater for both the interests of the organisers and those of the stakeholders, who both affect and are affected by the events. However, with so many potential stakeholders involved in most major events, event organisers often find it difficult to distinguish among stakeholders' potentially conflicting aims and demands, and thus also to manage or prioritise them. So, how do the event organisers determine who and what really counts? The thesis seeks to identify and prioritise event stakeholders, and to examine stakeholders' interests and influence strategies in tourism events. This preliminary chapter will begin with an introduction to the study background and its significance, followed by the study context. Next, it will outline the research objectives and questions, then explain the study scope and justification, and define key terms used in the thesis. Lastly, the thesis structure is established.

### 1.2 Study Background

The growth of event tourism in recent years has been 'spectacular', as destinations realise the potential of events to raise their profile in the increasingly competitive global tourism industry (Getz 2008, 403). Different types of events such as festivals, cultural celebrations, sports and business events are created or adopted to attract tourist arrivals. These temporary attractions have become additions to the tourism 'product mix' alongside permanent attractions, both natural and man-made (Getz 1989). Events are increasingly being embraced as a tourism destination marketing and branding tool (González-Reverté and Miralbell-Izard 2009; Jago et al. 2003; Knott, Fyall and Jones 2015). They constitute a good opportunity to create or reinforce destination image in the marketplace (Jin, Lee and Lee 2012; Hallmann and Breuer 2011). Therefore, governments and the private sector now pay great attention to events. Likewise, researchers' and practitioners' interests in event tourism studies have increased extensively since the 1990s (Brown et al. 2015; Getz 2013; Kim, Boo and Kim 2013).

An event organiser is not an independent actor who can produce events alone (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007). Instead, an event organiser is normally a dependent co-producer within a

network of organisations and individuals. These individuals and groups are event stakeholders, who could affect or be affected by the events (cf. Freeman 1984). It is clear from the literature that a key issue faced by event managers is the need to devise techniques that can bring together the many disparate parties participating in any organised event (Getz, Andersson, and Larson 2007; Reid 2011). Event managers must meet the needs of audiences but at the same time also respond to all stakeholder expectations to retain stakeholder involvement in the event (Ensor, Robertson and Ali-Knight 2007; Reid 2011). However, event organisers usually find it difficult to map all the actors claiming a stake in an event due to the large number of potential stakeholders that can be involved (Getz, Andersson, and Larson 2007). At the destination level, events as a tourism product are expected to serve the interests of society and contribute to broader regional development involving public, private and community stakeholders, each expressing differing interests and demands (Moscardo 2008). Tourism events are not only affected by the various entities at the destination but they themselves can also affect various entities and businesses (Getz 2013). With a diverse range of stakeholders, how does the event organiser determine who and what really counts? What do the various stakeholders do to advance their interests in events? Important questions in this context include identifying and prioritising event stakeholders and understanding stakeholders' interests and influence strategies in events.

Discipline-based discourse in event studies has contributed significantly to an understanding of the roles, meanings, importance and impacts of events in society and culture (Getz 2012a). For example, a collection of papers on festivals in rural Australia by Gibson and Connell (2011) combines various discipline studies to examine the roles and impacts of festivals in rural and aboriginal life. Numerous other social sciences studies such as anthropology (e.g. Clarke and Jepson 2011; Crespi-Vallbona and Richards 2007; Lau and Li 2015; Reverté and Izard 2011) and geography (e.g. Brennan-Horley, Connell and Gibson 2007; De Bres and Davis 2001; Quinn 2005), all of which contribute to an understanding of stakeholders' roles, meanings and interests in festivals and events. However, a review of literature indicates that limited theoretical and empirical research have explicitly framed around the term 'stakeholder salience' or 'interest'. Most of the researchers have studied event stakeholder phenomenon from different perspectives and used different theories.

From the discourse on event management and event tourism (Getz 2012a), reviewers of festival and event literature have mostly concluded that impact analysis and motivational/satisfaction research trends in the events field are well established, but research efforts on the topic of stakeholder management studies have been limited (Getz 2012a; Kim, Boo and Kim 2013; Lai and Li 2014; Mair and Whitford 2013; Park and Park 2017). The

application of stakeholder theory in event studies is emerging. So far, the focus has been on identifying stakeholder roles (e.g. Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Hautbois, Parent and Séguin 2012; Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien 2005; Prebensen 2010; Reid and Arcodia 2002; Spiropoulos, Gargalianos and Sotiriadou 2006; Todd, Leask and Ensor 2017), especially in relation to the sustainability and institutionalisation of festivals (Ensor, Robertson and Ali-Knight 2011; Getz and Andersson 2009). Other studies investigate event stakeholder management strategies (Andersson and Getz 2008; Reid 2011), collaboration and cooperation (Alonso 2014; Karlsen and Nordström 2009; Robertson and Rogers 2009; Yaghmour and Scott 2009), and stakeholder influence on festival brands (Mossberg and Getz 2006). Despite these existing studies, there remains a gap in the knowledge of stakeholders' salience, interests and influence strategies in events.

Accordingly, the current study aims to examine event stakeholders' salience, interests and influence strategies, provide an understanding of event-stakeholder relationships, and advance theory development in event stakeholder studies. Identifying the range of event stakeholders, and managing their needs and responses to events, is an issue of importance to event organisers (Andersson and Getz 2008; Ensor, Robertson and Ali-Knight 2011). Getz (2010, 21) pointed out that 'key stakeholders and their support or resistance will generally be major factors in determining long-term viability and achieving institutional status, but we do not know anything about this outside a few developed countries'. Most of the previous event studies were conducted in western developed countries and regions, such as America, Europe and Australia (Getz 2008; Lai and Li 2014). Thus, to explore the transferability of theoretical significance to other settings and fully evaluate differences that emerge from sociocultural influences, it is necessary and valuable to examine and understand event-stakeholder relationships in an eastern context and within a developing country (Getz and Andersson 2010), such as Malaysia. From a managerial perspective, this thesis has applications for governments and tourism marketing agencies that seek to develop events for strategic purposes. It will provide a management framework for identifying and monitoring influence from individuals or groups who are affecting or affected by tourism events. Hence, it will contribute to shaping event stakeholder management strategies, to ensure successful event establishment.

### **1.3 Study Context**

This study focuses on Malaysia for three reasons. Firstly, events are important to the Malaysian economy. Under the Malaysian government's National Transformation Programme (NTP) 2010, the events, sports and business tourism sector is expected to contribute Ringgit Malaysia

(RM) 5 billion (about US\$1.25 billion) in gross national income (GNI) and create more than 30,000 jobs by 2020. The total number of visitors to these international events is forecast to increase from 657,000 in 2009 to 1,171,000 in 2020, with the proportion of international visitors to increase from 11% in 2009 to 21% in 2020 (Performance Management & Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) 2010). Events are expected to be a key tourism sector making substantial contributions to Malaysia's economic performance.

Secondly, event tourism has been identified as one of the national tourism strategies and it is receiving prioritised public investment and policy support (PEMANDU 2010). Historically, Malaysia has successfully hosted major international events which have emerged as a key driver to the growth of event tourism in the country. Besides the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 1989 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia was also the first country in Asia to host the Commonwealth Games in 1998, as well as the first country outside the US and Europe to host the Laureus World Sports Awards in 2014. Other renowned international events hosted by Malaysia included the biennial Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition, one of Asia's most prestigious aerospace, maritime, commercial and defence events (first held in 1991); the Le Tour de Langkawi, an annual cycling race (since 1996); and the Formula One Petronas Malaysia Grand Prix championship, an annual motorsport race (since 1999). Due to its multi-racial, multi-ethnic society, Malaysia has hosted many cultural, ritual and historical events. Many of these annual celebrations and festivals have become major tourism attractions: for example, Citrawarna Malaysia; Thaipusam at Batu Caves; Gawai in Sarawak, Kaamatan in Sabah; the Malaysia Lantern Festival. The Malaysian Government called for a repackaging of current events with better private–public sector collaboration, and the amendment of guidelines for events with tourism potential (PEMANDU 2010). To promote events and festivals in the country, Tourism Malaysia declared 2015 as the Year of Festivals (Tourism Malaysia 2015).

Thirdly, a literature review has revealed that most of the event stakeholder studies were conducted in a western context, and Getz and Andersson (2010) called for further research on event stakeholders to be conducted in developing and non-western countries. Malaysia is an eastern plural society with diverse ethnicities representing diverse sociocultural, linguistic, economic and political characteristics (Mura and Tavakoli 2014). Previous research has reported that Malaysians are basically collectivistic in nature, particularly in terms of their social relations, self-sacrifice and family integrity (Kennedy 2002; Noordin and Jusoff 2010; Omar and Noordin 2016). Malaysia has also been characterised as a high power-distance country (Hofstede 1984), ranked the highest among all the countries in Hofstede and Bond's (1988) study. Over the years, rapid economic development and political transformation in the

country might indicate some reduction in power-distance and collectivism; but the cultural value of respecting hierarchical differences, maintaining harmony and emphasising on collective well-being remains deeply rooted in the society (Kennedy 2002; Omar and Noordin 2016). Thus, power is expected to have significant impact on event stakeholder management and relationships in Malaysia and it would be interesting to find out if differences emerge from this setting.

East Malaysia, Borneo, was chosen as the study site (see Figure 1.1, Map of Malaysia). Located on the northern part of the island of Borneo, bordering Indonesia and surrounding the Sultanate of Brunei, East Malaysia has a different ethnic, linguistic and sociopolitical background from Peninsular Malaysia, and therefore presents a significant and unique case study for the exploration of stakeholder relationships in tourism events, which has yet to be researched. The two eastern states of Sarawak and Sabah are considered to be the country's most ethnically diverse states. Sarawak (the largest state in terms of land mass) alone has at least 27 ethnic groups. Recognising the importance of event tourism industry to their states' economies, the two state governments are taking significant steps towards making event tourism the centre of their tourism development programs. Event infrastructure has been built and relevant event agencies established to promote event tourism in the two states. Most of the high-profile festivals and international events in East Malaysia are organised either by the state or local government/agencies, with corporate sponsors and input from local community groups and businesses. However, no empirical study has been done to determine who are the stakeholders actually involved in these events, what are their interests and expectations, or how they are going to get what they want. Event studies in the Malaysian context are in their infancy and limited to event evaluation studies (e.g. Abdullah, Patterson and Pegg 2015; Kler 2016; Musa and Kassim 2013; Ting et al. 2017).



**Figure 1.1: Map of Malaysia**  
 (Source: malaysiamap.facts.co 2017)

## 1.4 Research Objectives & Questions

As discussed in section 1.2, various stakeholders' input makes event organisation possible. But with a diverse range of stakeholders, how does the event organiser determine who and what really counts? What do the various stakeholders do to advance their interests in events? Literature review indicates that knowledge on these issues is limited, other than some studies which have been conducted in the western context (Getz and Andersson 2010). Hence, it is pertinent to argue that there is a need for further research on event stakeholders. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationships between event managers and stakeholders, for a better understanding of stakeholder salience, goals and interests, and stakeholder influence in the tourism event context, from the Borneo perspective. More specifically, the study examines how event managers perceive the salience of stakeholders, whether individuals, organisations or groups, and what factors influence the salience of these stakeholders. The study also seeks to determine stakeholders' interests in events as seen from various perspectives, such as the economic, social and environmental standpoints; and it examines stakeholders' influence strategies, deployed to satisfy their interests. Based on the literature review, the following three research questions have been developed to guide the study and address the research gaps:

RQ1. How do managers identify and prioritise salient stakeholders of tourism events in Borneo?

RQ2. What are the stakeholders' interests in the tourism events, and how do those interests diverge from or converge towards the interests of event organisers?



RQ3. What are the different influence strategies used by stakeholders to achieve their interests in events, and how do these strategies affect the events?

## **1.5 Scope of Study and Justification**

Events are enabled by a wide set of stakeholders, with differing interests and assuming multiple roles (Todd, Leask, and Ensor 2017). Stakeholder salience and influence strategy in event tourism remains a relatively unexplored research theme and is one of the growing important issues at all types and levels of events (Getz and Page 2016; Stokes 2008). Mitchell, Agle, and Wood's (1997) theory of stakeholder identification and salience (TSIS), and Frooman's (1999) stakeholder influence strategies typology form the basis of the conceptual framework for this thesis and provide some of the elements for analysis. Mitchell, Agle, and Wood's (1997) stakeholder identification criteria are well-cited and have been examined and applied in many studies in different fields (e.g. De Schepper, Doms and Haezendonck 2014; Gago and Antolín 2004; Magness 2008; Neville, Bell, and Whitwell 2011; Pajunen 2006; Siriwardhane and Taylor 2014). However, there has been limited application of Mitchell et al.'s (1997) framework in event studies, which will further be discussed in Chapter 2. A search of event literature only found a small number of empirical studies on large sporting events (e.g. Hautbois, Parent and Séguin 2012; Parent and Deephouse 2007; Xue and Mason 2011) that have explicitly and primarily applied Mitchell et al.'s (1997) salience framework. Most of the festival studies only mentioned the framework without the application of concepts (e.g. Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Presenza and Iocca 2012; Todd, Leask, and Ensor 2017). These previous studies offer an identification and categorisation of festival stakeholders without going further into stakeholder prioritisation and salience analysis, leaving a research gap to be filled.

Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997) proposed that stakeholders can be identified by their possession of three important attributes — power, legitimacy, and urgency — and stressed the interaction of these three attributes in creating the overall salience of stakeholders. The more attributes a stakeholder has, the greater would be that stakeholder's salience, thus deserving more managerial attention. Mitchell et al. (1997) have also mooted the idea that resource dependency theory (RDT) (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) is helpful when examining the role of the stakeholder power attribute in creating salience. To extend the construct of the stakeholder power attribute in this thesis, RDT will be integrated with network theory (NT) (Rowley 1997), as event organisations are embedded within a relational network of stakeholders. The structure of the network and the organisation's position within it then affect the relative power of stakeholders. There has been some limited empirical investigation that has applied RDT

(Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) together with Rowley's (1997) NT to examine stakeholder power and salience. This thesis makes explicit the constitutive interplay of resource-based and network-based power in examining the relative nature of stakeholder power in the stakeholder salience framework.

In addition to the three generic stakeholder salience attributes, this research will add Driscoll and Starik's (2004) proximity criteria to form the event stakeholder identification and salience framework, a concept which has not been applied to any event stakeholder studies. Proximity is suggested as a possible 'stakeholderiness' criterion because spatial distance can be as important as other factors in stakeholder recognition and interaction (Driscoll and Starik 2004, 61). The mutuality of the coexistence between an organisation and its stakeholders within a physical boundary is a relevant stakeholder criterion. For example, a motorsport event venue located in a specific neighbourhood allows the nearby residents to become important stakeholders and thus warrant managerial attention (Balduck, Maes and Buelens 2011; Fredline and Faulkner 2001). The proximity concept has been adopted by Haigh and Griffiths (2009) in their study of the natural environment as a primary stakeholder in view of the way climate change has impacted on businesses and organisations. Similarly, the proximity of events to various natural environments also forms a stakeholder relation between the two, 'since these entities continually affect one another in the physical world' (Driscoll and Starik 2004, 65). This study will contribute to the body of TSIS (Mitchell, Agle, and Wood 1997) and to event stakeholder literature.

While it is useful to identify salient stakeholders of events, it is important that their interests and influence strategies are identified as well. Stakeholders act to protect or enhance their interests in an organisation, and their actions affect that organisation and its performance (Frooman 1999; Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003; Sharma and Henriques 2005). Hede (2008) found that the notion of event stakeholders and their interests had not been explicitly studied within the special event context. She mapped out event stakeholders' interests based on the three domains of Triple Bottom Line (TBL) (i.e. the economic, social, or environmental), and suggested that event managers could use the map to guide strategies aimed at serving the interests of their event stakeholders. Some stakeholders' interests can be either aligned with or opposed to the event's interests (Reid 2011). This study extends Hede's (2008) stakeholders' interests framework to empirical research, investigating tourism event organisers and stakeholders' convergence or divergence of interests.

This thesis also utilises Frooman's (1999) influence strategies typology, which is based on resource dependency relationships between the focal organisation and stakeholders, to analyse

event stakeholder influence strategy. Frooman's (1999) typology is a relevant and useful framework because event organisations are dependent on their stakeholders for resource input, and based on such resource relationships, stakeholders could perform some strategies or tactics to get what they want from events and achieve their own goals (Andersson and Getz 2007; Heffernan and O'Brien 2010). After a review of event literature, it was found that the empirical use of Frooman's (1999) framework is limited in the event stakeholder studies. This research seeks to fill the gap. The only work found is Heffernan and O'Brien (2010), which analyses the negotiation of resource relationships between a professional sports franchise bid team and its key stakeholders. Stakeholders' potential to threaten, collaborate with, or facilitate the organisation is not fixed, and they could simultaneously adopt multiple strategies (Heffernan and O'Brien 2010; Hendry 2005; Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). Research on event stakeholder influence strategy is under-developed. This thesis will make a contribution to the body of literature on event stakeholder influence strategy, building on the work of Frooman (1999) and Heffernan and O'Brien (2010).

To address the three research questions, an interpretivist orientation and qualitative means of enquiry is adopted (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012). Interpretivism holds the view that social occurrence is highly contextual and differs depending on the parts of social actors within those contexts (Myers 2009). Therefore, differences or similarities among social actors need to be understood within the contextual framework in which a phenomenon takes place. (Johnson et al. 2006). As this study is conducted in Malaysia, which has a different environmental setting from the western countries where most of the event research projects have been carried out, adopting an interpretivist approach to the study is appropriate. This decision is based on the desire to investigate less-known phenomena of event-stakeholder relationships in more detail whilst yielding further understanding of the contextual practices in Malaysia.

The thesis takes an inductive approach using case study research. Case study research is an excellent method for theory building (Eisenhardt 1989). Such research would yield new insights to the event tourism sector which is greatly lacking in theoretically-oriented research (Getz 2012). This study is novel as no other relevant research could be found regarding event stakeholders in Malaysia. Thus, case study research is especially critical. The case study method allows for an in-depth analysis of the different event organisations and their stakeholders. Yin (2009, 13) also suggests that when a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control, this scenario is likely to favour the use of case studies. Case studies allows for investigative efforts to take place within its original setting. Such approach has been well acknowledged by the

research community in producing valuable results (Barratt, Choi and Li 2011; Myers 2009; Swanborn 2010; Yin 2003). Many events-related research projects have used the case study approach (e.g. Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Gratton, Dobson and Shibli 2000; Kler 2016; Merrilees and Marles 2011; Prebensen 2010; Simeon and Buonincontri 2011).

Six case studies have been purposefully selected on the basis of replication logic (Yin 2003). The study sample includes a range of event types and subgroups of cases, consisting of two music festivals, two community events and two sports events. The six events selected are the most prominent tourism events across five major cities in East Malaysia, Borneo. They are annually recurring events listed on the tourism events calendar released by the Malaysian Tourism Board, which also received funding or marketing support from the Malaysian Tourism Ministry. Among the six events, three are primarily organised by the Tourism Board to promote destinations, and the other three are primarily community events adopted to attract tourists as an additional market segment. More details on the six cases are presented in Chapter 3, Table 3.1.

The emerging event tourism studies field needs more theoretical development, and more sophisticated research methods (Getz 2008). This thesis will contribute to research methodology by bringing different types of events into one study and using multiple cases from five different cities or town. Most of the other studies have examined festivals, sports or mega events separately. They either used a single case study, or multiple studies, but limited to an urban (Spiropoulos, Gargalianos and Sotiriadou 2006; Todd, Leask and Ensor 2017; Xue and Mason 2011) or a rural area (Frost and Laing 2015; Reid 2011). Xiao and Smith (2006) found that 60%–70% of case study research projects in the tourism field have adopted the single case study approach. In addition, this thesis will contribute to creating knowledge and advancing theory development in event tourism studies, especially on the issue of stakeholder salience, and stakeholder interests and influence strategies. This study looks at the issues from both the event organisers' and their stakeholders' perspectives, in a context that is substantially different from the mainstream so far, which has focused on a western context.

## **1.6 Thesis Structure**

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. Chapter 1 provides the background of the study and context, presents the research objectives and questions, and outlines the contributions, scope and justification for the study.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature related to event tourism studies and stakeholder theory, and serves as the framework to guide this study. The literature review begins with an overview of the event tourism phenomenon and studies of the phenomenon, leading to a description of the research gaps that will be bridged by the current study. This is followed by a comprehensive review of the stakeholder literature and the TSIS (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997), which provides the primary theoretical foundation of the study. Mitchell et al. (1997) suggested stakeholder attributes of power, legitimacy, and urgency would be examined in greater detail. In this study, RDT and NT are integrated to examine the stakeholder power attribute. The attribute of 'proximity' proposed by Driscoll and Starik (2004) will be added to the existing model in examining stakeholder salience. Then, the review will critically examine the stakeholder theory application in the event context, give an overview of existing stakeholder literature found in event studies, and continue with a detailed review of empirical studies of stakeholder identification and salience in event literature. Next, a review of stakeholder interest and influence in the event context will be discussed, concluding with the conceptual framework for the thesis.

Chapter 3 details the research methodology selected to address the research questions formulated, including the rationale for the choice of methods. Topics within the chapter include: a justification of the research paradigm, an overview case study methodology, a detailed explanation of case study research design which will include sampling, data collection and data analysis procedures. Lastly, criteria for judging the quality of case study research and also the limitations of the study will be discussed.

Chapter 4 presents one by one, the six individual case study findings of the thesis. In each case, an overview of the event will first be provided to give an insight into the event context, then the event stakeholders will be identified and mapped. Next, the case will examine stakeholder attributes of power, legitimacy, urgency and proximity, in relation to their saliency. Then, the case discusses stakeholders' interests and influence strategies, concluding with a case summary. Chapter 5 reports the cross-case analysis which strives to identify similarities or differences across the six cases, and answers the three research questions.

Chapter 6 of the thesis interprets the results from within case analysis (Chapter 4) and cross-case analysis (Chapter 5), and compares them with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The discussions of findings are structured according to the three research questions, in order to answer those questions. At the end of each research question, a summary of study insights and conclusions to the questions are presented. Chapter 7 presents the conclusions and implications of the thesis, and highlights the theoretical and methodological contributions the study makes

to the literature. Next, implications for managerial practice as well as the limitations of the study will be explored, and recommendations made for future research.

## **1.7 Chapter Summary**

This first chapter has provided an introduction to this thesis. It has presented the background of the study and its research objectives, formulated the study's three research questions, and described the study's significance. The chapter has also included an overview of the theoretical foundations, methodology, justifications for the research, and definitions of key terms. The next chapter will critically review previous research on the relevant topics to establish the theoretical framework of the thesis.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Chapter Overview**

This chapter situates the current thesis within the existing literature. It provides an overview of the current state of research on this topic, identifies the key theories that will provide the theoretical framework for the thesis, and highlights the gaps and limitations in the current understanding of event stakeholders. The chapter has 10 sections. Firstly, section 2.2 gives an overview of the event tourism phenomenon and related studies. A review of event tourism literature has highlighted the limited theory development in event management and the importance of a stakeholder approach to organising events. Next, as the thesis is centred in stakeholder theory, section 2.3 will give an overview of the literature on the development of stakeholder theory since the publication of Freeman's seminal work in 1984. The section is structured according to Laplume, Sonpar and Litz's (2008) identified themes. Then, section 2.4 will critically analyse the TSIS developed by Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997). This section will provide the primary theoretical foundation for Research Question 1, identified in the preceding Chapter 1. The constructs of power, legitimacy and urgency suggested by Mitchell et al. (1997) will be examined in greater detail. RDT and NT are integrated to examine the stakeholder power attribute. The stakeholder attribute of 'proximity' proposed by Driscoll and Starik (2004) is added to the existing model for examining stakeholder salience. Section 2.5 will outline the literature on stakeholder actions and responses, and examine stakeholder influence strategies. This section is used to inform the Research Questions 2 and 3, and to provide the background to the theories that will be used.

From section 2.6 to 2.8, the review will examine the application of stakeholder theory in the event context. Section 2.6 starts by giving an overview of existing stakeholder literature found in event studies. Section 2.7 continues with the detailed discussion of the application of the TSIS in the event context. Then, section 2.8 sheds light on stakeholders' interests in events and the different influence strategies which stakeholders may use to achieve their interests in events. Finally, the conceptual framework for this research is presented (section 2.9), followed by a chapter summary (section 2.10).

#### **2.2 Overview of Events and Event Tourism**

The term 'event tourism' was first coined by Getz (1989, 133) as 'the systematic development and marketing of special events as tourist attractions'. These 'special events' are spatial-

temporal phenomena organised to sell unique hedonistic experiences and elevate attendees above their routines and ordinary lives. Put differently, events and festivals are planned performances, public themed occasions or celebrations created for specific purposes at particular places and times (Allen et al. 2011), as well as to meet visitors' needs and travel motivations (Li and Petrick 2005). More precisely, based on the tourism potential of 'hallmark events', Ritchie (1984, 2) has defined such events as 'major one-time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and/or long term'. It is noticed that many adjectives such as 'special' (Getz 1989), 'hallmark' (Hall 1989; Ritchie 1984) or 'mega' (Marris 1987; Rooney 1988), are used in conjunction with the term 'event'. Each of these terms can hold a variety of connotations, but also appear to be interchangeably used. Simply put, they are all in fact 'planned events', except labelled differently based on their relative significance, uniqueness or their size (Getz 1991; Hall 1989).

Getz (2012b, 41) presented six major categories of planned events based on their form – cultural celebrations; political and state; arts and entertainment; business and trade; sports and recreation; and private functions. Certain events can fall into more than one category. For example, a music festival can be considered a cultural celebration, arts and entertainment, or even recreation. It is necessary to highlight that not all planned events have tourism potential or are targeted to the tourist market. Many of the traditional cultural and community events have not been organised specifically for targeted tourists, but as a source of identity and celebration, and as a special occasion for local people (Buch, Milne and Dickson 2011; Lau and Li 2015). Some of these existing events are viewed as having tourism potential, and as a result are adopted and repackaged to develop tourism demand (Blichfeldt and Halkier 2014; Richards 2007). In essence, integrating planned events to promote tourism is essentially event tourism (Getz 2008). For that reason, in this study the term 'event(s)' encompasses all types of planned events deliberately created or adopted with tourism objectives in mind.

An event organiser cannot produce an event alone, rather must involve a range of co-producers, who could affect and are affected by the event outcomes (Getz and Andersson 2009). It is clear from the literature that a key issue of event management is how to bring together the different parties needed to organise an event (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Reid 2011). Stakeholders' participation and involvement makes the events possible (Prebensen 2010), but with so many different individuals and organisations involved in the event tourism phenomenon (Andersson and Getz 2009; Carlsen et al. 2011), it becomes very challenging to find common ground among the various agendas in play. Event survival and success are largely dependent on the event organisers' effective management of the

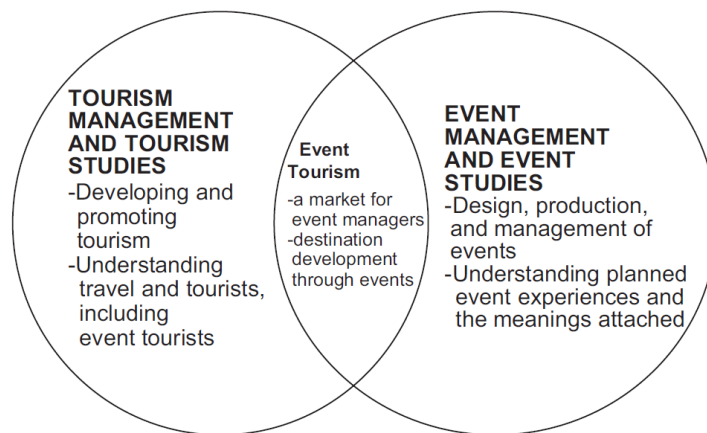


stakeholders involved (Getz and Andersson 2009). The following subsections will continue discussing the role of planned events within tourism, the development of event tourism studies and the importance of stakeholders in events.

### **2.2.1 Role of planned events within tourism**

Within the context of tourism, the ‘planned event’ is increasingly being recognised and adopted as a destination marketing strategy to attract visitors (Getz and Page 2016). The roles played by events in tourism include destination image-makers and enhancers, as attractions and place animators. Studies show that events can generate significant economic and tourism benefits for the host destination (Baptista-Alves, Campón-Cerro and Ferreira-Martins 2010; Gratton, Dobson and Shibli 2000; Chirieleison and Montrone 2013). Events can extend the tourist season and offset cyclical demand in the travel market (Barker, Page and Meyer 2001; Ritchie and Beliveau 1974). Events are also conceived as a catalyst for urban renewal (Carlsen and Taylor 2003), and for regional growth and development (Ezeuduji 2015; Jones 2005; Moscardo 2008), and can bring about positive economic impacts on the local economy by creating business opportunities and generating employment (Dwyer, Forsyth and Spurr 2005; Lim and Lee 2006).

Events also foster social development (Ziakas 2013) and a sense of place uniqueness (Lau and Li 2015) in the host communities, as well as bringing about cultural and educational benefits and improving the subjective wellbeing of local residents (Yolal et al. 2016). Hence event tourism is receiving much attention from governments and the private sector (Getz 2013). Likewise, researchers’ and practitioners’ interest in event tourism studies has increased extensively since the 1990s (Brown et al. 2015; Kim, Boo and Kim 2013). Within event tourism studies, there are sub-areas like festival tourism, sports tourism and convention tourism, with all being subsets of tourism in general. Getz (2008) depicts event tourism studies as occurring at the nexus of tourism and event studies, as shown in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: Event Tourism at the Nexus of Tourism and Event Studies**

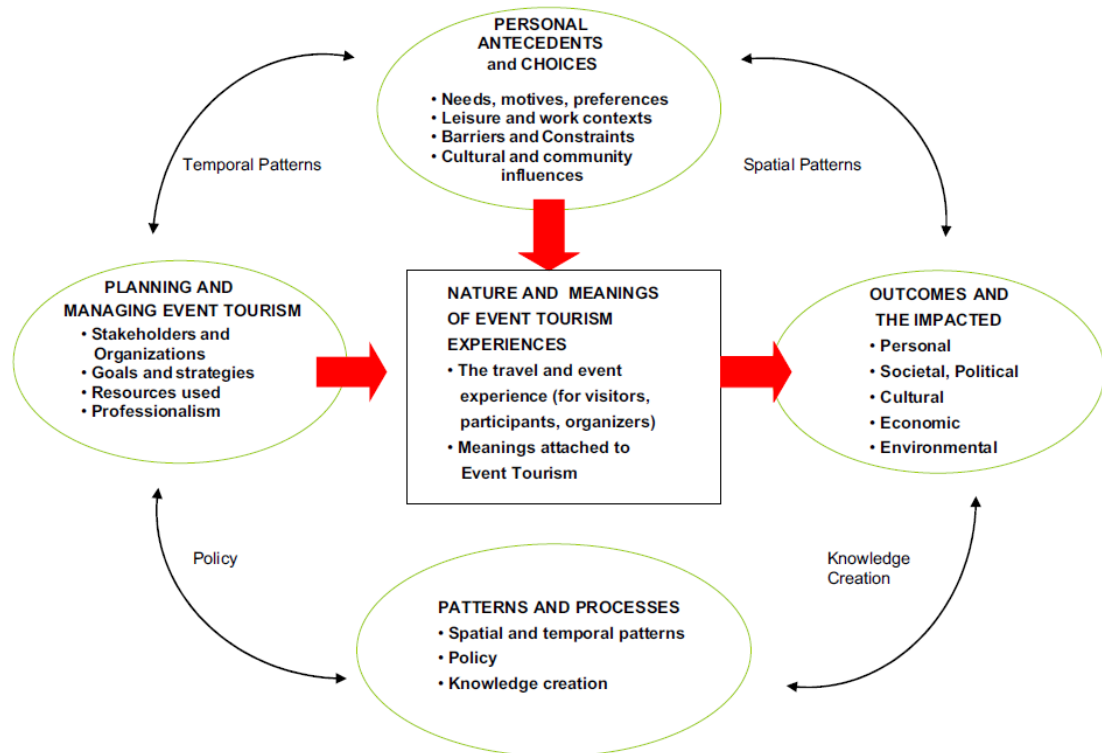
Source: Getz (2008, 406)

### 2.2.2 Development in event tourism studies

Recent reviews of event literature by Kim, Boo and Kim (2013) and Mair and Whitford (2013) found that the high level of interest in event tourism studies has continuously expanded since the 1980s. Mega sports events such as the Olympics, and all kinds of festivals and business events have received the most attention from researchers (Getz 2008; Lai and Li 2014). As events are widely recognised as a ‘catalyst’ for economic and tourism development, most events studies have tended to focus on post-event evaluation of the event’s overall impacts and outcomes (e.g. Burgan and Mules 2001; Chirieleison and Montrone 2013; Gursoy, Kim and Uysal 2004; Lim and Lee 2006; Shibli and Coleman 2005; Yolal et al. 2016), with economic impact studies and evaluations dominating the event research agenda (Mair and Whitford 2013). The research on image, attitude, motivation, behaviour, satisfaction and revisiting intention in the events field has gradually increased since the 1990s, focusing mainly on the tourists’, event participants’ or local residents’ perspectives (Kim, Boo, and Kim 2013; Lai and Li 2014). Reviewers of event literature have mostly concluded that impact analysis and motivational research trends in the events field are well established (Getz 2012a; Kim, Boo and Kim 2013; Lai and Li 2014; Park and Park 2016). Theory development in event tourism borrows heavily from economics and consumer behaviour research, while theory specific to event management has been slow to develop (Getz 2012a).

Getz (2008) provides a framework for systematically studying and creating knowledge about event tourism (see Figure 2.2), and suggests three lines of research that need more attention – event experiences and meaning; patterns and processes; and planning and managing events. The research theme of event tourism planning and managing still ‘remains a relatively unexplored research theme...[that] encompasses the organisations involved, stakeholder

networks, policy making, goals and strategies' (Getz 2008, 417). In other words, research on event stakeholders is still limited and there is a need to increase the understanding of event stakeholders in the tourism context (Kim, Boo and Kim 2013; Van Niekerk and Getz 2016). Moreover, most of the event studies occurred in developed countries (Getz 2008; Lai and Li 2014). It is only recently that event studies have gained momentum in South East Asian destinations (Cheng and Jarvis 2010; Henderson et al. 2010), including Malaysia (Abdullah, Patterson and Pegg 2015; Kler 2016; Musa and Kassim 2013; Ting et al. 2017).



**Figure 2.2: A Framework for Understanding and Creating Knowledge about Event Tourism**

Source: Getz (2008, 413)

### 2.2.3 The importance of stakeholders in events

An event organiser is not an independent actor who can produce events alone (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007). Instead, an event organiser is normally a dependent co-producer within a network of organisations and other stakeholders. Due to the fluctuating and temporal nature of events, the organisers normally do not keep fixed resources but hire from others. As a result, events are created in a network of activities involving a host of stakeholders, who can affect and are affected by the event outcomes (Getz and Andersson 2009; Larson 2009b). Generic event stakeholders may include the employees, volunteers, sponsors, suppliers, spectators,

participants, media, government and host community. These stakeholders participate in both producing and consuming the event by being there and taking more or less active roles in the event. Stakeholders' contributions make the events possible as well as add value to the events (Prebensen 2010; Reid 2011). For example, spectators or audiences influence event revenue directly through their tickets and merchandise purchases; volunteers give their time and knowledge; suppliers provide the material resources needed for the events; and the sponsors and media add economic value to the events. The resource exchange relationships that exist between events and stakeholders give those stakeholders leverage and influence over events.

All stakeholders involved in events have different roles, for different reasons, and expect their interests in events to be fulfilled (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007). For example, governments provide funding, in exchange, they expect the event to bring returns to local communities and destination promotion. Sponsors who give money to the event expect return on their investment in terms of generating market awareness or appropriate product sales (Larson 2002). Host communities provide the event with places and infrastructure, and in exchange, they expect events which enhance or at least do not damage their quality of life (Jackson 2008). To secure their goal fulfillment, event stakeholders may use different strategies to increase their legitimacy, strengthen their power position, and gain more influence on decision-making within the event network (Larson 2002). Larson and Wikstrom (2001) see the multiple parties involved in producing events as operating within a political environment in which objectives and resources for the event are negotiated by multiple parties. Further discussion on implications of the complexity of event stakeholders is presented beginning from section 2.6 to 2.8.

Due to the large number of stakeholders involved, event organisers usually find it hard to manage and distinguish between their differing goals and demands (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007). Maintaining key stakeholders' support is critical to event survival (Reid 2011). Therefore, in planning and managing events it is necessary for event organisers to identify and prioritise event stakeholders, and have a clear understanding of the various stakeholders' interests and their influence in events. These are the issues that this thesis intends to explore and examine. A review of stakeholder theory by Parmar et al. (2010) emphasises the need to address one of the most fundamental topics in the stakeholder literature: identification of stakeholders and their interests. Reviewing the event literature, it is clear that event stakeholder study remains an under-explored research theme, with previous studies mostly confined to the western context (Getz 2010; Kim, Boo and Kim 2013). The development of event stakeholder study currently depends heavily on the application of generic stakeholder and organisational theory, plus theory filtered through the closely related field of tourism (Getz 2012a). Thus,

this thesis aims to contribute to the body of work on event stakeholder theory and advance the ‘planning and managing’ line of research in Getz’s (2008) framework, as shown in Figure 2.2. The ensuing sections will commence with an overview of stakeholder theory since the publication of Freeman’s seminal work in 1984, continue with a detailed discussion of the TSIS first introduced by Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997), which is the primary theoretical foundation of this study, then lead on to its application in event studies.

## **2.3 Stakeholder Theory**

### **2.3.1 Introduction to stakeholder theory**

Stakeholder theory stemmed from the notion that a firm should consider, respect and treat fairly all its deserving constituencies, instead of maximising only the interest of stockholders (Freeman and McVea 2001). The word ‘stakeholder’ was coined in an internal memorandum at the Stanford Research Institute (SRI) in 1963 and refers to ‘those groups without whose support the organisation would cease to exist’ (Freeman and Reed 1983, 89). Stakeholder theory crystallised as a framework for strategic management when Freeman (1984) published his seminal book entitled *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*. Freeman (1984, 46) gives a broad definition of a stakeholder as ‘any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives’, and argues that stakeholders with similar interests or rights may constitute a group. The firm-stakeholder relationship is illustrated by Freeman in a dyadic ‘hub-and-spoke’ model with the firm at the centre. Freeman (1984) urges managers to be aware of and engage in constructive relationships with both internal stakeholders (owners, employees, customers, suppliers) and external stakeholders (government agencies, competitors, communities, media and other interest groups). He combined corporate planning, systems theory, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and organisational theory in developing his stakeholder theory (Freeman 1984). The theory is intended to offer a pragmatic stakeholder approach so managers can achieve superior performance in a changing business environment and ensure long term success (Freeman and McVea 2001).

Subsequently, research on stakeholder theory underwent rapid growth in the 1990s, matured around 1999 (Laplume, Sonpar and Litz 2008) and continues to the present. It has gained popularity among both academics and practitioners. Stakeholder theory started as a theory of the firm (Steurer 2006), predominantly as a means of management in for-profit corporations (Crilly and Sloan 2012; Purnell and Freeman 2012; Silver 2012) including small and medium-sized enterprises (Nejati, Amran and Ahmad 2014; Schlierer et al. 2012; Sen and Cowley

2013) and family businesses (Fang et al. 2013; Mitchell et al. 2011; Mitchell et al. 2013). Over time, it has evolved and has been applied in not-for-profit settings (Esteve et al. 2011; Sobczak and Havard 2015; Walters 2010), to governments (de Bussy and Kelly 2010; Siriwardhane and Taylor 2014) or to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Hendry 2005; Mele and Schepers 2013). Following the initial proposition, stakeholder theory usually examines stakeholders from a managerial perspective (Eesley and Lenox 2006; Mitchell et al. 1997; Parmar et al. 2010; Weitzner and Deutsch 2015), but a few studies have taken the reverse approach, considering the phenomenon from the stakeholder perspective (Garriga 2014; Pajunen 2006; Sandbu 2012; Tashman and Raelin 2013).

Research on stakeholder theory has spilled over into different fields (Marindeis, Alves and Raposo 2011). It has been applied in the fields of marketing (de Bussy, Ewing and Pitt 2003; Jones 2005; Laczniak and Murphy 2012), public relations (de Bussy 2008; Meintjes and Grobler 2014), accounting practice (Boesso and Kumar 2009; Krishnan and Yetman 2011), financial management (Cheng, Ioannou and Serafeim 2014; Henisz, Dorobantu and Narthey 2014), human resource management (Greenwood and Anderson 2009; Nickols 2005; Tsai et al. 2005), and project management (De Schepper, Doms and Haezendonck 2014; Eskerod 2013; Vos and Achterkamp 2006), among others. Due to the flourishing of international business, the development of information and communication technologies, and increasing emphasis on TBL business performance, stakeholder theory has been deployed in the analysis of a wide variety of phenomena, such as international business ethics (Carroll 2004; Kujala, Heikkinen and Lehtimäki 2012; McCarthy et al. 2012), CSR standards (Avetisyan and Ferrary 2013; Dong, Burritt and Qian 2014), sustainable development (Gibson 2012; Roome and Wijen 2006; Weng 2005), global project management (Aaltonen and Kujala 2010), global governance (Mele and Schepers 2013), and social media impact (Sedereviciute and Valentini 2011). Globalisation has brought new challenges to stakeholder theory (Jensen and Sandström 2011). The theory was originally formulated in developed economies, based on western values and moral systems, but its influence has spread into eastern and emerging or developing economies (Chiu and Wang 2015; Cummings and Guthrie 2007; Masoud and Wilson 2011; McCarthy et al. 2012; Su, Mitchell and Sirgy 2007), as it seeks new legitimacy in its application to the task of differentiating cultural contexts (Castelló and Galang 2014; Wu and Wokutch 2015).

Indeed, very few management theories have generated as many published works in recent decades as stakeholder theory (Mainardes, Alves and Raposo 2011). More than 30 years have passed, yet Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory continues to attract attention and generate critical discussion from both academics and practitioners (Laplume, Sonpar and Litz 2008;

Marindeis, Alves and Raposo 2011; Parmar et al. 2010). A comprehensive review of the literature by Laplume, Sonpar and Litz (2008) found that the work done on stakeholder theory clustered around five broad themes: (1) firm performance, (2) firm actions and responses, (3) theory debates, (4) definition and salience, and (5) stakeholder actions and responses. This literature review will examine the advances on the last two themes identified by Laplume, Sonpar and Litz (2008), as they are used to inform the research questions and provide the background to the theories that will be used in the thesis. The themes of stakeholder salience and stakeholder actions and responses will be discussed in greater detail under separate sections (2.4 and 2.5). The rest of this section will review the definition of ‘stakeholder’. This is one of the most fundamental topics in stakeholder literature but there is much work yet to be done in order to yield a richer description of the stakeholder concept (Marindeis, Alves and Raposo 2011; Parmar et al. 2010). Freeman et al. (2010, 208) argue ‘work needs to be done to pare down and refine what we mean by stakeholders if the term is to prove helpful at a conceptual level or at a practical level.’

### **2.3.2 Definition of ‘stakeholder’**

One of the main themes in stakeholder theory is stakeholder definition and salience, one which has been explored since the commencement of the stakeholder debate (Laplume, Sonpar and Litz 2008). Key questions include: who are stakeholders, who or what really counts, and who is more important? (Fassin 2012; Laplume et al. 2008; Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997). These questions are consistently highlighted as challenges to the theory (Hasnas 2013; Laplume et al. 2008; Mainardes, Alves and Raposo 2011, Parmar et al. 2010). After more than three decades of critical theoretical analysis, the terms ‘stakeholder’ and ‘stake’ are still disputable (Freeman et al. 2010; Orts and Strudler 2009). The term ‘stakeholder’ has been used indiscriminately without clear understanding of what a stakeholder actually is (Friedman and Miles 2006; Marindeis et al. 2011). It has been defined and used in different ways and in conjunction with different issues, subject to different interpretations by different users (Frooman 2010; Mitchell et al. 1997; Parmar et al. 2010). It is a term lacking a generally accepted definition or framework (Marindeis et al. 2011) although Freeman’s definition is usually used as the starting point for further conceptualisation.

Freeman’s (1984, 46) broad definition of the stakeholder as ‘any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives’ has provided an enduring foundation for many continuing efforts to define and build stakeholder models and concepts. The concept’s ambiguity and vagueness in scope have created an impressive philosophical and intellectual debate on the broad versus narrow definitions of a stakeholder

(Laplume et al. 2008; Marindeis et al. 2011). A litany of definitions has been developed, as shown in Table 2.1. Fundamentally, the stakeholder concept contains a trinity of elements – the focal organisation, the stakeholders, and organisation-stakeholder relationships or connections (Marindeis et al. 2011). However, it is the interaction among stakeholders that completes the picture of the organisation-stakeholder relationship (Rowley 1997). Due to the differences among moral, legal and managerial interpretations of the concept, it is difficult to derive a consensus (Fassin 2009). Many attempts have also been made to answer the normative question ‘which stakeholders should managers pay attention to?’ (Clarkson 1995; Crane and Ruebottom 2011; Derry 2012; Driscoll and Starik 2004; Freeman 1984; Phillips 2003), as against the more empirical question ‘which stakeholders do managers really care about?’ (Jawahar and McLaughlin 2001; Kochan and Rubinstein 2000; Laplume et al. 2008; Mitchell et al. 1997; Su, Mitchell and Sirgy 2007). The narrow definition of stakeholder is grounded on the reality that managers have limited resources to deal with all the entities that can affect or are affected by the organisation, therefore favouring instead a more pragmatic conceptualisation that captures the saliency or level of influence of potential stakeholders (Frooman 1999; Kochan and Rubinstein 2000; Mitchell et al. 1997).

### **2.3.2.1 *Narrow definition of ‘stakeholder’***

The legal interpretation, which rests upon rights and contracts, leads to a narrower view of the stakeholder concept, limited to those who have direct contractual or legal relationships with a firm (Clarkson 1995; Fassin 2009). This view selects a number of stakeholders who are essentially the classic stakeholders, such as creditors, suppliers and employees who are contributing to the firm’s operations (Freeman and Reed 1983), and who have legitimate claims based upon contractual or exchange relationships (Hill and Jones 1992). They are groups of people who are the ‘supportive’ stakeholders in Savage et al.’s (1991, 65) typology, considered to be inside the organisation’s formal boundaries and to have a concrete stake as well as an expected loyal interest in the firm (Fassin 2010).

Economic-led definitions view stakeholders as those who have a direct economic impact upon the organisation (Clarkson 1995), and/or those on whom the organisation is dependent for its continued survival (Freeman and Reed 1983; Pajunen 2006), and in addition, those who take on risk when supporting the organisation (Clarkson 1994). Post, Preston and Sachs (2002, 8) stressed the role of stakeholder relationships in the creation of firm wealth, defining stakeholders as ‘individuals and constituencies that contribute, either voluntarily or involuntarily, to its wealth-creating capacity and activities, and who are therefore its potential beneficiaries and/or risk bearers’. Similarly, Kochan and Rubinstein (2000) emphasise that



potential stakeholders are those who contribute valued resources, put their resources at risk, those who would experience costs if the firm failed or should their relationship with the firm terminate, and who also have power in or over the firm. For some authors, stakeholders are groups with resources and network power (Pajunen 2006), committed to work together in mutually beneficial ways (Sloan and Oliver 2013), or a group of individuals who are actively or passively involved in the achievement of objectives (Vos and Achterkamp 2006).

### **2.3.2.2            *Broad definition of ‘stakeholder’***

Conversely, the broad definition of ‘stakeholder’ expands the stakeholder groups to include those who are internal and external (Freeman 1984), primary and secondary (Clarkson 1995), fiduciary and non-fiduciary (Goodpaster 1991), normative and derivative (Phillips 2003), or powerful and powerless (Mitchell et al. 1997). Some distinguish among core, major and peripheral, where core stakeholders are managers within the firm making key decisions; major stakeholders are those who exert influence on core stakeholders through the provision of resources or through action that can hurt the firm; and peripheral stakeholders influence the major stakeholders, and thus the core in the long term (Su, Mitchell and Sirgy 2007). More recent work has sought to de-centre the firm, seeing it as located within an ‘issue network’ of relationships, and arguing that stakeholders are those who have a stake in an issue, instead of those who have a stake in the firm (Frooman 2010; Roloff 2008).

Certain groups of people may have some impact on the firm’s activities, but have no specific stake in the firm itself, for example the pressure groups, media, and competitors (Donaldson and Preston 1995). From the business ethics perspective, stakeholders are those for whom a company is responsible (Kaler 2006). Based on this definition, advocates of business ethics and CSR begin to add other potentially deserving claimants such as the local community and other regional groups of people who are either harmed or benefited by a firm’s activities (Orts and Strudler 2009). Some studies have focused entirely on fringe (Hart and Sharma 2004) or marginalised stakeholders (Derry 2012; Paul 2015), or citizen stakeholders (Silver 2012). From a different perspective, due to the globalisation of business and the development of information technologies and communication systems, virtually everyone and everything could be considered a stakeholder (Jones and Fleming 2003). In the broadest sense, the term could include non-human beings such as the natural environment (Starik 1995) and gods (Schwartz 2006). Such a broad view of the stakeholder concept has been criticised as unmanageable, if not virtually meaningless (Orts and Strudler 2009).

**Table 2.1: Who are Stakeholders?**

<b>Narrow Definition</b> <b>Those which</b>	<b>Researchers</b>
- the organisation is dependent on for its continued survival	Freeman and Reed 1983 (91) Pajunen 2006 (1265)
- have a legitimate claim on the firm...established through the existence of an exchange relationship	Hill and Jones 1992 (133)
- have direct relevance to the firm's core economic interest	Clarkson 1995 (106)
- contribute to the firm's wealth-creating capacity and activities, and which are therefore its potential beneficiaries and/or risk bearers	Post, Preston and Sachs 2002 (8) Kochan and Rubinstein 2000 (369)
- are actively or passively involved in the achievement of objectives	Vos and Achterkamp 2006 (166-167)
- have a concrete stake in the company, are dedicated and supportive, with a real positive and loyal interest in the firm	Fassin 2010 (40)
- are committed to work together in mutually beneficial ways to accomplish goals that they could not otherwise achieve alone	Sloan and Oliver 2013 (1837)
<b>Broad Definition</b>	<b>Researchers</b>
- can affect or are affected by the achievement of an organisation's objectives	Freeman 1984 (46)
- have the ability to influence the organisation	Savage et al 1991 (63-64) Frooman 1999 (193-194)
- are persons or groups with legitimate interests in corporate activity	Donaldson and Preston 1995 (67)
- have the ability to affect the organisation and achievement of its goals, and other stakeholders	Phillips 2003 (30-31)
- have a voice in the actions of an organisation	Hart and Sharma 2004 (8)
- have a relationship with an organisation	Su, Mitchell and Sirgy 2007 (305-307)
- have a grievance or a valued resource or an opportunity to influence others in the issue network	Frooman 2010 (169)
- contribute to the value creation in the firm	Parmer et al. 2010 (405-406) Garriga 2014 (491)
- carry perfect or imperfect rights in their claim on corporate action	Brown and Forster 2013 (306)
- have an interest, or rights, or ownership, and can contribute to, or be impacted by, an organisation.	De Schepper, Dooms and Haezendonck 2014 (648).

Source: Adapted and updated from Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997, 858) and Frooman (2010, 163)

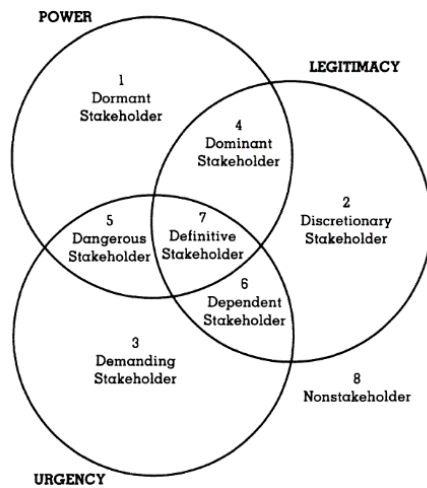
It can be concluded that stakeholders can be divided into two groups – those whose interactions help an organisation to accomplish its goals and those whose interactions do not (Frooman 2010). Multiple definitions of the stakeholder concept, including variations in emphasis,

interpretation and scope, have resulted in abundant multiple frameworks for defining and identifying various stakeholders. Acknowledging the pragmatic problems involved, Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) did an extensive analysis of the definitions of stakeholders and proposed a TSIS, to explain how managers may prioritise stakeholder relationships. The work of Mitchell et al. (1997) has proved to be one of the most commonly discussed and deployed models (e.g. Cummings and Guthrie 2007; Gago and Antolín 2004; Magness 2008; Masoud and Wilson 2011; Weber and Marley 2012; Weitzner and Deutsch 2015) and has had the greatest influence on stakeholder theory literature (Mainardes, Alves and Raposo 2012; Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011). The following section will review Mitchell et al.'s (1997) TSIS in more detail as it forms the theoretical background to Research Question 1 mentioned in Chapter 1.

## **2.4 Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience (TSIS)**

### **2.4.1 Introduction to TSIS**

Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) propose that stakeholders can be identified by their possession of three important attributes: power, legitimacy and urgency. Stakeholder power refers to 'a relationship among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not have otherwise done' (Mitchell et al. 1997, 869). Etzioni's (1964) categorisation of power in the organisational setting was adopted by Mitchell et al. (1997) as the basis of power: coercive power (force/threat); utilitarian (material/incentives); and normative (symbolic influences). Basing their definition on Suchman's (1995, 574) work, legitimacy is defined by Mitchell et al. (1997, 866) as 'a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, benefits and definitions'. Legitimacy could be based on factors at the individual, organisational or societal level. Urgency refers to 'the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention' (Mitchell et al. 1997, 869). Beyond identifying the non-stakeholder, Mitchell et al.'s (1997) theory produces seven groups of stakeholders: dormant, discretionary, demanding, dominant, dangerous, dependent, and definitive stakeholders. Each group possesses one, two, or all three of the power/legitimacy/urgency attributes. Definitive stakeholders have all three attributes. Expectant stakeholders have two of the three attributes. Latent stakeholders have only one attribute. Figure 2.3 presents the basic model of stakeholder attributes, showing the logical categories of stakeholders that result from various combinations of these three important attributes.



**Figure 2.3: Stakeholder Typology: One, Two or Three Attributes Present**

Source: Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997, 874)

Building upon this typology, Mitchell et al. (1997) go beyond the question of stakeholder identification to further propose a theory of stakeholder salience which can explain to whom and to what managers actually pay attention depending on situational uniqueness and managerial perception. They define salience as ‘the degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims’, and advocate that managers pay attention to stakeholders with salient attributes of power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell et al. 1997, 869). A central proposition in their theory stresses the interaction of power, legitimacy and urgency in creating stakeholders’ overall salience. The more attributes a stakeholder has, the greater their salience, thus ensuring they deserve more managerial attention.

Mitchell et al.’s (1997) model has three key characteristics. First, it is dynamic, as three stakeholder attributes are variable (Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011); it is socially constructed and not all stakeholders are aware of their attributes. Moreover, stakeholders can move from one class to another, or increase their salience by acquiring additional attributes, resulting in important consequences for managers and the firm (Mitchell et al. 1997). Second, it is political, considering the organisation as the result of conflicting and unequal interests (Kujala, Heikkinen and Lehtimäki 2012). Third, it is operationally effective in terms of qualifying the stakeholders (Mainardes, Alves and Raposo 2011). The following subsections (2.4.2 to 2.4.4) will revisit and assess the three original salience attributes, which are relevant to the thesis. Mitchell et al. (1997) have mooted the idea that RDT (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) is helpful in explaining why power plays such an important role in stakeholder salience. In the next subsection, this idea of resource-based power will be examined in greater detail and will be

integrated with NT (Rowley 1997) to extend the construct of the stakeholder power attribute in the thesis.

#### **2.4.2 Stakeholder power**

Power is very much a part of relationships where people affect each other and depend upon each other, in organisations or society as a whole (Foucault 1980). Courpasson, Phillips and Clegg (2006) argue that power is the most central concept in the analysis of organisation(s) and organising. However, there is lack of consensus as to how power should be defined. Moreover, different terms such as ‘influence’, ‘control’, ‘capacity’ or ‘ability’ are used indistinctly to illustrate the concept. Examples of studies which have treated power and influence as one concept in their attempt to map stakeholders’ influence can be found in Freeman and Reed (1983), Savage et al. (1991), and Bourne and Walker (2005). This thesis agrees with Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) in distinguishing power from influence, as the former represents an attribute of stakeholders which gives them the capacity to use power, causing them to be salient in the eyes of managers. Power is different from stakeholder influence, as influence is associated with the stakeholders’ behaviour, and their attempted or actual use of their power (Frooman and Murrell 2005).

The early Weberian idea of power is about ‘the probability that one actor within a social relationship would be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance’ (Weber 1947 cited in Mitchell et al. 1997, 865). Pfeffer (1992, 3) described power as ‘a relationship among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not otherwise have done.’ Savage et al. (1991) suggested that capacity, opportunity, and willingness to act are postulated to be a function of the stakeholder’s relative power either to cooperate with or threaten the organisation. This leads to the fundamental question of ‘what are the bases of power?’ or ‘how is power exercised?’

French and Raven’s (1959) work on the power bases of reference, expertise, legitimacy, reward, coercion and information, is a well-known study of power in organisations (Blois and Hopkinson 2013). However, some authors have found the framework muddled, lacking rigour and problematic in its application (Beetham 1991; Blois and Hopkinson 2013; Mitchell et al. 1997). The main criticism is the use of legitimacy as a base of power without considering the distinction between legitimacy and power (Beetham 1991). Blois (2010, 162) illustrated that ‘Mafia possesses power but most people do not believe that the Mafia’s power is legitimate.’ Legitimacy and power can exist independently (Mitchell et al. 1997); legitimacy justifies the acceptance of power, yet it is not in itself a basis for power (Blois 2010). Conversely, Freeman

and Reed (1983) narrowed stakeholder power down to three types, ranging from the formal or voting power of stockholders, through the economic power of customers, suppliers, creditors and employees, to the political power of special interest groups. Economic power refers to the ability to affect a company's cost and revenue structure; political power means the ability to influence through use of the political process. Meanwhile, Wartick and Wood (1998) added that sometimes stakeholders take on multiple roles, and have multiple stakes in an organisation, allowing them to acquire cumulative powers. For example, employees who own a company's shares buy the company's product and also live near the company, so that they become both the employee and owner, as well as being customers and community members for the company.

Mitchell et al. (1997, 865) adopted Etzioni's (1964) categorisation of power in the organisational setting, defining stakeholder power as 'the extent it has or can gain access to coercive, utilitarian, or normative means, to impose its will in the relationship.' This definition suggested that power is exercised based on the type of resources a stakeholder has: coercive power, based on physical resources of force, violence or restraint; utilitarian power, based on material or financial resources; and normative power, based on symbolic resources. Due to different types and amounts of resources possessed by different organisations, resulting in what are often labelled as asymmetrical power relationships, where the resource-poorer party normally appears to be the subservient party (Blois 2010; Ford, Wang and Vestal 2011). Powerful stakeholders have resources that are valued; they can potentially affect those subject to their power in terms of achievement of their goals, or can make their lives better or worse (Tjosvold and Wisse 2009).

Mitchell et al. (1997) introduced RDT (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) in studying stakeholder power. However, they did not further explain how relationships based on different categories of resources might influence relative stakeholder power, and in turn influence stakeholder salience. One of the basic tenets of stakeholder salience theory is that stakeholders are not equal in their importance, and in this context, RDT is a useful framework for understanding how resource differences between the organisation and its stakeholders affect their power relationship and also stakeholder salience (Eesley and Lenox 2006; Frooman 1999). RDT has been adopted widely by organisational theorists in their research on organisation-stakeholder relationships (Berman, Phillips and Wicks 2005; Casciaro and Piskorski 2005; Drees and Heugens 2013; Eesley and Lenox 2006; Frooman and Murrell 2005; Pajunen 2006).

The stakeholder salience theory and RDT illustrated are both based on dyadic relationships, where a focal organisation is placed at the centre of attention. However in practice,

contemporary organisations operate within a relationships network, where other actors in the network might be equally or even more powerful than the focal organisation (Beritelli and Laesser 2011; Freeman 1979; Frooman 2010; Pajunen 2006; Roloff 2008; Rowley 1997; Sparrowe and Liden 2005; Weitzner and Deutsch 2015). The network perspective of stakeholder power ‘refers to power obtained through the network’s structure, as opposed to power gained through individual attributes’ (Rowley 1997, 898). Mitchell et al. (1997) treat power as an attribute of stakeholders, and their conceptualisation of stakeholder power is single-faceted and underdeveloped. This thesis aims to extend the construct of stakeholder power by amalgamating RDT (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) with NT (Rowley 1997) into a single framework, to see how they potentially together explain the relative power of stakeholders, and in turn their salience. RDT and NT have rarely been integrated in order to examine stakeholder power. This thesis aims to fill that gap.

#### **2.4.2.1            *Resource dependence theory (RDT)***

RDT is an organisational theory which explains that organisations are not self-sufficient but depend on the external environment to provide needed resources in order to survive and function (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). It proposes that organisations are interdependent on one another through resource exchange processes. Such interdependent relationships can be either asymmetric or symmetric forms of dependence (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003). A reciprocal resource exchange or a mutually dependent form of relationship brings about a better balance of power between two organisations, and tends to lead to a more positive and long-term relationship (Casciaro and Piskorski 2005). On the other hand, an unequal resource exchange relationship results in asymmetric forms of dependence and power differentials between two organisations. The degree of dependence and power difference is determined by the number of alternative supplies, the substitutability of the resource and the criticality of the resource to the organisation’s final outcomes (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003).

Although the unit of analysis associated with RDT is organisational, it has its theoretical and conceptual roots in the social exchange that defines the power differentials emerging between individuals (Emerson 1962). Power is structurally determined and also defined in relative terms, in the sense that it is defined in terms of which actor is more dependent than another, who is dependent on whom, and how much (Frooman 1999). When actor B has control of resources that actor A values and that are not available elsewhere, actor A is more dependent on actor B – this relationship then enhances B’s power in relation to A. An actor’s power is the inverse of its dependence on the other actor in a dyad (Emerson 1962). A stakeholder in control of essential, non-substitutable and critical resources needed to achieve the

organisation's goals possesses a power advantage relative to other dependent stakeholders (Eesley and Lenox 2006). The stakeholder may exercise power by laying down conditions constraining use of the resources, or by supplying or withholding the resources (Frooman 1999; Sheehan and Ritchie 2005). Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) emphasise that power is an ability to regulate or control the access, possession, allocation and use of resources. Above all, a strategy for gaining such power is to make the resources that one controls more important, valuable, unique, or non-substitutable. Resource dependence provides insight into the relational nature of power besides implying what resources matter most (Roscigno 2011).

According to Rogers (1974, 1425) a 'resource is any attribute, circumstance, or possession that increases the ability of its holder to influence a person or group'. Individual attributes such as competence, innovativeness and trustworthiness could be valuable resources (Church and Coles 2007; Pfeffer and Salancik 2003). Foucault (1980) argued that knowledge is a resource that induces the effects of power. He further stressed that it is impossible for knowledge not to create power and also impossible for power to be exerted without knowledge. Studies have confirmed Foucault's claim, identifying knowledge and competence as resources in the exercise of power (Beritelli and Laesser 2011; Clarke and Jepson 2011; Kochan and Rubinstein 2000). Others have proposed that media reputation (Deephouse 2000), allies, hierarchy and access to information (Ford, Wang and Vestal 2012) could be the valuable resources required by organisations. More recent studies have claimed that interpersonal skills (Turner and Schabram 2012) and networking capability are resources of social power exerting influence on others (Ford et al. 2012; Volgger and Pechlaner 2014). Circumstances that could be resources include such things as holding public service authority or political office; access to influential people; availability of time and energy; or committee memberships (Rogers 1974). Possessions that could constitute tangible resources include venues or material, financial and manpower supplies, among others.

However, mere possession of resources does not make one powerful. Rogers (1974) distinguished between 'infra-resources' and 'instrumental resources', suggesting that both need to be present when exercising power in any given situation. According to her, 'infra-resources are those attributes, circumstances, or possessions that must be present before the appropriate instrumental resources can be activated or invoked; in that situation they are the preconditions or prerequisites without which instrumental resources are useless' (Rogers 1974, 1425). For example, time and energy may be an infra-resource necessary to involvement in a community project. Assume a person has the experience and knowledge (instrumental resource) to help with a community project, but lacks the time or energy: that would not permit him or her to use his/her power in that instance. Thus, stakeholders' capacity for threat or



cooperation is tempered by their opportunities and willingness to act (Savage et al. 1991) as well as by their own awareness of their power (Mitchell et al. 1997).

Taking a different view, the stakeholder providing the most resources has the most significant impact on the organisation, as well as having some effect on other stakeholders (Lämsiluoto, Järvenpää and Krumwiede 2013; Volgger and Pechlaner 2014). The greater the resource base of a stakeholder group relative to the resource base of the targeted organisation, the greater is that stakeholder's salience (Eesley and Lenox 2006; Hofer et al. 2012; Su, Mitchell and Sirgy 2007). Inter-organisational power differentials grow out of asymmetric resource exchanges between organisations and seem to be embedded in a wider relationships network of stakeholders (Frooman 1999; Pajunen 2006; Rowley 1997). Some stakeholders may have relationships with other stakeholders who supply resources to the focal organisation. These stakeholders might be able to influence indirectly or manipulate the flow of resources to the focal organisation and also within the stakeholder network (Rowley 1997). This source of power arises due to the network structure and the resulting relationships among stakeholders, and in turn affects the relative power among the stakeholders in the organisation network, bringing about a political model of inter-organisational behaviour (Frooman 1999).

#### **2.4.2.2        *Network theory (NT)***

Freeman (1984) conceptualises the stakeholder model in a hub-and-spoke map, where the focal organisation is at the centre of a wheel and its stakeholders are at the ends of the wheel's spokes. Under this scenario, stakeholders are independent of one another, and have no relationship with one another. In contrast, Rowley (1997, 892) argues that an organisation and its stakeholders operate within a social network system, which encompasses multi-directional relationships, and the focal organisation is 'more than simply the central point of its own stakeholders: it is also a stakeholder of many other focal points in its relevant social system'. Similarly, an organisation's stakeholders are likely to have direct relationships with one another and with many other actors in a wider social system. Rowley (1997) used social network analysis to describe how organisations are embedded within a relational network of stakeholders, and how the structure of the network and the organisation's position within it then affects the relative power of stakeholders. Stakeholder power depends on the density and centrality of the network environment.

Density refers to the interconnectedness of stakeholders, including the number of relationships or linkages that exist in the network (Rowley 1997). A dense network structure exhibits many relationships among stakeholders, and facilitates information exchange, the establishment of

shared behavioural expectations, and effective interactions among stakeholders (Oliver 1991). Such dense network structure tends to furnish stakeholders with power and projects strong unified stakeholder pressures onto the focal organisation. In contrast, a less dense stakeholder network impedes communications and interactions, limiting stakeholders' ability to influence the organisation (Rowley 1997). While density is a characteristic of the whole network, centrality refers to an individual stakeholder's position in the network relative to others. Network centrality represents a stakeholder's number of direct connections (degree) and free access (closeness) to others, as well as control over others (betweenness) in the network (Freeman 1979; Rowley 1997). The more a stakeholder is linked to other stakeholders and the shorter the communication paths to the focal organisation and all others in the network, the more central that stakeholder is. Stakeholders with high betweenness centrality are the intermediaries or gatekeepers, who facilitate exchanges among less central stakeholders within the network (Freeman 1979; Rowley 1997). It is suggested that centrally positioned stakeholders have power advantages because they control communication flow in the system or have independent access to other resources potentially available within the network (Rowley 1997). Peripheral stakeholders tend to depend on other stakeholders to access other regions of the network. Hence, power is a function of one's position in the network of exchange and social relations (Pfeffer 1992).

Managers should assess their multi-stakeholder networks instead of concentrating on dyadic organisation-stakeholder relations, as Frooman (2010) claims that the question of who stakeholders know in the network does affect their level of influence in the organisation. Some empirical studies have supported Rowley's (1997) proposition that a centrally positioned stakeholder can be influential, powerful and salient (Ford, Wang and Vestal 2012; Hautbois et al. 2012; Turker 2014); a dense stakeholder network demonstrates a greater efficacy in communication and decision-making (Kujala et al. 2012; Neville and Menguc 2006; Roloff 2008; Shepherd and Pryke 2014). Others have concluded that the network position is only a partial indicator of perceived stakeholder salience (Cooper, Scott and Baggio 2009).

Stakeholders' power can be best understood as an unequal relationship, based on their attributes and positioning within a network system (Hazra, Fletcher and Wilkes 2014; Pajunen 2006). However, there has been only limited empirical investigation that has applied RDT (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) in tandem with Rowley's (1997) NT to the examination of stakeholder power and salience. This thesis fills that research gap, and makes explicit the constitutive interplay of resource-based and network-based power in examining the relative nature of stakeholder power in the stakeholder salience framework.

In the TSIS, stakeholder power has to interact with the other two attributes of legitimacy and urgency to gain priority in a stakeholder-manager relationship. Power may be problematic to define, but it is not that difficult to distinguish as compared to legitimacy (Mitchell et al. 1997). The next section will examine the legitimacy attribute of stakeholders in Mitchell et al.'s (1997) framework.

### **2.4.3 Stakeholder legitimacy**

Conceptualising legitimacy in the stakeholder salience framework is the most confusing and argumentative endeavour, requiring more precise assessment (Mainardes, Alves and Raposo 2011; Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011). Some authors have even argued that legitimacy is the *sine qua non* of stakeholder status (de Bussy 2008; Phillip 2003), or as Freeman (1984, 45) wrote, 'stakeholder connotes legitimacy.' Some stakeholder theorists, like Hill and Jones (1992) and Donaldson and Preston (1995), actually included the term 'legitimate' in their definition of a stakeholder. Hence a common debate about legitimacy centres on who or what exactly is being conferred legitimacy: entities or actions? Several authors have articulated the 'appropriateness of a stakeholder claim or issue' to be accorded legitimacy (Eesley and Lenox 2006; Frooman 2010; Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011; Roloff 2008).

Stakeholder scholars have studied how legitimation occurs and how the boundary is drawn between those who have legitimate claims on organisations and those whose claims are not regarded as legitimate (de Bussy 2008; Fassin 2009; Friedman and Miles 2002). A very narrow approach suggests that '... the boundary is a contractual one. Only stakeholders in necessary relations with the organisation are regarded as legitimate stakeholders by it' (Friedman and Miles 2002, 16). Others view legitimacy as implying legal, ownership rights or moral claims (Fassin 2009; Hill and Jones 1992; Kaler 2002), or as linked with the notion that stakeholders have something at risk (Clarkson 1994). In contrast, Mitchell et al. (1997) regard legitimacy as a characteristic of the stakeholder group. Mitchell et al. (1997) suggest that legitimacy and power concept either competes or overlaps in many management theories (e.g. agency, behavioural, institutional, population ecology, resource dependence and transaction cost theories). Mitchell et al. concurred with Weber (1947) that although legitimacy and power can be combined to create 'authority' (defined by Weber as the legitimate use of power), they are distinct attributes that exist independently. Managers consider how these two attributes interact when establishing stakeholder salience.

Mitchell et al.'s work (1997, 866) adopted Suchman's (1995) broad definition of legitimacy, which defined legitimacy as 'a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an

entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions'. Suchman's landmark work on legitimacy (1995) presents a multifaceted definition, identifying three forms of legitimacy: pragmatic, moral and cognitive. He went on to mix this basic three-pronged framework with two temporal textures (episodic or continual), and two emphases (organisational actions versus organisational essences) thus arriving at a typology containing 12 distinct legitimacy types (Deephouse and Suchman 2008), as shown in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2: A Typology of Legitimacy**

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Essences</b>	
<b>Episodic</b>	Exchange	Disposition Interest	Pragmatic Legitimacy
<b>Continual</b>	Influence	Character	
<b>Episodic</b>	Consequential	Personal	Moral Legitimacy
<b>Continual</b>	Procedural	Structural	
<b>Episodic</b>	Comprehensibility Predictability      Plausibility		Cognitive Legitimacy
<b>Continual</b>	Taken-for-Grantedness Inevitability      Permanence		

Source: Suchman (1995, 584)

Pragmatic legitimacy is centred on resource exchange-based relationships (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978), and based on the focal organisation's self-interest. This instrumental view also resembles the resource-dependence approach to organisation-stakeholder relationships discussed in the previous subsection 2.4.2.1. It can also involve broader political, economic, or social interdependencies, where a stakeholder's action or non-action visibly affects and influences the focal organisation or other larger interests (Suchman 1995). Stakeholders with this form of legitimacy could be strategically important to the organisation as they directly affect or influence the organisation's outcomes. Besides exchange and influence legitimacy, Suchman (1995) suggests a third variant of pragmatic legitimacy, i.e. dispositional legitimacy, which further consists of interest and character legitimacy, elements that also merit consideration. Actors who display goodwill and trustworthiness, and are morally responsible, are more likely to be rendered legitimate.

On the other hand, the concept of moral legitimacy reflects a favourable normative evaluation of the organisation and its activities, validating that the actions of an organisation are moral as well as legal, within a social system (Suchman 1995). Moral legitimacy comprises another four types of legitimacy: consequential, procedural, structural, and personal. A stakeholder's consequential legitimacy is related to what it produces and accomplishes and whether its outcomes are of quality and value to the organisation and to society at large. Procedural legitimacy means that stakeholders are using socially accepted techniques and procedures to produce socially valued consequences. The implication is that the processes used to achieve valued consequences need to be legally and morally acceptable. Structural legitimacy indicates stakeholders' socially constructed capacity to perform specific types of work; it is more to do with their social identity or designation and how this identity reflects traditional authority. The fourth type of moral legitimacy, personal legitimacy, rests on the charisma of individuals believed to be able to do well and transcend their organisation (Suchman 1995).

Suchman's (1995, 582) third dimension of legitimacy is cognitive legitimacy, which is based on two variants – comprehensibility or 'taken-for-grantedness'. Comprehensibility suggests that an organisation and its activities are predictable, meaningful, believable, and credible, and that they also mesh with larger belief systems. The 'comprehensibility of actions [is] labelled *predictability*, and the comprehensibility of essences [is] called *plausibility*' (Suchman 1995, 583-584). This concept advocates that 'taken-for-grantedness' represents both the most subtle and the most powerful source of legitimacy, signifying that the acceptance of a stakeholder is necessary or inevitable. In a similar way, 'the taken-for-grantedness of actions [is] termed *inevitability*; the taken-for-grantedness of essences, *permanence*' (Suchman 1995, 584). While moral and pragmatic legitimacy are based on some form of self-interest and evaluation, cognitive legitimacy is not, but rather, takes the legitimacy for granted.

Other institutional researchers have also conceptualised different yet somewhat similar dimensions of legitimacy. For example, Aldrich and Fiol (1994, 648) differentiate between the cognitive and sociopolitical legitimacy of new industries: 'cognitive legitimation refers to the spread of knowledge about a new venture...socio-political legitimation refers to the process by which key stakeholders, the general public, key opinion leaders, or government officials accept a venture as appropriate and right, given existing norms and laws'. Similar to sociopolitical legitimacy would be 'regulative legitimacy' (Archibald 2004). Archibald (2004) further integrated normative and cognitive legitimacy in a new category called 'cultural legitimacy'. Other categories of legitimacy include a more contextually focused dimension called 'corporate environmental legitimacy' (Bansal and Clelland 2004); 'professional legitimacy' (Deephouse and Suchman 2008); and 'networked legitimacy' (Mele and Schepers

2013). Phillips (2003) tried to draw a distinction between normative and derivative legitimacy. He argued that normative legitimacy, based on direct moral obligation and fairness to some groups of stakeholders, is a narrower approach to stakeholder legitimacy. He attempted to expand the stakeholder legitimacy concept by bringing in 'derivative legitimacy', where legitimacy is derived from the stakeholders' ability to benefit or harm the organisation and its normative stakeholders. However, his trivial conceptualisation seems unnecessary since 'derivative legitimacy' is equivalent to the power construct in Mitchell et al.'s (1997) stakeholder salience framework (de Bussy 2008). Even Phillips (2003, 31) himself questioned, 'Isn't derivative legitimacy just another name for power?'

Some authors have criticised existing stakeholder legitimacy research on the grounds that most of it stresses pragmatic intent over moral obligation (Driscoll and Starik 2004; Phillips 2003), and have argued that stakeholder legitimacy in the TSIS should be restricted to Suchman's (1995) concept of moral legitimacy (Jones, Felps and Bigley 2007; Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011). These authors have contended that pragmatic legitimacy is related to the stakeholders' ability to instrumentally affect the organisation, due to the organisation's dependence and exchange relationships with the stakeholders. In these critics' opinion, the pragmatic legitimacy concept is akin to recognising stakeholder power, and represents a 'double-counting' in the process of assessing stakeholder salience (Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011, 365). Based on Suchman's (1995, 574) definition of legitimacy, managers' assessments of the moral legitimacy of stakeholders should be made 'within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions'. However, often managers' personal attributes and values, and their organisation's culture, will influence their decision-making (Jones, Felps and Bigley 2007). It is right for Berger et al. (1998) to conclude that legitimacy depends on actors' approval of the action or structure's legitimacy claims, and depends as well on the actor's belief that others will also treat the act or structure as valid according to the rules of a wider sociocultural system.

This thesis utilises the broad definition of legitimacy by Suchman (1995) and Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997), recognising that legitimacy is actually defined by the values of social actors, and a legitimate stakeholder is one whose actions and claims are seen as appropriate, proper or desirable in the context of a social system. Suchman's (1995) multifaceted definition seems morally appropriate and more inclusive. Moreover, his legitimacy concept is one of the most comprehensive, broad-based and widely embraced versions (Bansal and Clelland 2004; Drees and Heugens 2013; Mele and Schepers 2013; Mitchell et al. 1997; Phillips 2003; Blois 2010).

#### **2.4.4 Stakeholder urgency**

After reviewing power and legitimacy attributes, the third stakeholder salience attribute in Mitchell, Agle and Wood's (1997, 867) framework is urgency, or 'the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention'. In this attribute, it is the urgency of the stakeholder's claim or request that matters. The urgency attribute gives the stakeholder salience model an added dynamic, and can be viewed as having two attributes of its own: time-sensitivity, and criticality. Time sensitivity alone is not sufficient to identify a stakeholder's claim as urgent. A stakeholder's claim must be perceived to be critical or highly important, to call for managerial action (Mitchell et al. 1997). Urgency is also partly driven by the likelihood that the matter of the claim will actually take place (Driscoll and Starik 2004). Thus, when a claim is time-sensitive, critical, and has a high chance of occurring, the managers will perceive the claim as commanding greater salience (Driscoll and Starik 2004; Neville et al. 2011).

Urgency by itself however does not guarantee high salience or warrant managerial responses. Urgency is considered a 'secondary attribute that merely provides the "extra push" needed to make already salient issues more so' (Jones, Felps and Bigley 2007, 153). It has to be combined with power and legitimacy to trigger reciprocal responses and actions between stakeholders and managers (Bundy, Shropshire and Buchholtz 2013; Harvey and Schaefer 2001). For example, when an urgent claim for immediate attention can be expressed via the stakeholders' ability to use their resources (i.e. the stakeholders' access to economic, social and political power) to influence the firm, then the claim will be perceived as endowing the stakeholder with high salience (Frooman 1999; Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). Similarly, when an urgent claim will positively or negatively influence the organisation's outcomes, it will be perceived as giving a stakeholder salience (Eesley and Lenox 2006). It is also proposed that when a claim represents a true opportunity or threat to an organisation, concerning the organisation's identity or strategic success, that claim will have high salience (Bundy, Shropshire and Buchholtz 2013). In that situation, managers will be willing to engage and make a serious commitment to address the stakeholder's request. On the other hand, if the claim is urgent and of high concern to the stakeholder(s), but not related to either an organisation's identity or strategic success, then that claim is easily ignored and dismissed by the organisation (Bundy and Buchholtz 2013; Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). Furthermore, an empirical study shows that a stakeholder who has only an urgent claim, unsupported by the attributes of either power or legitimacy, will not be granted stakeholder status by managers (Parent and Deephouse 2007).

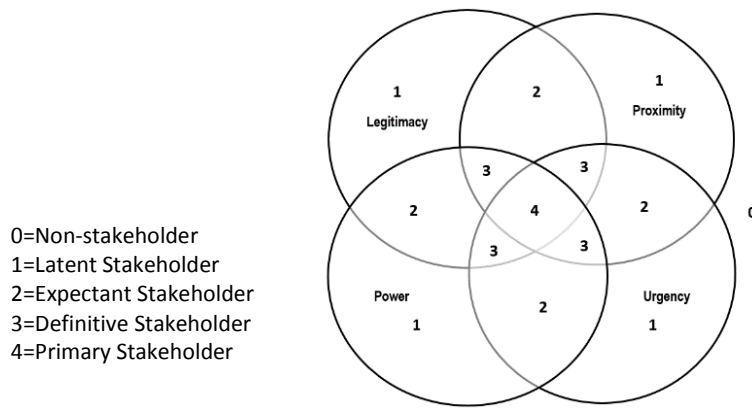
Although ‘urgency’ has received little prior attention in the stakeholder literature, the urgency of a claim plus the ability of the stakeholders to affect the operations and future plans of the firm, will capture the firm’s managerial attention or responses (Mitchell et al. 1997). The TSIS has advanced itself to empirical research because power, legitimacy, and urgency have been frequently operationalised in the management sciences (Mitchell et al. 1997). However, some authors have found it difficult to operationalise or measure the three attributes (Parent and Deephouse 2007; Roome and Wijen 2006; Xue and Mason 2011; Weber and Marley 2012), and some have asked, ‘what do we need in addition to power, legitimacy and urgency?’ (Myllykangas, Kujala and Lehtimäki 2010, 65). The following section will discuss the development of the TSIS, followed by discussion of the theory’s application.

## **2.4.5 Development of the TSIS**

### **2.4.5.1 *Additional attributes proposed***

Some researchers have proposed other attributes to clarify and enhance the stakeholder salience model (e.g. Driscoll and Starik 2004; O’Higgins and Morgan 2006). As a way to give ‘a stronger basis for arguing for the salience of the natural environment as the primary and primordial stakeholder of the firm’, Driscoll and Starik (2004, 55) added proximity to the set of stakeholder salience attributes developed by Mitchell et al. (1997). Driscoll and Starik (2004) argued that organisations and the natural environment coexist, interact, and impact on one another, thus constituting a stakeholder relationship. Proximity implies nearness and embeddedness in space, time, concept or practice. The more proximate stakeholder – near or sharing the same principles – will be more salient to managers (Driscoll and Starik 2004). Group identity and the feeling of solidarity through group affiliation also shapes stakeholder saliency (Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). A stakeholder that is directly working in the project is more salient than those that are relatively remote from the project (Walker, Bourne and Shelley 2008). Since business activities continue to impact on and be impacted by the natural environment, Haigh and Griffiths (2009) supported Driscoll and Starik’s (2004) notion of proximity as the fourth salience attribute, and argued that it is a strategic rather than an ethical managerial choice to include the natural environment as a primary stakeholder in business. Based on Mitchell et al. (1997) and Driscoll and Starik’s (2004) work, Haigh and Griffiths (2009) presented a combined stakeholder salience framework as shown in Figure 2.4.





**Figure 2.4: Combined Stakeholder Identification Framework**

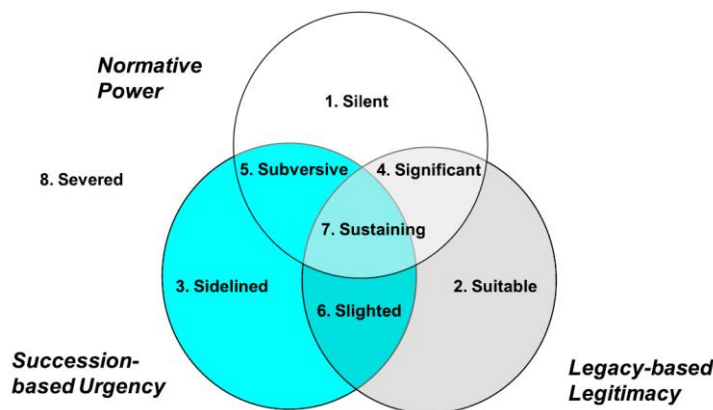
Source: Haigh and Griffiths (2009, 353)

Ideology-fit or value-fit stakeholders in political parties have been found to receive higher levels of engagement and to be granted higher salience by the parties, as opposed to those who possess power, legitimacy and urgency (O'Higgins and Morgan 2006). It appears that those stakeholders who share the same political ideology with political parties and are closely aligned to the relevant party manifestos are assigned higher salience. This ideology-fit attribute suggested in O'Higgins and Morgan's (2006) study to some extent mirrors Driscoll and Starik's (2004, 64) similar 'proximity in concept' viewpoint.

#### 2.4.5.2 *Original attributes enriched*

Some researchers have provided a richer understanding of the original attributes. 'Urgency' in Mitchell et al.'s (1997) salience framework refers to the degree to which a stakeholder claim is time-sensitive and critical, and requires immediate managerial attention. Consequently, some authors have hypothesised that it is the urgency and legitimacy of the stakeholder's claim or issue, rather than the urgency and legitimacy of the stakeholder itself, which confer saliency on the stakeholder (Bundy, Shropshire and Buchholtz 2013; Eesley and Lenox 2006; Frooman 2010; Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011). As such, urgency is not an attribute of the stakeholder, and is irrelevant in stakeholder identification, but is helpful and relevant in the prioritisation of stakeholder claims (Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011). However, studies did not find compelling evidence that more salient claims are more likely to bring about a positive response from managers (Boesso and Kumar 2009; Eesley and Lenox 2006). Some authors have argued against seeing power as an attribute possessed by the stakeholder, but rather see power as a socially constructed condition emerging from a process of transactions, interactions and exchanges (Frooman 1999; Siltaoja and Lähdesmäki 2015; Tucker 2014).

Mitchell et al. (2011) apply the three stakeholder salience attributes into a family business setting and claim that where the principal institutions are different, managerial perceptions of stakeholder salience will be different. Conceptualising stakeholder salience based on power, legitimacy and urgency attributes in the family business setting, Mitchell et al. (2011) propose that normative power based upon prestige, esteem, love and acceptance is more distinctive than utilitarian power. Legitimacy among family stakeholders is based on heredity rather than socially constructed as in a general business context. Mitchell et al. (2011) further stress that family stakeholder claims are processed through a different managerial lens, especially when it comes to family-centred non-economic goals; and the temporal nature of the urgency of family stakeholder claims is a relatively less significant factor as compared to the general business case. With a view to providing ‘an even finer-grained dimensionalisation of family-business stakeholder attributes’, Mitchell et al. (2013, 216) added ‘spirituality influence’ into their examination of family stakeholder salience attributes, and put forward a family-business-specific stakeholder salience model, as presented in Figure 2.5.



**Figure 2.5: Family-Business Stakeholder Types and Salience**  
Source: Mitchell et al. (2013, 230)

A number of empirical studies have sought to verify Mitchell et al.’s (1997) stakeholder identification and salience framework in a business (Agle, Mitchell and Sonnenfeld 1999; Boesso and Kumar 2009; Gago and Antolín 2004) or non-business environment (de Bussy and Kelly 2010; Siriwardhane and Taylor 2014), and have found inconsistent results on the role of the power, legitimacy and urgency attributes in creating stakeholder salience.

## **2.4.6 Application of the TSIS**

### **2.4.6.1 *Empirical evidence***

Agle, Mitchell and Sonnenfeld (1999, 520), using a survey of chief executive officers (CEOs) in 80 U.S. firms, found that ‘the stakeholder attributes of power, legitimacy, and urgency are individually (with only two exceptions) and cumulatively (with no exceptions) related to stakeholder salience...urgency is the best predictor of shareholder salience’. A survey on environmental managers’ perceptions of organisational stakeholder salience reported that ‘the government stands out among the stakeholders due to its power and legitimacy to impose urgent environmental demands (Gago and Antolín 2004, 69). Customers and owners rank high in salience due to their power to affect company performance. In contrast, the local community, global community and future generations are salient due to their legitimacy and the urgency of their environmental demands. Environmentalists and media are ranked relatively low in salience, and suppliers are among the least valued stakeholders (Gago and Antolín 2004). Agle, Mitchell and Sonnenfeld (1999) and Gago and Antolín’s (2004) study supported the stakeholder salience framework, as the measures of power, legitimacy, urgency and also the salience of aggregate stakeholder groups were all correlated. Other examples of empirical studies which have supported Mitchell et al.’s (1997) framework include Siriwardhane and Taylor (2014); Dong, Burritt and Qian (2014); and De Schepper, Dooms and Haezendonck (2014), among others.

On the other hand, some empirical studies only found limited support for the framework (Boesso and Kumar 2009; Magness 2008). The stakeholder salience framework as a tool for analysing dynamic stakeholder relationships ‘is not sufficient for understanding business value creation’ (Myllykangas, Kujala and Lehtimäki 2010, 65). An empirical study on non-business organisations found that Mitchell et al.’s (1997) framework, in which the accumulation of power, legitimacy and urgency determines salience, does not seem to describe the salience of stakeholders to all organisations in a generic sense (O’Higgins and Morgan 2006). In most empirical studies, power seems to play a far greater role in determining stakeholder salience (Boesso and Kumar 2009; de Bussy and Kelly 2010; Parent and Deephouse 2007).

Studies of stakeholder salience have provided empirical evidence that stakeholder relationships in differing sociocultural, economic and legal systems may be significantly different (Boesso and Kumar 2009; Cummings and Guthrie 2007; Su, Mitchell and Sirgy 2007). For example, a three-country (Australia, China and Indonesia) study indicates that developing economies embracing market-oriented models accord high salience to customers

as compared to economies in transition to market-based societies (Cummings and Guthrie 2007). A surprise result from Cummings and Guthrie's (2007) study was that the environmental groups in China emerged as an overwhelmingly salient stakeholder but not in the other two countries. Employees in Australia have higher salience than employees in China and Indonesia. Government and investors are generally salient, while suppliers are not considered important in all three countries. Likewise, the saliency profile for major stakeholders – employees, customers and community – is low in Tanzanian firms (Masoud and Wilson 2011) as compared to the results obtained in developed countries (Gago and Antolín 2004; Harvey and Schaefer 2001; Kochan and Rubinstein 2000). Studies exploring corporate social disclosures have also found that the salience of stakeholders can be moderated by societal and institutional factors in particular countries or industries where the role of a corporation and its stakeholders may be different (Dong, Burritt and Qian 2014; van der Laan Smith, Adhikari and Tondkar 2005). On the contrary, Weber and Marley (2012, 626) concluded that 'nationality' was not found to be a differentiating factor in stakeholder salience, whereas in one of two instances, 'industry membership was found to differentiate stakeholder salience in corporate reports'.

#### **2.4.6.2 *Other moderating factors impacting stakeholder salience***

Managers' personal values and roles play an important part in their perceptions of stakeholder salience (Adams, Licht and Sagiv 2011; Siriwardhane and Dennis 2014). In addition, if stakeholders' claims are in line with an organisation's identity and affect the organisation in achieving its strategic goals, then they will be granted high salience by the managers (Bundy, Shropshire and Buchholtz 2013). Post, Preston and Sachs (2002) added that resources, industry structure and the socio-political setting determined how firms managed their stakeholder relations for mutual benefit. Strategies used by managers to deal with stakeholders will vary according to the life cycle stage of the organisation (Jawahar and McLaughlin 2001). Jones, Felps and Bigley (2007, 151) agree that 'stakeholder salience is the result of managerial perceptions – psychological constructions of reality by managers, based partly on features of their environments'. They proposed that managers with different stakeholder cultures may assign different weighting to the three main attributes (power, legitimacy and urgency). More recent research suggests that the two factors of motivation and social influence also contribute to an understanding of how managers prioritise stakeholders (Weitzner and Deutsch 2015).

The theory of stakeholder salience began as a managerial theory. In more recent years, researchers have broadened the perspective of the theory beyond managerial perceptions and have introduced a stakeholder perspective (Tashman and Raelin 2013). It is contended that

managers can misperceive the stakeholder field due to bounded rationality, or ‘opportunistic managers are more likely to ignore the interests of stakeholders that are salient to the firm’ (Tashman and Raelin 2013, 601). To reduce the managerial bias in assessments of salience, it is proposed that managers and stakeholders should co-determine which stakeholders are important to the firm and therefore deserving of managerial attention, through stakeholder dialogue sessions. It is believed that taking into account the stakeholders’ own perceptions of salience will better capture those stakeholders’ interests and help the firm to prescribe accurate decisions proper to the firm (Tashman and Raelin 2013).

#### **2.4.6.3            *Integration with other theories***

Users of the TSIS have integrated it with other theories or concepts in developing and enriching the theory, such as network theory (Driscoll and Starik 2004; Neville and Menguc 2006; Rowley 1997); life-cycle theory (Jawahar and McLaughlin 2001); ethical theory and organisation culture (Jones, Felps and Bigley 2007); innovation theory and role concept (Vos and Achterkamp 2006); and emotion concept theory (Siltaoja and Lähdesmäki 2015). In another example, Su, Mitchell and Sirgy (2007), combining stakeholder theory with Anderson’s (1982) constituency theory, examined the salience of various Chinese *guanxi* (relationship) stakeholders to develop a hierarchical stakeholder model of *guanxi* that enables western business firms in China to better manage their *guanxi* partners effectively.

While, the issue of to ‘whom or what’ do managers pay attention and how they go about making this determination continues to be debated (Freeman, Wicks and Parmar 2004), it can be established that stakeholder salience theory as developed by Mitchell, Agle and Wood in 1997 is one of the most popular stakeholder models in the literature, making substantial contributions to the development of stakeholder research (Mainardes, Alves and Raposo 2012). Nonetheless, stakeholder salience theory has been criticised for presenting a too rational picture of managerial decision-making (Siltaoja and Lähdesmäki 2015), and for failing to provide an understanding or prediction of how and when a stakeholder group will act to gain salience (Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). The theory may not suffice to assess salient stakeholders’ actions and behaviours that will most likely directly or indirectly influence the organisation (Frooman 1999). The next section will examine the literature on stakeholder actions and responses, and it provides the theoretical background to Research Questions 2 and 3 mentioned in Chapter 1.

## **2.5 Stakeholder Actions and Responses**

According to Laplume, Sonpar and Litz (2008), the theme of ‘stakeholder actions and responses’ is the least discussed theme among the five themes of stakeholder theory that they have identified. Most research has covered ‘firm actions and responses’, i.e. from the focal organisation’s viewpoint (e.g. Bundy, Shropshire and Buchholtz 2013; Freeman 1984; Jawahar and McLaughlin 2001; Polonsky and Scott 2005; Savage et al. 1991; Sloan and Oliver 2013). Nonetheless, the theme of ‘stakeholder actions and responses’ was found to be receiving increasing attention in more recent years (Frooman and Murrell 2005; Hahn 2015; Hendry 2005; King 2008; Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). Laplume et al. (2008, 1162) further stress that ‘if managers want to proactively manage their stakeholders...they must go beyond understanding stakeholder interests and attempt to predict which influence strategies stakeholders are likely to employ.’ Stakeholder actions represent a critical issue for managers as they potentially may impact severely on the firm’s performance (Nejati, Amran and Ahmad 2014; Rowley and Berman 2000; Sharma and Henriques 2005). In this section, stakeholder interests, an antecedent of stakeholder actions and responses will be discussed first, followed by stakeholder influence strategies.

### **2.5.1 Stakeholder interests**

Stakeholders’ actions are driven by their stake-defined interests in the firm (Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003; Wolfe and Putler 2002), which can take many forms, including a right or ownership (Donaldson and Preston 1995); a legal or moral claim (Hill and Jones 1992); a contract (Friedman and Miles 2002); or the fact of bearing some form of risk (Clarkson 1994). Reichart (2003, 64) suggested five possible types of stakeholder interests: material (gain/loss of tangible benefits), political (political power and influence distribution), affiliative (human relationships, needing to belong), informational (knowledge-based), and symbolic (associated with a symbol, e.g. an image). Besides economic benefits, stakeholders also expect other non-economic benefits from their association with firms. Harrison and Wicks (2013, 103) proposed that the ‘perceived utility’ stakeholders seek from their relations with a firm includes: (1) utility associated with actual goods and services, (2) utility associated with organisational justice, (3) utility from affiliation, and (4) utility associated with perceived opportunity costs. They argued that happiness with the tangible and intangible utility a stakeholder receives from a firm was important and was likely to influence stakeholder behaviour. Based on an assumption that there were continuous ‘reciprocal interactions’ between the firm and its stakeholders, it was suggested that a firm that provided more utility, enjoyed relationships with stakeholders who positively reciprocated, and that this process created more returns to the

firm, as well as better able to retain stakeholder participation and support (Bosse, Phillips and Harrison 2009).

While a wide array of other things might be important to individual stakeholders, it is important to note that individual attitudes and interests both between and within stakeholder groups are often heterogeneous. Stakeholders do not always cooperate, and their interests can diverge (Harrison and Wicks 2013). The heterogeneity of stakeholder motives and interests can hinder their ability to set actionable priorities and mobilise for collective action (Wolfe and Putler 2002). To overcome the collective action problem, stakeholder groups must first of all be able to leverage resources available to support continual action and to reduce the costs of individual participation (King 2008). Groups that have engaged in collective action in the past and have secured a certain density of relationships among group members are more likely to act collectively to protect or enhance their interests (Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). Stakeholders are likely to cooperate with stakeholders who have similar interests, and to actively participate in the actions related to their interests (Kujala et al. 2012). Harrison and Wicks (2013) argued that stakeholders depend on both the firm and its other stakeholders to satisfy their own interests.

Stakeholders are determined not only by their interests (both material and non-material), but are also mobilised to preserve their identity (Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). Based upon the stakeholders' social network environment and social identity perspective, individuals can belong to multiple stakeholder groups and have multiple social roles and identities (Neville and Menguc 2006). Consequently, similar interests among stakeholders with dissimilar identities is suggested to have a positive effect on bringing about change, while identity overlap may decrease the possibility of stakeholder action (Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). Stakeholders' actions and non-action are dependent on the preconditions and nature of relationships between the firm and stakeholders, which are illustrated in the stakeholder salience framework (Mitchell et al. 1997). Stakeholders are more likely to act and protect their interests especially when those interests are urgent (Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). However, if they have neither legitimacy nor power, they are like 'mosquitoes buzzing in the ears of managers: irksome but not dangerous, bothersome but not warranting more than passing management attention' (Mitchell et al. 1997, 875). Similarly, stakeholders with urgent legitimate claims, but lacking power, need to rely on a powerful third party to enforce their will. Stakeholders who are not salient in the perception of the managers, have little bargaining power against firms, hence their actions or attempted influence might be not sustainable (Mitchell et al. 1997). The more powerful the stakeholders are, the more probable they will cause change in firm behaviour (Eesley and Lenox 2006). To exert their influence and impose

their will on the firm, it is necessary for stakeholders to increase their salience by utilising their relationships with others in the network (Kujala, Heikkinen and Lehtimäki 2012).

Stakeholders seeking to shape their salience and influence a firm's decision-making, or intending to change the firm's behaviour, may use different kinds of strategy and tactics to influence the focal organisation (Frooman 1999). The choices of strategy are determined by various relational factors and are highly context-specific (Frooman and Murrell 2005), a topic which will be discussed in the next section.

### **2.5.2 Stakeholder influence strategies**

Frooman (1999) defines influence strategies as a set of actions stakeholders use to achieve their interests. Other researchers have used equivalent concepts such as 'influence tactics' (Hendry 2005) and 'activities' (Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003). Frooman (1999) argues that the type of influence strategy stakeholders use is a function of their resource relationships with the firm. There are two types of symmetrical and two types of asymmetrical resource relationships. In symmetrical relationships between the stakeholders and the firm, either they have high interdependence, or low interdependence on each other. In asymmetrical relationships, when the firm is more dependent on the stakeholder, it is a case of stakeholder power; when the stakeholder is more dependent on the firm, it is a case of firm power. Frooman (1999) offers two 'resource control' strategies based on resource interdependence between the firm and its stakeholders (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). The first is the resource withholding strategy, where stakeholders discontinue providing resources to a firm. For example, customers boycott the firm; employees go on strike; or creditors withhold financing. The second strategy is the resource usage strategy, where stakeholders continue to supply resources but with conditions attached. For example, suppliers change contract terms for the continuation of supplies. Corresponding to these two resource strategies, there is the choice of 'paths' a stakeholder could take to exert influence on a firm – a direct or indirect pathway. Rationally, in the case of stakeholder power and a high interdependence relationship, a stakeholder would choose to perform withholding and usage strategies directly. On the contrary, when the relationship is a case of firm power and low interdependence, the stakeholder has to perform withholding and usage strategies indirectly, through stakeholder allies with whom the focal firm has a dependence relationship. When using an indirect strategy, a communication strategy needs to be put in place to persuade or encourage the ally to use a resource withholding or a resource usage strategy (Frooman 1999). Table 2.3 summarises the four resource relationships and the rationally selected influence strategies.



**Table 2.3: Typology of Influence Strategies**

		Is the stakeholder dependent on the firm?	
		Yes – <i>usage</i>	No – <i>withholding</i>
Is the firm dependent on the stakeholder?	Yes – <i>direct</i>	<i>Direct/usage</i> (high interdependence)	<i>Direct/withholding</i> (stakeholder power)
	No – <i>indirect</i>	<i>Indirect/usage</i> (firm power)	<i>Indirect/withholding</i> (low interdependence)

(resources relationships in parentheses; general strategy type in italics; adapted from Frooman, 1999)

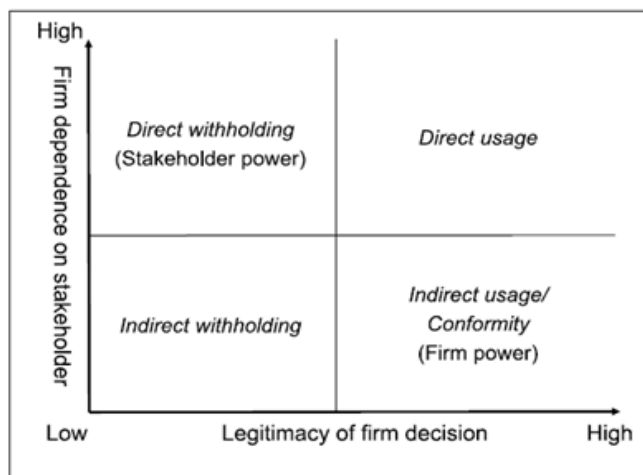
Source: Hendry (2005, 81)

Frooman and Murrell (2005) presented an ‘upgraded’ version of the stakeholder influence strategy model, with trivial variations. They suggested stakeholders could use ‘manipulation’ strategies to change a firm’s behaviour, and they put forward two basic strategies – ‘coercion’ and ‘compromise’ strategy. A coercive strategy is punishing in nature, involving either the threat to decrease benefit or increase cost to a firm. A compromise strategy is rewarding in nature, involving an offer to either increase benefit or decrease cost to the firm. Frooman and Murrell (2005) further argue that Frooman’s (1999) withholding and usage strategies are examples of coercion and compromise respectively. If the stakeholder is not dependent on the firm, a coercive strategy is recommended; if the stakeholder is dependent on the firm, a compromise strategy is recommended. Indirect coercion and compromise strategies executed through stakeholder allies are the preferred strategies and also considered the more effective strategies (Frooman and Murrell 2005).

The connection between the resource dependence relationship and the influence strategy chosen by a stakeholder is neither absolute nor always clear in empirical studies (Hendry 2005; Sharma and Henriques 2005; Tsai et al. 2005). Hendry (2005) presented three different views from Frooman’s (1999) propositions. Firstly, the secondary stakeholders on whom the firm is not dependent for survival (Clarkson 1995) would expect to be relatively powerless and choose an indirect strategy (Frooman 1999). However, if the firm believes the secondary stakeholders have power over the firm and will act correspondingly, then the secondary stakeholders need not choose an indirect strategy (Hendry 2005). The perceived power of stakeholders is a judgement to be made by the firm (Mitchell et al. 1997) and stakeholders’ allies (Hendry 2005). Secondly, when stakeholders seek allies, desirable allies are not necessarily limited to those wielding stakeholder power or enjoying high interdependence relationships with targeted firms. Allying with a relatively weak stakeholder is believed to boost legitimacy, which may encourage more powerful allies to join the alliance (Hendry 2005). Thirdly,

multiple strategies can be used simultaneously in the same quadrant of Frooman's (1999) model. The four influence strategies are not exhaustive or mutually exclusive (Hendry 2005). In addition, the possibility of using a resource withholding strategy is subject to the completeness of resource supply contracts and competition among the resource-providing stakeholders (Hahn 2015). Resource withholding strategies might be futile due to the availability of substitute resources.

Based on an empirical study of a downsizing business in Taiwan, Tsai et al. (2005) adjusted Frooman's model to include the dimension of institutional legitimacy in the framework, as shown in Figure 2.6. The legitimacy of firm decisions is high when firms have a justifiable cause for such decisions and the action conforms to social norms or legal requirements.



**Figure 2.6: A New Model of Stakeholder Influence Strategy**  
Source: Tsai et al. (2005, 1878)

Tsai et al. (2005, 1879-1880) presented four propositions from their new model of stakeholder influence strategy:

1. When firm dependence on a stakeholder is low, and the legitimacy of the firm's decision is low as well, the stakeholder will choose an indirect withholding strategy to influence the firm.
2. When firm dependence on a stakeholder is high, yet the legitimacy of the firm's decision is low, the stakeholder will choose a direct withholding strategy to influence the firm.
3. When firm dependence on a stakeholder is low, yet the legitimacy of the firm's decision is high, the stakeholder will choose an indirect usage strategy to influence the firm, or else conform to firm decision.

4. When firm dependence on a stakeholder is high, and the legitimacy of the firm's decision is high as well, the stakeholder will choose a direct usage strategy to influence the firm.

From a project life cycle perspective, Aaltonen and Kujala (2010) identify eight influence strategies used by secondary stakeholders to influence project management's decision-making. The eight influence strategies include resource building, credibility building, communication, coalition building, conflict escalation and direct action, as well as two influence strategies offered by Frooman (1999), i.e. direct withholding and indirect withholding. In a conflict situation, stakeholders are found to be using tactics such as issue framing, ally building, coalition forming, social movement mobilising and ultimately tie severing (Zietsma and Winn 2008). On the other hand, conflict solution seeking tactics might include negotiating, offering, compromising, complying and joint learning (Zietsma and Winn 2008).

Stakeholder theory is inherently managerial-oriented and focuses on firm actions (Freeman 1984, 2010), not stakeholder actions. However, knowing how stakeholders in their environment will act or attempt to influence a firm either directly or indirectly, is critical knowledge for any managers as these stakeholder actions will affect firm performance and outcomes (Frooman 1999). As a Chinese adage says: 'If you know both yourself and your enemy, you can win numerous battles without jeopardy'. Frooman's (1999) model of stakeholder influence strategy provides a basic framework for understanding how stakeholders select strategies for influencing firms. Unfortunately, only a limited number of empirical studies have used Frooman's (1999) model. This thesis will fill that gap.

As previously discussed in section 2.2, event tourism contexts are complex and political, involving numerous individuals and groups concerned with achieving sometimes differing event goals. With a diverse range of stakeholders involved, it is difficult to map all stakeholders in event tourism settings (Getz 2008; Reid 2011). Moreover, event-stakeholders relationships tend to be short-term, often per event basis, different from long lasting relationships in firms; for example, the use of volunteers, temporary workers and partners, rotation of venues and suppliers, and engagement of different performers/musicians annually. Such a non-permanent and changing roles of stakeholders within events are likely to prevent event managers from recognising their stakeholders and shutting out many potential and community stakeholders (Getz 2013). Therefore, applying the TSIS as the thesis' main conceptual framework is appropriate for three reasons. First, stakeholder attributes of power, legitimacy, and urgency provide a relevant framework for identifying and prioritising salient

stakeholders in tourism event settings. Second, short time-frame from planning to staging of events presents a unique set of challenges to event managers in prioritising which stakeholder groups matter most. Third, power usually counts in short-term decision making and power is expected to have significant impact on event stakeholders' salience in a high power-distance country like Malaysia. The temporary nature of events and stakeholder relationships could affect the bases of stakeholder power, legitimacy, and urgency in tourism event contexts. Thus, understanding how event managers prioritise their various stakeholders has both theoretical and practical importance.

The ensuing sections will review the application of stakeholder theory in the event context, highlight the research themes and identify the literature gaps, which the thesis will address. First, an overview of stakeholder theory in event literature will be presented, followed by an examination of the application of the TSIS (Mitchell et al. 1997) in events and the rationale for the application of a modified TSIS to tourism event context. Next, event stakeholders' interests and influence strategies will be discussed, followed by the conceptual framework, ending with the chapter summary.

## **2.6 Stakeholder Theory in Event Literature**

A systematic review of 423 research articles in festival studies by Getz (2010) found that 'festival organisational environment and stakeholder' related research had only 23 citations. Of the 23 citations, only 10 articles have explicitly used the stakeholder concept, while others used different terminology such as 'actors' (Elbe, Axelsson and Hallén 2006; Larson 2002, Larson and Wikstrom 2001) or 'partners' (Long 2000), and some only mentioned 'stakeholders' in passing in their articles. Since then, there has been an increased use of stakeholder theory in event and festival studies. As part of this thesis, a review of event-oriented journals and tourism management journals (filtered by event-related topic only), searching within publication titles/journals containing 'stakeholder', has resulted in a total of 922 articles (see Table 2.4). Of these 922 articles, only 55 articles contained 'stakeholder' in their article title or keywords, indicating that stakeholder studies were their primary topic. These 55 citations are presented in Table 2.4.

**Table 2.4: Stakeholder Studies in Event and Selected Tourism Journals (as of April 2017)**

<b>Journal Name</b>	<b>Total No. of Articles</b> (search within journal contains 'stakeholder')	<b>Total No. of Articles</b> (search on article title or keywords contains 'stakeholder')	<b>Authors</b>
<b>Event Management</b> (include former title of 'Festival management and event tourism')	205	20	Harris et al. (2000); Morla and Ladkin (2006); Spiropoulos, Gargalianos and Sotiriadou (2006); Getz, Andersson and Larson (2007); Hede (2008); Parent and Slack (2008); Getz and Andersson (2009); Leopkey and Parent (2009b); Sadd (2009); Prebensen (2010); Ponsford and Williams (2010); Moital, Jackson and Le Couillard (2013); Tkaczynski (2013); Chapman and Sadd (2014); Frawley (2015); Gargalianos, Toohey and Stotlar (2015); Larson, Getz and Pastras (2015); Tiew, Holmes and de Bussy (2015); Van Niekerk (2016); Van Niekerk and Getz (2016)
<b>Journal of Convention &amp; Event Tourism</b> (include former title of 'Journal of Convention & Exhibition Management')	102	7	Hultsman (2001); Andersson and Getz (2008); Ford, Peeper and Gresock (2009); Alonso and Bressan (2013); Peters and Schnitzer (2015); Duarte Alonso (2016); Lau, Milne and Chui (2017)
<b>International Journal of Event &amp; Festival Management</b>	89	5	Carlsen et al. (2011); Reid (2011); MacIntosh and Nicol (2012); George (2015); Garay and Morales Pérez (2017)
<b>Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events</b>	96	4	Yaghmour and Scott (2009); Becken and Clapcott (2011); Jordan et al. (2013); Davies, Ritchie and Jaimangal-Jones (2014)
<b>Tourism Management</b> (include title of 'Tourism Management Perspectives')	38	5	Stokes (2008); Chirieleison and Montrone (2013); Johnston (2015); Xu, Wong and Tan (2016); Todd, Leask and Ensor (2017)
<b>Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism</b>	134	5	Mossberg and Getz (2006); Karlson and Nordström (2009); Robertson and Rogers (2009); Åkerlund and Müller (2012) Mykletun, Bartkeviciute and Puchkova (2014)

<i>Journal of Sport &amp; Tourism</i>	93	3	Otto and Heath (2009); Wäsche, Dickson and Woll (2013); Kaiser et al. (2013)
<i>European Sport Management Quarterly</i>	165	6	Friedman, Parent and Mason (2004); Parent and Séguin (2007); Leopkey and Parent (2009a); Parent, Rouillard and Leopkey (2011); Sallent, Palau and Guia (2011); Xue and Mason (2011); Hanstad, Parent and Kristiansen (2013); Schenk et al. (2015)
	<b>922</b>	<b>55</b>	

Other than in the above-listed journals, event stakeholder studies may also be sporadically published in other journals in the fields of travel, tourism, hospitality, sports, culture and leisure, as well as marketing and management or business journals. It was noted that the use of stakeholder theory is mainly confined to the study of major sporting events. For example, the theory has been used to analyse stakeholder relationships in mega events (Gargalianos, Toohey and Stotlar 2015; Lau, Milne and Chi Fai Chui 2017; Xing et al. 2008); sports events and marketing (Knott, Fyall and Jones 2015; Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien 2005); organising committee and issues (Parent 2008; Parent and Séguin 2007); perceived stakeholder identification and prioritisation by managers (Parent and Deephouse 2007); risk management issues and strategies (Leopkey and Parent 2009a, 2009b); changing stakeholder salience at different points in time (Xue and Mason 2011); bid stakeholders' role and salience in different bid phases (Hautbois, Parent and Séguin 2012); and sustainability (Parent et al. 2015; Samuel and Stubbs 2013).

Other than sporting events, the stakeholder theory has been sparingly applied to explore festival stakeholders. For example, festival stakeholder identification and differentiation (Van Niekerk and Getz 2016); stakeholder management strategy (Andersson and Getz 2008; Van Niekerk 2016); stakeholder roles and relationships in festivals (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Presenza and Iocca 2012; Spiropoulos, Gargalianos and Sotiriadou 2006; Todd, Leask and Ensor 2017; ); financial position of a tourism-oriented street festival (Andersson and Getz 2007); developing sustainable rural event practices (Reid 2011); and segmenting music festival attendees (Tkaczynski 2013). The literature review indicates that research efforts on stakeholder analysis in events is limited and the application of stakeholder theory in event studies is emergent. This review reveals that stakeholder research in events can be categorised into four major themes, namely (1) event stakeholder definitions and typologies, (2) event stakeholder management, (3) event stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes, and (4) event stakeholder interests and influence strategies. The following subsections will discuss the first

three themes in turn. The fourth theme will be examined separately (section 2.8) as it forms the theoretical framework to Research Questions 2 and 3.

### 2.6.1 Event stakeholder definitions and typologies

Freeman (1984) suggests the first step to stakeholder management processes is to identify relevant stakeholders. Review of the literature found that only a small number of publications explicitly provide a clear definition of ‘event stakeholder’ and address the identification of stakeholders. Some studies proceed without using a definition or classification-base. Freeman’s (1984) definition has typically been adopted or cited as a starting point to give a more focused view of the event stakeholder definition. In the context of event tourism, Getz (2013, 23) defines ‘stakeholders are people or organisations that can influence events and event tourism, and those impacted by events and event tourism’, bringing Freeman’s (1984) generic definition closer to the events context. Others have attempted to delineate event stakeholders as ‘those that can influence or have power over the allocation of resources either directly or indirectly’ (Ford, Peeper and Gresock 2009, 170), or ‘deemed to have been affiliated with [event] and was active in creating and/or supporting managerial decisions’ (Tkaczynski 2013, 288), or ‘those that could affect the organisation’s strategic objectives’ (Moital, Jackson and Couillard 2013, 441).

Table 2.5 further presents examples of event stakeholder typology studies. It shows that some studies have attempted to map stakeholders by classifying them into primary and secondary (Reid and Arcodia 2002), or internal and external groups (Van Niekerk and Getz 2016), while the majority have categorised event stakeholders according to their functional roles and responsibilities in events (e.g. Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Prebensen 2010; Presenza and Iocca 2012). Similarly, Allen et al. (2011, 127) offer the ‘relation of stakeholders to events’ perspective, identifying six major event stakeholder groups – the ‘host organization’, the ‘host community’, the ‘co-workers’, the ‘event sponsors’, the ‘media’, and the ‘participants and spectators’.

**Table 2.5 Who are Event Stakeholders?**

<b>Authors &amp; type of research</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Typology</b>
<b>Reid and Arcodia (2002, 492-495)</b>	Stakeholders are groups or individuals who are affected or could be affected by an event’s existence.	<b>Primary stakeholders</b> – employees, volunteers, sponsors, suppliers, spectators, attendees and participants

<b><i>A conceptual study</i></b>	<p>Primary stakeholders are those individuals or groups without whose support the event would cease to exist...[they] are influenced by the decisions of the event organisation and contribute directly to the event.</p> <p>Secondary stakeholders are those groups or individuals who although they are not directly involved in the event can seriously impede the event's success. [cited Clarkson (1995)].</p>	<p><b>Secondary stakeholders</b> - government, host community (community groups, residents), emergency services (fire, police ambulance), general business (profit, non-profit), media (print, radio, television, internet) and tourism organisations (tourism operators, tourists).</p>
<p><b>Van Niekerk and Getz (2016, 428)</b></p> <p><b><i>A study of festivals in US</i></b></p>	<p>Stakeholders are individuals who have a stake in the festival and its outcomes, and who influence or are influenced by it. [cited Getz (2008)].</p>	<p><b>Internal stakeholders</b> – employees; owners/shareholders; senior managers</p> <p><b>External stakeholders</b> – customers; government/government agencies; suppliers; special interest groups; competitors.</p>

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***Below studies have used functional and role-based typology***

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<p><b>Spiropoulos, Gargalianos, and Sotiriadou (2006, 171 &amp; 176)</b></p> <p><b><i>A case study of an ethnic festival in Sydney</i></b></p>	<p>Stakeholders have a relationship with the events. [cited McDonnell et al. (1999, 39)].</p>	<p><b>i) Marketing stakeholders</b></p> <p>(a) product stakeholder (festival content), (b) place stakeholder (venues), (c) promotion stakeholder (publicity &amp; communication), and (d) audience</p> <p><b>ii) Administration stakeholders</b></p> <p>(a) human resources (paid staff, volunteers, the board of directors, (b) financial resources (government support, corporate sponsorship, and individual donors), and (c) infrastructure resources (administration space, plant and equipment, and legal framework)</p> <p><b>iii) Production stakeholders</b></p> <p>(a) the street fair production stakeholders (such as local authority stall renters and sound-system provider), and (b) all the other events stakeholders that contributed to the production of these events such as venue personnel.</p>
<p><b>Getz, Andersson, and Larson (2007, 105 &amp; 109)</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders are any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives. [cited Freeman (1984, 25)].</p>	<p>a) <b>the festival organisation</b> (internal stakeholders): owners/investors; directors; employees; volunteers; members; advisors</p> <p>b) <b>co-producers</b> (independent organisations that are voluntarily involved in creating the event experience): sponsors;</p>



<p><i>An empirical study of 13 festivals across Canada and Sweden</i></p>	<p>suppliers; entertainers; venues; on-site businesses</p> <p>c) <b>facilitators</b> (non-participating resource providers): cash/in-kind sponsors; grants from government agencies; media</p> <p>d) <b>allies and collaborators</b> (provide intangible help, partners in marketing): industry lobbyist; professional associations</p> <p>e) <b>regulators</b> (their approval and cooperation are required): public authorities such as fire, police, law enforcement officers; local municipality; politicians</p> <p>f) <b>suppliers and venues</b> (represent costs to the event, but often become sponsors or partners)</p> <p>g) <b>the audience and the impacted</b> (affected by the festival or the organisation): beneficiaries of the event; community at large.</p>
<p><b>Parent (2008, 136)</b></p> <p><i>A case study of a large sporting event in Canada</i></p>	<p>Stakeholders are organisations, groups, or individuals who can affect or be affected by an organisation's actions. [cited Freeman (1984)].</p> <p>a) <b>board of directors</b> (focal organisation)</p> <p>b) <b>managers and volunteers</b></p> <p>c) <b>all levels of government</b> (federal, provincial, and municipal)</p> <p>d) <b>community</b> (residents, sponsors, all local businesses, community groups, and schools)</p> <p>e) <b>sports organisations</b> (international, continental, national, and provincial levels)</p> <p>f) <b>media</b> (print, television, and radio)</p> <p>g) <b>international delegations</b> (athletes, coaches, trainers, support staff, administrators, etc.).</p>
<p><b>Prebensen (2010, 40)</b></p> <p><i>A case study of a dog-sled race in High North</i></p>	<p>Those participating and involved in a specific event...play various roles in creating values for the event, for other stakeholders, and for themselves. [cited Freeman (1984)].</p> <p>a) <b>owners/board of directors,</b></p> <p>b) <b>employees,</b> c) <b>local dog-sled club,</b></p> <p>d) <b>volunteers,</b> e) <b>media</b> (newspapers and tv), f) <b>sponsors,</b> g) <b>collaborating organisations</b> (local/regional government),</p> <p>h) <b>mushers/handlers/dogs,</b></p> <p>i) <b>spectators</b> (local, national and international).</p>
<p><b>Presenza and Iocca (2012, 27 &amp; 29)</b></p>	<p>Stakeholders can be defined as those persons or groups who can influence the organisation, or are</p> <p>a) <b>media</b> (television and radio stations, newspapers and magazines)</p>

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<b><i>An empirical study of music festivals in Italy</i></b>	influenced by it. [cited Getz (2007, 92)].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) <b>music and artists</b> (national and international, music/arts performers/bands and their booking agency)</li> <li>c) <b>public authorities</b> (local authority, government agencies that give grants, police and other public services)</li> <li>d) <b>sponsors</b> (big and small companies that use the festival as a marketing tool)</li> <li>e) <b>suppliers of facilities, food and beverages</b></li> <li>f) <b>visitors</b> (through trading intermediaries)</li> <li>g) <b>tourism traders</b> (hotels, other accommodation, restaurants, associations and clubs)</li> <li>h) <b>independent organisations</b> (that work to organise and promote the festival).</li> </ul>
	Those people and groups with a stake in the event and its outcomes, including all groups participating in the event production, sponsors and grant-givers, community representatives, and everyone impacted by the event. [cited Getz (1991, 15)].	

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Review of event literature in this study also found that some stakeholder studies have used different terminologies to describe event stakeholders. For example, from a political perspective, Larson (2002, 2009) and Larson and Wikstrom (2001) use the term ‘actors’, and from an interorganisational collaboration perspective, Long (2000) uses the term ‘partners’. Larson (2002) distinguishes eight different ‘actors’ involved in the producing and marketing of a festival in Sweden, namely, ‘festival organiser’, ‘artist industry’, ‘media industry’, ‘local trade and industry’, ‘sponsors’, ‘public authorities’, ‘associations and clubs’, and ‘free-riders’. Similarly, Elbe, Axelsson and Hallén (2006, 177) analyse mobilisation of resources for public events, and define ‘actors’ as ‘people or organisations that perform activities and control or use resources’. These researchers examined the same phenomenon but from different perspectives and used different terminologies and theories, illustrating the multi-disciplinary field of event studies, as well as the significance of the event stakeholder phenomenon.

In summary, event management studies in different western countries have applied the organisational stakeholder theory to classify and understand the roles of event stakeholders in the context of different sizes and types of events, ranging from large sporting events to small cultural or music festivals. Numerous stakeholder groups have been identified and categorised according to their various functional, symbolic or political roles in events. Other than the generic event stakeholder typologies (e.g. employees, volunteers, sponsors, suppliers, spectators, participants), the literature has also defined event-specific stakeholders in particular event settings. However, most of the previous studies offer identification and categorisation of event stakeholders without going further into stakeholder prioritisation and salience

analysis. As a result, there is a lack of understanding of event stakeholder salience vis-à-vis stakeholder roles and functions.

### **2.6.2 Event stakeholder management**

Event-stakeholders relationships have been characterised as political (Larson 2002) and hegemonic (Clarke and Jepson 2011), where power struggles and competition among stakeholders inevitably occur in achieving their desirable goals in events. Researchers have explored how event managers work with stakeholders and what stakeholder management processes and strategies could be used to achieve their mission and improve event viability (Andersson and Getz 2008), thus facilitating stakeholder satisfaction and continued support (Reid 2011). Savage et al.'s (1991) study offers four different stakeholder strategies – involve, defend, collaborate and monitor. It is evident that a combination of stakeholder involvement and collaboration is a common strategy used in events to deal with cost-saving and resource dependency (Andersson and Getz 2008; Van Niekerk 2016). Convincing other stakeholders such as media and suppliers to become official partners or sponsors of the event, and developing a formal marketing partnership with other stakeholders were found to be successful strategies (Andersson and Getz 2008; Presenza and Iocca 2012). However, lobbying government for financial support was found to be less successful, and practical and political barriers hindered tangible resource-sharing with other festivals (Andersson and Getz 2008). Initiating community outreach programs that can gain public support and increase a festival's legitimacy (Larson, Getz and Pastras 2015; Presenza and Iocca 2012), and bringing sponsors together for networking and mutual benefit, were also suggested to be effective relationship management strategies (Andersson and Getz 2008; Johnston 2015).

Event leadership and the composition of an event team (Frost and Laing 2015; Reid 2011), and cultural and political differences (Yaghmour and Scott 2009), may affect stakeholder relationships and collaborative partnerships. Frost and Laing (2015) discovered that a problem with volunteer and festival burnout was common in rural tourism festivals. Their study suggested that strategies such as delegating organising work to a series of sub-committees; getting new and younger people to join the committee; and maintaining the festival size, were ways of resolving the succession and leadership issues in festival organisation. Yaghmour and Scott (2009) found that stakeholder relationships were universally positive and collaborative in the Jeddah Festival, as all stakeholders participated in an orientation programme. It was found that governance and trust were the two important collaboration characteristics for achieving festival outcomes (Yaghmour and Scott 2009). Stakeholder collaboration can also lead to increased media coverage and spectator participation, and may be expected to further

impacts on destination promotion on a larger scale (Getz and Fairley 2003; Robertson and Rogers 2009).

Another development in stakeholder management strategy focuses on innovation and branding (Carlsen et al. 2010), which takes place in cooperation with different stakeholders within event networks, as a means of increasing event viability (Karlsen and Nordström 2009). Cooperation is the least formal form of partnership and also less risky than most (Long 2000). Innovation often takes place when new partners enter the network and cooperative efforts bring about information sharing, and an exchange of knowledge and learning (Larson 2009). For successful event branding, ideally organisers and stakeholders need to come to a consensus, set clear goals and define the core values of their events that could provide a unique selling point and basis for differentiation (Carlsen et al. 2010). Stakeholders cooperate and coordinate their activities to promote such shared values, and work toward mutually desirable goals (Karlsen and Nordström 2009).

It is critical to build a sense of belonging and event ownership in host communities through involving and delegating responsibility (Capriello and Rotherham 2011; Kler 2016; Reid 2011). To engage external stakeholders in organising and planning processes, consultation and communication through meetings, discussions and listening to opinions and concerns was a strategy employed by rural event organisers (Reid 2011). Similarly, stakeholder engagement strategies such as open forums, face-to-face meetings, displays in public spaces, a system of comment cards, and organising committee-led presentations, were all considered a successful engagement tool by a mega sports event organising committee in their infrastructure planning and development process (Ponsford and Williams 2010).

According to stakeholder theory, successful organisations and their stakeholders interact to jointly create and trade value for one other in a sustainable and ethical manner (Harrison and Wicks 2013; Parmer et al. 2010). Stakeholders' support for and involvement in the events determined the survival and success of those events (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Kler 2016) besides resulting in the creation of various types of value, benefiting all stakeholders at the destination as well as the host organisation (Prebensen 2010; Todd, Leask and Ensor 2017). Therefore, understanding stakeholders' perceptions of and attitudes toward events is important, and many studies have analysed how effectively the needs or expectations of each stakeholder group are being met by the event organisations (Hoksbergen and Insch 2016; Kim, Kim and Jai 2016; Parent, Kristiansen and MacIntosh 2014; Xu, Wong and Tan 2016; Yürük, Akyol and Şimşek 2017).

### **2.6.3 Event stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes**

As events are widely recognised as a 'catalyst' for socioeconomic and tourism development (Burgan and Mules 2001; Moscardo 2008; Yolal et al. 2016), most of the studies of these events have tended to focus on evaluating post-event performance, event outcomes and impacts, whether from the event managers' perspective (Gursoy, Kim and Uysal 2004; Lade and Jackson 2004; Laing and Mair 2015) or from the stakeholders' perspective (Chirieleison and Montrone 2013; Lim and Lee 2006). However, only a limited number of studies have directly applied stakeholder theory, with most only mentioning or advocating the importance of the stakeholder approach (see Buch, Milne and Dickson 2011; Lamberti et al. 2011; Mykletun, Bartkeviciute and Puchkova 2014). Most studies have gauged the perceptions of a single group of event stakeholders, predominantly from the perspective of visitors or audiences (Hallmann and Breuer 2011; Lee and Beeler 2009; Pennington-Gray and Holdnak 2002), participants (Parent, Kristiansen and MacIntosh 2014; Peters and Schnitzer 2015; Yürük, Akyol and Şimşek 2017), or local residents (Henderson et al. 2010; Jackson 2008; Lau and Li 2015; Lawton and Weaver 2015; Ting et al. 2017; Yolal et al. 2016), as well as some from volunteers' perspective (Smith, Wolf and Lockstone-Binney 2014; Pavlova and Hannam 2014). Each of these stakeholder groups is not homogenous; with differences in perceptions and attitudes among inter-groups and intra-groups. Some studies have been assessed from multiple stakeholders' perspectives and revealed a multifaceted stakeholders' interests in events (Alonso 2013; Mykletun, Bartkeviciute and Puchkova 2014; Richards 2007).

Studies of event stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes have mostly been analysed through a marketing lens. Various aspects of events have been examined, namely the perceived benefits and the event's future (Alonso and Bressan 2013); event meaning and experience (Lau and Li 2015; Parent, Kristiansen and MacIntosh 2014); event and place branding (Blichfeldt and Halkier 2014; Knott, Fyall and Jones 2015); event success (Kaplanidou, Kerwin and Karadakis 2013); and festival sustainability (Van Niekerk and Coetzee 2011). Studies show that festival stakeholders do not get actively involved in the segmenting of visitors and marketing of events (Tkaczynski 2013), perceiving this to be the responsibility of the festival organisers (Lade and Jackson 2004). In the context of mega sports events, special attention has been given to understanding stakeholders' perceptions of risk management issues (Leopkey and Parent 2009a), green legacies (Samuel and Stubbs 2013), sports and educational legacies (Peters and Schnitzer 2015), stakeholder participation, and perceived impacts (Lau, Milne and Chi 2017). Due to stakeholders' varying backgrounds and their varying objectives for the event, stakeholders were found to have conflicting views about the event performance and its future (Moital, Jackson and Le Couillard 2013).

Despite the importance of stakeholder involvement or stakeholder management in events, there are only a limited number of studies of stakeholder salience in events. Of course, it could be the case that previous authors have used some implicit stakeholder notion, such as ‘actor’ or ‘partner’, to identify stakeholders, as discussed in section 2.6.1. However, stakeholder theory amplifies that it is necessary to structurally identify stakeholders based on an explicit stakeholder model, and ascertain which stakeholders are deserving of managerial attention (Mitchell et al. 1997). Surprisingly, few studies identify event stakeholder salience, except in major sports events (Hautbois, Parent, and Séguin 2012; Parent and Deephouse 2007; Xue and Mason 2011). The prevailing role-based stakeholder classification models presented in Table 2.5 might be useful, but the leading salience classification model (Mitchell et al. 1997) for tourism events is more favourable: power usually counts in short-term decision-making, and the short time-frame of events, from planning to staging, as well as the judgement of whose stakeholder interests and issues are to be considered urgent and legitimate, require immediate managerial attention.

## **2.7 TSIS in Events**

Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) present a promising model for understanding and predicting stakeholder salience, based upon the stakeholder’s possession or lack of three basic characteristics: power, legitimacy and urgency. Despite its recognition as one of the most deployed stakeholder theories, Mitchell et al.’s (1997) stakeholder salience framework has not been rigorously explored and applied in event studies. A search of event literature found only a small sample of empirical studies of large sporting events that examined Mitchell et al.’s (1997) framework. Most of the studies only mentioned the framework, without application of the three attributes. The following subsections will examine those event studies which explicitly and primarily applied Mitchell et al.’s (1997) salience model, then discuss other relevant stakeholder salience studies which have applied constructs such as event stakeholder roles and resource dependency, or network analysis.

### **2.7.1 Application of the TSIS in event studies**

Parent and Deephouse (2007) used a multi-method, comparative case study of two large sports events in Canada, examining stakeholder identification and prioritisation by managers. Their results supported Mitchell et al.’s (1997) notion that the more attributes a stakeholder has, the greater that stakeholder’s salience. However, not all attributes are equal. The power attribute was found to have the most important effect on salience. Similarly, not all powers are

equivalent. Of the different types of power described by Etzioni (1964) – coercive, utilitarian, and normative – utilitarian power (denoting a key provider of financial and human resources) was found to be more salient than normative or coercive power. Similar to the salience attributes, the more a stakeholder accumulated of the three types of power the more salient the stakeholder became.

In their study, Parent and Deephouse (2007) found that most stakeholders were definitive, dominant, or dormant types (all of which have power as an attribute), while the other three types (discretionary, dangerous, or dependent) were rare, and the demanding type (which has the urgency attribute only) was not detected in their study. Consistent with Freeman (1984), Parent and Deephouse (2007) also discovered that managers' hierarchical level and role directly affect their stakeholder identification and perceived salience. Top managers tended to identify a larger number of stakeholders than the lower-level managers. Stakeholder salience also varied over time and across issues.

To better understand the changes in stakeholder relationship and salience in different time periods, Xue and Mason (2011) used Mitchell et al.'s (1997) model, and developed two different stakeholder maps of the F1 Shanghai, a motorsports event, seen from a macro-political perspective. The Shanghai government was the focal organisation in the study. Government reports and news articles published from 2002 to 2010 concerning the event were used as the data source, analysed using a qualitative content analysis. As the study was based on secondary data, the authors examined the urgency attribute by looking at whether a stakeholder took or did not take any proactive actions to prioritise their specific claim. If a stakeholder took action, the stakeholder was considered to possess urgency or vice versa. Xue and Mason (2011) found stakeholder types limited to definitive, dominant, dependent, dormant and demanding. On the initial stakeholder map, Shanghai Circuit (the venue), Formula One Management, the local district government, real estate developers, the sponsor (Sinopec), the media, motorsports fans, and tourists were considered definitive stakeholders that possessed all three attributes. The local business companies, the new middle-class and the national government were deemed dominant, having power and legitimacy, while street vendors were demanding. After a broader change to the political leadership, there was a corresponding change in the types of stakeholder group and their salience. As the event's goal shifted from its initial business-oriented focus to a more politically-oriented mindset, it became a tool to promote the image of the city and country. The national government changed from its original dominant status to become a definitive stakeholder, taking substantive action to influence the Shanghai government (focal organisation) and the whole event organisation. Several definitive stakeholders lost attribute(s) and their saliency. Xue and Mason's (2011) study found that

stakeholder salience changes were precipitated by the turmoil across different time periods, and that this asserted the power of the national government in terms of its capacity for event intervention.

Based on a case study of the French bid for the 2018 Winter Olympics, which included four candidate cities, Hautbois, Parent and Séguin (2012) analysed the stakeholder relationships and salience in the bidding process, to determine stakeholder-based key bid success factors. Data were first of all collected from archival material, which provided key information related to the stakeholders involved in each of the four candidate cities, and these were used for designing the sample interviews. Five major stakeholder groups were identified as important at the local cities level. These were the public officials, economic partners, sports groups, media and local population. Subsequently, a total of 28 personal interviews were conducted with representatives from each stakeholder group in each candidate city. The results show that public officials had the definitive status and played a central role within the bid project. However, Hautbois, Parent and Séguin (2012) proposed that no individual in the bid committee or a stakeholder group was singly driving the bid to win. The sports stakeholder group could not have latent status, instead occupied a strategic position in the bid project in order to have a positive impact. The study concluded that stakeholder salience varied according to the structural level, bid phase and case context, and that stakeholder salience and network governance could affect the success of a bid.

These empirical studies of large sports events have demonstrated that the three stakeholder attributes are not equal or objective, but dynamic and variable in creating event stakeholder salience. Event stakeholder salience is situational, perceptual and event-context specific. It changes over time, issues, and in response to the managerial role and hierarchy.

### **2.7.2 Other pertinent research on stakeholder salience in event studies**

This subsection examines relevant event stakeholder salience studies which have applied other constructs such as network analysis, stakeholder roles and resource dependence. A network approach is commonly used to examine the interconnections among event stakeholders (Izzo, Bonetti and Masiello 2012; Larson and Wikström 2001; Stokes 2006; Ziakas and Costa 2010). Network analysis (Rowley 1997) allows researchers to determine the relative importance or salience of a stakeholder in an event network (Larson 2002, Parent et al. 2015). An exploratory case study of the Youth Olympic Games (YOG), conducted by means of observations and stakeholder interviews, revealed three central stakeholders – the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the media (press and broadcast), and the athletes' parents, all of which were



generally perceived as important for the YOG's potential survival and success (Parent et al. 2015). These three stakeholders had a higher number of ties, were close to a high number of stakeholders, and were influential in information control. As the rights holder, the IOC sets the games rules, provides resources, and could press its claims urgently on the organising committee; hence the IOC was perceived to possess the power, legitimacy and urgency attributes. An interesting finding from Parent et al.'s (2015) case study was that the media was not interested in covering YOG, a new sports event, and the organising committee had to persuade the media to cover the event, imposing its legitimacy and urgency status on the media, and skewing the power balance in their relationship. The parents made most of the decisions for their children with regards to their participation in the event, thus they too became legitimate and powerful stakeholders (Parent et al. 2015).

A survey of major festivals in Sweden and Canada revealed that festivals were highly dependent on the audience, followed by the local municipality, government agencies, artists, and venue owners (Andersson and Getz 2008), while other suppliers and vendors were accorded little significance. The local municipality and their agencies were often inevitably salient stakeholders in festivals due to their authority to give approval on when and how to stage an event. Often the local municipality played multiple roles in festivals, being simultaneously regulator, partner and co-producer (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007). Festivals were found to be dependent on grants from the local municipality, with only negligible grants or support emanating from the central or provincial government and the tourism organisations. Keeping the local residents happy was found to be an important concern, if festivals were to be financed with local taxes. The popularity of a festival was found to increase the festival's legitimacy, as well as the negotiation power of the festival with other stakeholders (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Larson, Getz and Pastras 2015). If the major proceeds of music festivals came from ticket sales, the audience gained cognitive legitimacy (Suchman 1995), thus becoming an important stakeholder. In general, the media were moderately important, as they facilitated the communication between the festivals and their stakeholder groups. Corporate sponsors' salience was found to correlate with their dependency level. Festivals which used sponsorship moderately also perceived sponsors to be moderately important. Most local artists were found to be connected to artist agencies and the booking of artists was done via these artist agencies. The popular artists and dominant artist agency were perceived to be moderately salient (Andersson and Getz 2008), as artists and music quality are important to festival attractiveness. It was also found that some festivals were highly dependent on unpaid volunteers. However, volunteers from other associations or clubs which received a fee from the events were perceived to be unimportant (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007).

A separate survey of music festivals in Italy found that stakeholders who provided funds (public bodies and sponsors) were perceived to be highly salient, while logistics and facilities providers were less salient (Presenza and Iocca 2012). Musicians received higher attention from festival organisations than all other stakeholders. As festivals gain longevity through repeating themselves with new editions over the years, the interaction intensity between the festival organisation and its key stakeholders also increases, explaining the close relationships built over time within the festival network (Presenza and Iocca 2012). A four-country comparison study indicated that festivals were not highly dependent on a particular group of stakeholders (Getz and Andersson 2010). However, the four highest ranked stakeholders were venue/facilities and local government, followed by paying customers and the media. Sponsors were ranked low overall, except for festivals which were for-profit oriented (Getz and Andersson 2010). Todd, Leask and Ensor (2017), who conducted a study on the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, suggested that primary stakeholders usually have multiple roles and a high level of salience. They posit primary stakeholder roles could include organising, participating, attending, supplying and/or supporting. From a different perspective, some researchers have applied the framework of power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell et al. 1997) to help identify definitive stakeholders or potential informants for their sampling purposes (Knott, Fyall and Jones 2015; Tkaczynski 2013).

It can be concluded that event stakeholder salience is context-specific, varying according to the age, ownership, type and structure of the events (Parent et al. 2015; Presenza and Iocca 2012), and changing over time and with issues (Hautbois, Parent and Séguin 2012; Xue and Mason 2011). A change in event leadership, event goals or event environment will lead to a change in the types of stakeholder group and their salience (Xue and Mason 2011). Resource dependency (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) and network centrality (Rowley 1997) directly affect the salience of event stakeholders, and utilitarian power seems to be more salient than normative or coercive power (Parent and Deephouse 2007). Stakeholders who are providing critical resources are perceived to be more salient than those receiving resources (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978), and centrally positioned stakeholders are more powerful than the peripheral stakeholders (Rowley 1997). Ultimately, stakeholder identification and perceived salience are in the minds of event managers, and may be moderated by managers' hierarchical levels and roles (Parent and Deephouse 2007).

Most of the studies in events only mentioned Mitchell et al.'s (1997) model in the identification of stakeholders; they have not applied it fully to examine event stakeholder salience. The full potential of Mitchell et al.'s (1997) TSIS has yet to be completely realised in event literature.

Given the explanatory potential of Mitchell et al.'s (1997) framework and the longstanding lack of empirical studies in event contexts, it seemed prudent for this thesis to explore stakeholder salience in tourism events using Mitchell et al.'s (1997) framework. The framework explains why and when certain event stakeholders get managerial attention, 'how stakeholders can gain or lose salience to an [event's] managers', and which stakeholders are able to influence the event's activities (Mitchell et al. 1997, 868). Stakeholders are able to influence in order to protect or enhance their interests (Frooman 1999; Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003) in events. Consequently, it is important as well to understand various stakeholders' interests in events and to explore how salient stakeholders might exercise their influence.

## **2.8 Event Stakeholder Interests and Influence Strategies**

While it is important to identify and prioritise the stakeholders of events, it is equally important that their interests and influences be identified as well. A review of event literature indicates that little empirical research has been done to understand stakeholders' interest and influence in events. Growing efforts were made to understand 'why people attend festivals or events' using the motivational theories, and primarily focus on a single group of stakeholders such as attendees or participants (Li and Petrick 2005). Previous research on festival attendance motivation has borrowed concepts from tourism motivation (e.g. Crompton and McKay 1997), which defined motivation as 'an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates a person's behavior' (Iso-Ahola 1980, 230). Reviewers of festival and event motivation studies have concluded that socio-psychological and anthropological characteristics are inherent in festival attendance motivation (Li and Petrick 2005; Maeng, Jang and Li 2016). Various terms such as 'motives', 'benefits', 'needs', or 'demand' were used to understand festival or event attendance motivation, which might capture some of the elements of stakeholder 'interests', but not all. To this study, interests are 'the goals, values, desires and expectations that lead a person to act in one direction rather than another' (Morgan 1986, 149), which can take many forms, including a right, a contract, a moral claim or the fact of bearing some form of risk (Clarkson 1994; Friedman and Miles 2002). This definition of event stakeholder interest is a more inclusive theoretical perspective, targeting all interest groups, not merely the attendees, and across different types of tourism events. It embodies broader socio-psychological and anthropological elements than motivation studies, and can include any event-specific factors.

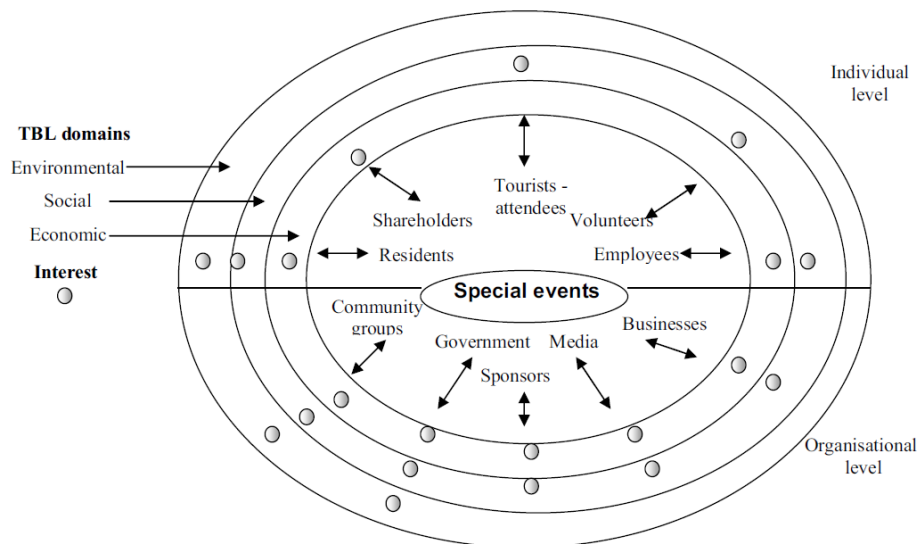
Through the existence of an exchange relationship, stakeholders have a legitimate claim or interest in events, and expect their needs to be fulfilled (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007). Reichart (2003) suggested six possible types of stakeholder interest: material (gain/loss of

tangible benefits), political (distribution of power and influence), affiliative (human relationships, needing to belong), informational (knowledge-based), symbolic (evoking associated emotions, attitudes or impressions, e.g., an event's image), and ethical (environmental and moral values). In trying to get what they want from an event, event stakeholders may use different influence strategies, depending on their relative power and the criticality and temporality of their interest (Mitchell et al. 1997).

### **2.8.1 Event stakeholder interests**

Stakeholders involved in events have different roles, for different reasons. Some of their interests could be either shared with or opposed to the event's interest. Event stakeholders may include event managers, governments, volunteers, sponsors, audiences, suppliers or local communities. Each of these stakeholders can be seen as contributing critical resources to the event; in exchange each expects their interests to be fulfilled (Hill and Jones 1992). Governments provide funding. In exchange, they expect the event to bring returns to local communities and destination promotion. Sponsors who give money to the event expect return on their investment in terms of generating market awareness or appropriate product sales (Larson 2002). Audiences provide the event with ticket revenues and expect good event experience in exchange. Employees and volunteers contribute time, skills, and efforts, expect fair returns and adequate working conditions. Suppliers supply the event with materials, seek fair prices and reliable buyers in exchange. Local communities provide the event with places and infrastructure, and in exchange, they expect events which enhance or at least do not damage their quality of life (Jackson 2008).

Based on stakeholder theory, Hede (2008) identified the interests of special event stakeholders, conceptualised under the three TBL pillars (Elkington 1997) – the economic, social and environmental domains. As can be seen from Figure 2.7, a stakeholder might have an interest in one, two or all three domains.



**Figure 2.7: TBL Primary Stakeholder Map**

Source: Hede (2008, 19)

In the event tourism context, the majority of event stakeholders' interests are economically oriented (Dwyer, Forsyth and Spurr 2005; Ensor, Robertson and Ali-Knight 2007; Gratton, Dobson and Shibli 2000). For example, governments are clearly interested in the visitor spending, tourist receipts, urban renewal and job creation that events will bring to the destination (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Prebensen 2010). Local tourism businesses are often interested in how events will impact on their commercial viability. Similarly, local vendors who pay fees to rent a place at the event aim to earn profits and make themselves visible to event visitors (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007). Likewise, local residents are interested in the tourism enterprise and employment opportunities arising. The local community at large will be concerned about the costs and revenues as a result of hosting the event (Chirieleison and Montrone 2013). As event stakeholders, sponsors are interested in their return on investment, which can be measured via a number of variables, including brand exposure, purchase intent or product sales (Hede 2008; Larson 2002). Destination marketing organisations often view events as destination promotion and image-making tools (Hallmann and Breuer 2011; Jago et al. 2003; Simeon and Buonincontri 2011), generating free publicity and media coverage, as well as expanding visitor numbers and spending (Knott, Fyall and Jones 2015).

In terms of social interest, Fredline and Faulkner (2001) found that local communities think events improve their quality of life, instil community pride and reinforce collective identity. Events provide social opportunities for locals and create positive social relationships (Derrett 2003; Laing and Mair 2015; Smith 2009). Volunteers participate in events to acquire

experience or training, develop new skills or interact with locals (Holmes and Smith 2009), or for the opportunity to socialise and connect with a hobby (Elstad 2003). Festival visitors are motivated by social/cultural opportunities, and at the same time having fun or being entertained is particularly valuable to them (Arcodia and Whitford 2006; Small 2008). Local associations or institutions including sponsors may see events as an opportunity for network building, hospitality, outreach and community development, cultural and heritage conservation (Getz 2005; Moscardo 2008). However, due to the differential effects of event tourism on local hosts, there are potentially some variations in perceptions of and reactions to tourism activity among the subgroups of the community, highlighting the complexity and diversity of host community social interest and value in event tourism (Fredline, Jago and Deery 2003).

The review of event literature shows that only in recent years has there been an increased environmental interest in festivals and events (Laing and Frost 2010; Mair and Laing 2013; Merrilees and Marles 2011; Mykletun, Bartkeviciute and Puchkova 2014), particularly in the context of the Olympics (Ponsford 2011; Shalini and Stubbs 2013) and mega sports events (Otto and Heath 2009; Collins, Jones and Munday 2009). Large music festival organisers are also found championing in greening their events (Mair and Laing 2012). However, the lack of support from various key stakeholders was found to be the main barrier to greening of these music festivals. Fewer stakeholders appear to be environmentally-oriented, but those environmentally concerned include governments, local residents and community groups (Hede 2008). Governments are more concerned with the macro-level environmental stewardship associated with events, focusing broadly on biodiversity and habitat, water and air quality, and the conservation of natural or built areas (Ponsford 2011). Local residents and community groups' environmental interests are more micro-level, including concerns about noise and air pollution, and traffic congestion (Bagiran and Kurgun 2016; Fredline and Faulkner 2001; Van Niekerk and Coetzee 2011). Event-goers are particularly concerned with the event venue and site management or the 'blended festivalscape', which incorporates pro-environmental initiatives and provides an environmentally friendly place of natural beauty (Gration et al. 2011; Wong, Wan and Qi 2014).

The above analysis suggests that different stakeholder groups involved in events may have differing, shared or opposing interests, which can have implications for the successful running of the event (Larson 2002; Reid 2011). Hede's (2008) TBL primary stakeholder map (Figure 2.8) is conceptual and relates to events generally. This thesis will extend Hede's (2008) framework to multi-event empirical research, investigating the convergence or divergence of event organiser and stakeholder interests in tourism events. While stakeholders may be

heterogeneous in their interests, they should be complementary in their desire to achieve the goal of the event, i.e. to have a successful event providing unique event experiences to participants (Getz 2012b). Managing a diverse range of multiple stakeholder interests and goals in events may be problematic. Any widening expectational gap (Reichart 2003) between event performance and stakeholder expectation can lead to stakeholder action and challenges to the legitimacy of an event. Stakeholders may seek to influence the event to achieve certain interests or changes in managerial behaviour.

### **2.8.2 Event stakeholder influence strategies**

Events are enabled by a wide set of stakeholders with differing, shared or competing interests which assume multiple roles, and have complex interrelationships (Reid 2011; Todd, Leask and Ensor 2017). The stakeholder literature argues that stakeholders who are important or considered salient by managers in terms of their power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell et al. 1997) and proximity (Driscoll and Starik 2004), influence organisations. To protect or enhance their interests, event stakeholders may exert their influence using different strategies and tactics. Frooman (1999) argues that the nature of an organisation-stakeholder resource relationship is the main determinant of a stakeholder's choice of influence strategy; he classifies stakeholder influence strategies as 'usage' or 'withholding' as well as 'direct' or 'indirect' strategies (refer Table 2.4: Typology of Influence Strategies). For example, event sponsors who provide essential resources can use the threat of withdrawal to exert influence. Stakeholders who do not have salience (Mitchell et al. 1997) may be able to influence the event only indirectly via other stakeholders (Frooman 1999; Rowley 1997).

The literature review of event studies found only two research papers that had empirically applied Frooman's (1999) stakeholder influence strategy framework, suggesting that event stakeholders' strategic behaviour is under-explored. Through a qualitative case study, Heffernan and O'Brien (2010) analyse the negotiation of resource relationships between a professional sports franchise bid team and its key stakeholders. The bid team was highly resource-dependent on its key stakeholders while each stakeholder had no dependence on the bid team, characteristic of an asymmetric resource relationship. Heffernan and O'Brien's (2010) study concurred with Tsai et al. (2005) on the role of organisation legitimacy in stakeholders' choice of influence strategy. Through strategic networking, relationship development and prudent use of media, the bid team's legitimacy was built and the influence pathways chosen by stakeholders became more indirect instead of direct, as predicted in Frooman's (1999) framework. Heffernan and O'Brien (2010) also agreed with Rowley (1997) and Rowley and Moldoveanu (2003) that stakeholder influences are multiple and simultaneous

in nature, and stakeholders are not merely driven by interests, but also the desire to express an identity. Heffernan and O'Brien (2010) drew similar conclusions to other researchers (e.g. Hendry 2005; Sharma and Henriques 2005; Tsai et al. 2005), i.e. that the connection between the resource dependence relationship and the influence strategy chosen by stakeholders is not absolute and stakeholder behaviour can deviate from Frooman's (1999) typology. Nonetheless, Heffernan and O'Brien (2010) added that Frooman's (1999) typology was shown to provide a useful, though limited and heuristic understanding of the complexity of stakeholders' strategic behaviour.

In a more recent research by Xue and Mason (2017), it was found that cultural differences have been used as a justification for changes in the resource dependence relationships between a foreign organisation operating business in China and its local stakeholders. Leveraged on the loose joint venture between its two US-based partners and employed a strategy of 'talent raiding', a local stakeholder increased its ability and know-how and reduced its dependence on the two foreign partners to design and bring in international events to China (Xue and Mason 2017, 410). In this instance, the local stakeholder used cultural differences to justify the need to reduce its reliance on the foreign partners and rationalised change to its strategic behaviour. The study concurs with Frooman (1999) that, when stakeholders are less dependent upon an organisation, the stakeholder will use withholding strategies to maintain control and achieve interests.

From a political perspective, emphasising interests, conflict and power, Larson (2002) analysed actors' (i.e. stakeholders) opportunistic interactions in a Swedish festival network. Her study found that different strategies were used by stakeholders, such as gate-keeping, negotiation, coalition building, trust, and identity building, in order to strengthen their power position in relation to one another, and thus secure goal fulfilment. Gatekeeping in this context is the strategy of controlling information or actor entry to the festival. As for negotiation, stakeholders having partly mutual interests will negotiate terms and conditions for cooperation subject to their relative power over one another. Coalition building, which includes formal alliances and interpersonal networks, is used to shift or strengthen a stakeholder's power position and increase stakeholder legitimacy within the network. Building trust based on reputation and past performance can be viewed as a strategy to strengthen a stakeholder's power position, gain more influence on decision-making, and to create more opportunities to use the festival in serving one's own interest. Identity building and sharing among stakeholders controlled the heterogeneity of stakeholders in the festival and in turn led to increased stability across the festival network (Larson 2002).



Clarke and Jepson (2011) explored the power relations in and around a community festival in Derby, and found that powerful stakeholders were able to achieve hegemonic control over other stakeholders by controlling knowledge and adopting exclusion strategies. As a result, the voices of local communities were not fully integrated within the festival planning process, leaving the powerful stakeholders to manipulate the festival towards their own direction. Some other stakeholders who were unable to create any influence chose to use passive resistance and a withdrawal of support from the festival. Consequently, it was almost impossible for the festival to achieve its goal of ‘embracing all sections of the community’ (Clarke and Jepson 2011).

A stakeholder’s potential to threaten, collaborate with, or facilitate an event is not fixed (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007) but variable over the organisational life cycle (Pajunen 2006), and hierarchies change (Larson 2002). This implies that any changes in the internal or external environment of events will lead to changes in stakeholder strategies and relations. Research on event stakeholder influence strategy is underdeveloped, hence this study will make a contribution to the body of literature on stakeholder influence, building on the work of Frooman (1999) and Heffernan and O’Brien (2010).

## **2.9 The Conceptual Framework**

To synthesise the discussion of event stakeholder salience and influence, the conceptual framework of this thesis is presented in Figure 2.8. This framework outlines both the managerial and stakeholder perspectives of their relationships in tourism events. The TSIS (Mitchell et al. 1997) serves as the theoretical framework underpinning this thesis. Mitchell et al.’s (1997) theory explains who and what really counts, based on the managerial perception of the three attributes: (1) the stakeholder’s *power* to influence the organisation, (2) the *legitimacy* of the stakeholder’s relationship with the organisation, and (3) the *urgency* of the stakeholder’s claim on the organisation. The concepts of *resource dependence* (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) and *network centrality* (Rowley 1997) are integrated to examine the stakeholder power attribute in this study. Driscoll and Starik’s (2004) *proximity* attribute (refer subsection 2.4.5.1) is added to Mitchell et al.’s (1997) *stakeholder salience* framework, a concept which has not been applied to any event stakeholder studies. According to the literature, managers’ personal values and roles, corporate culture and environment, all play an important part in managerial perceptions of stakeholder saliency. Thus, managers’ strategic cognition and perceptions of salience determine their responsiveness to stakeholder concerns. In other words, the responsiveness and actions of the managers reflect stakeholder salience.

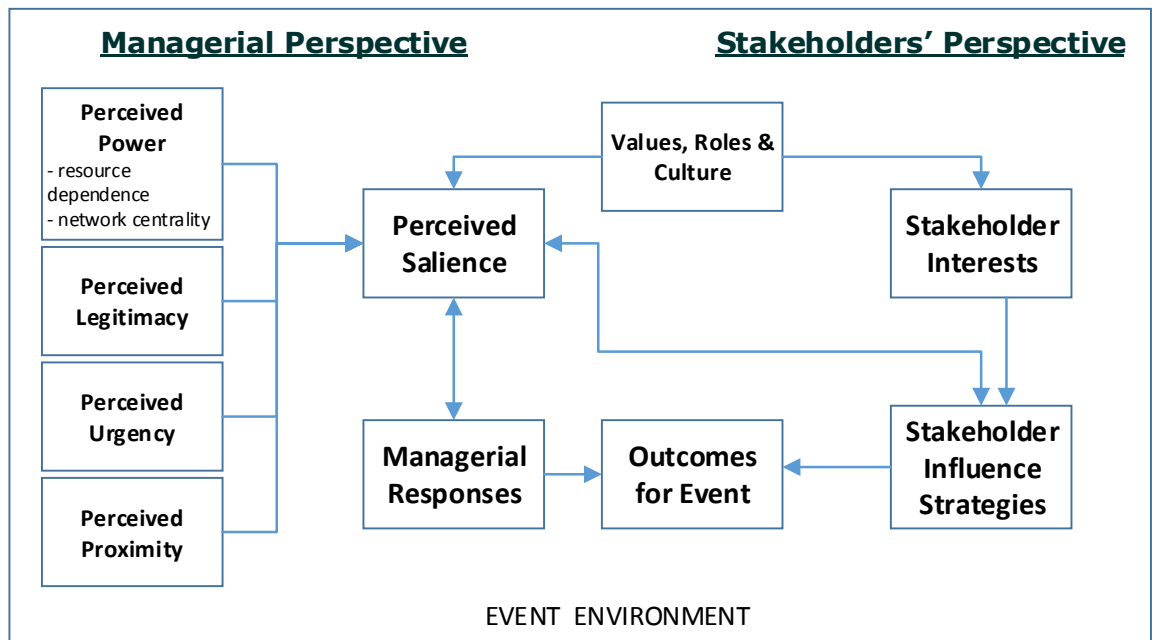
Similarly, from the stakeholder perspective, stakeholders' values, roles, culture and environment may affect their involvement and interest in events. Through a resource exchange relationship, stakeholders have a legitimate interest in events and expect their needs to be fulfilled. Depending on the urgency of their claim and their relative power in the event network, stakeholders may act to shape their salience and safeguard their interests using different influence strategies. Thus, how event stakeholders exert their influence in accordance with their interests is dependent on how they perceive their own salience, moderated by their personal values, role and environmental viewpoint.

The concept of stakeholder salience is constructed on the argument that salient stakeholders deserve managerial attention as they could potentially influence the organisation's decisions and goal achievement. The literature indicates that stakeholder salience and influence can be temporary and may change over time. It is situational, perceptual and context-specific. The conceptual framework diagram provides a theoretical background and structure for analysing stakeholder salience and influence in tourism events, and answering the three research questions.

RQ1. How do managers identify and prioritise salient stakeholders of tourism events in Borneo?

RQ2. What are the stakeholders' interests in the tourism events, and how do those interests diverge from or converge towards the interests of event organisers?

RQ3. What are the different influence strategies used by stakeholders to achieve their interests in events, and how do these strategies affect the events?



**Figure 2.8: Conceptual Framework for Stakeholder Salience and Influence in Event Tourism**

## 2.10 Chapter Summary

In summary, this chapter has presented literature in alignment with the three research questions. The chapter has provided insights into the event tourism research context, and into the underpinning stakeholder theory and its application in events studies, leading to research gaps being identified. Stakeholder theory in event studies is clearly underdeveloped and only a few studies have looked at stakeholder salience and influence in events. This thesis aims to contribute to the body of literature on stakeholder identification and salience, and stakeholder interest and influence strategy, examined in the context of event tourism. To clarify the research process used to answer the research questions, the next chapter will outline the methodology for this thesis.

# CHAPTER 3

## METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Chapter Overview

In the previous chapter, the literature relevant to the study was reviewed, research gaps were highlighted and the theoretical framework underpinning the thesis was presented. The current chapter outlines the research methodology selected to address the three research questions developed in Chapter 1, and the rationale for the choice of research approach and method. To address the research questions, the study used a qualitative-inductive case study research methodology situated in the interpretive paradigm. There are nine sections following this overview. The first two sections briefly describe the main research philosophies in social science research, and the justification for the research paradigm adopted in this study. This is necessary to reach an understanding of the decisions behind the research method selected. The third section discusses the case study methodology and the rationale of using case study method. Then the fourth section details the case study research design including the selection of cases, case study protocol, participant sampling, data collection and data analysis procedures. This is followed by a section which outlines the criteria for judging the quality of a case research. Finally, the last three sections cover ethical considerations, reflexivity and limitations to the case study method, and conclude with the chapter summary.

### 3.2 Understanding Research Philosophies

In social science research, the methodological position adopted for a research project is shaped by the researcher's underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions (Morgan and Smircich 1980). Ontology is concerned with how researchers view the nature of social reality and human beings. Two views prevail in ontology, namely objectivism versus subjectivism (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). These two different world views affect the epistemological stance of researchers and their research methods. An objectivist views reality as governed by fixed laws, something that is external to and independent of social actors, and holds that human behaviour entails observable facts and measurable laws, regularities, and relationships (Morgan and Smircich 1980). Hence objectivist assumptions give rise to the epistemology of positivism, with an emphasis on the quantitative analysis of the studied phenomena. Objectivist research methods often include surveys, questionnaires, or instruments measuring various variables (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012).

On the other hand, a subjectivist views social reality as created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors, and holds that these phenomena are subjective, multiple and ever-changing in nature (Morgan and Smircich 1980). As explanations of the social world are grounded in people's self-understanding, it is necessary to grasp the subjective consciousness or intent of the actors from 'inside', through conversation and interaction, in order to produce knowledge (Schwandt 2000). Such knowledge may constitute multiple realities constructed within a framework of shared understandings, practices, language, and so forth. Thus subjectivists frequently use epistemology of interpretivism that stresses the importance of understanding how people concretise their relationship to their surroundings. The subjectivist stance therefore entails the adoption of a qualitative approach to research (Morgan and Smircich 1980). Research methods used include unstructured interviews, participant observation, and narrative analysis (Cunliffe 2011). On a positivism-interpretivism continuum, numerous different philosophical approaches have been developed and new ones are developing as knowledge expands. For example, in event research four important and commonly adopted approaches are post-positivism, interpretivism, social constructivism and critical realism (Fox et al. 2014).

Axiological assumption is another component of research philosophy that needs to be considered. It is a branch of philosophy that studies judgements about values (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012, 137). Researchers' basic beliefs about what is valuable and ethical will be reflected and embedded in their conduct of the research, and will affect their extraction of knowledge as well as the credibility of the research itself (Creswell 2013; Walshaw 1995). By openly declaring their own values the researchers provide readers with a more transparent and critical lens through which to make their own judgements (Johnson et al. 2006). In the ensuing sections, the research philosophy of this thesis and its justification will be discussed further within the concept of 'research paradigm', a term frequently used in the social sciences (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012).

### **3.3 Justification of the Research Paradigm**

A research paradigm can be defined as an abstract model of a researcher's world view and a way of examining and understanding social phenomena, and attempted to offer explanations of these phenomena (Guba and Lincoln 1994; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). On a positivism-interpretivism continuum, this study adopted an interpretivism paradigm. The researcher considered that research is permeated with values and the researcher cannot be detached from the object of study, hence judgements will be subjective (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). Both the researcher's and participants' knowledge is contextual, as each event

is specific, experiential and unique, involving various stakeholders. How an event plays out in a particular context and the interrelationships of acts and consequences are subjective matters, bound up with the views of those involved in the event. The following subsections will give a further account of the selected research approach. First, it is useful to consider the nature of event research and the implications this has for the choice of paradigm when approaching event stakeholder research.

### **3.3.1 Nature of event research**

A review of established methods in event research by Crowther, Bostock and Perry (2015) reveals that the application of positivistic approaches such as quantitative survey-based methods has dominated event research over the past two decades. Topics focusing on event impact assessments and evaluations, and on event visitors' attitudes and satisfaction levels, dominated the early stages of event-related research (Brown et al. 2015; Getz 2012; Mair and Whitford 2013). As event research matures beyond its infancy, a more balanced range of methods is needed, to frame and establish this fledgling area (Crowther, Bostock and Perry 2015; Getz 2012). The use of qualitative methods (Getz 2012; Mackellar 2013) and ethnography (Holloway, Brown and Shipway 2010; Jaimangal-Jones 2014) is now widely accepted in event research, demonstrating the application of interpretivist and constructivist approaches by event researchers.

Crowther, Bostock and Perry's (2015) study also indicated a growing acceptance of the in-depth interview approach as a more favourable path to the study of event phenomena. Due to the experiential nature of events and the diverse meanings attached to them (Getz 2012), a plurality of methods permits a more extensive and holistic examination (Crowther, Bostock and Perry 2015). Event tourism studies and related research are considered to be still in the early stage of their development, and the research focus remains limited to a restricted number of topics (Getz 2008; Kim, Boo and Kim 2013). A review of the literature on event stakeholders found that the topic is relatively under-explored within event studies. The purpose of this thesis is to develop an understanding of stakeholders' salience, interests, and influence strategies in event tourism from multi-stakeholder perspectives, an area which has so far received limited attention in the literature. Moreover, the theory of stakeholder identification and salience (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997) which underpins this study has rarely been applied to examine event-stakeholder relationships in the context of a developing Asian economy. Since this subject is under-researched, it is necessary to choose a research paradigm that supports theory development (Burrell and Morgan 1979) around the topic of event stakeholders, still an emergent field of enquiry.

Furthermore, tourism events as a conceptual field of research is a field complicated by such events' prevalent and divergent role within different political, economic, and sociocultural environments (Crowther, Bostock and Perry 2015). These different environments can affect or be affected by the multiple groups of people from public, private or not-for-profit organisations that come together at a specific time (Andersson and Getz 2009b). Consequently, as events touch manifold groups of people, the circumstances, experience and perceptions of each group (and subsets) could be diverse and difficult to fathom. Events are characterised as experiential, congregational, unique, purposeful and transient in nature. The precise intent and meaning of participation and interaction will likely vary among the myriad stakeholders (Crowther, Bostock and Perry 2015). As the research participants in this study are the event managers and their stakeholders, who 'possess the ability to think...comprehend their own [action and] behaviour, and have an opinion about the social world of which they are a part...', 'the study...cannot be approached from the exterior standpoint demanded by the positivist' (Shaw 1999, 60). Thus, the young and emergent nature of event stakeholder studies, combined with the field's characteristic multi-stakeholder research requirements, suggests that an interpretivist philosophy and qualitative-inductive mode of enquiry must be deemed the most suitable approach for the purposes of this study (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). This study supports a paradigm shift to effect a more balanced suite of research methods and broaden the qualitative research segment within the existing body of event literature, as suggested by Crowther, Bostock and Perry (2015).

### **3.3.2 Choice of the interpretivist paradigm**

Given the social and contingent character of events argued earlier, the interpretivist paradigm seems to positively aid analysis of the event phenomenon (Crowther, Bostock and Perry 2015; Getz 2012). Interpretivism adopts the position that knowledge is socially constructed from multiple and subjective truths, subject to the interpretation of individuals (Walsham 1995). An interpretivist believes human action is meaningful, has a certain intentional content and is dependent on the context (Schwandt 2000). This study has been conducted in East Malaysia, Borneo, hence an interpretive and qualitative means of enquiry has been considered the most appropriate approach for illuminating the multi-stakeholders' complex relationships within Borneo's rich cultural system, providing the necessary depth and richness to the study (Patton, 2002). The study context has previously been presented in Chapter 1, section 1.2.1. With a research context exhibiting such a distinctive and diverse social reality, an interpretivist approach was deemed most suitable for examining the subjective social world of event

stakeholders in Malaysia and the meanings participants assign to their social environment (Crowther, Bostock and Perry 2015; Holloway, Brown and Shipway 2010).

Interpretivism moves away from positivism's deterministic explanation of human behaviour, which views reality as single, objective and tangible (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Instead, interpretivism champions the notion that any knowledge generated is contextual, being value- and culture-bound. Interpretivists seek understanding, but do not make firm predictions. Interpretivist studies tend to focus on that which is unique, even deviant, rather than seeking global generalisability (Getz 2012). Interpretive understanding is valuable for its offering different but equally interesting insights (Walsham 1995b). The subjective character of each event creates multiple realities around different stakeholders, and even more so among different types of events. The positivist pathway of predetermined constraints and the pursuit of a singular knowable reality might limit the understanding of complex event stakeholder relationships, and could perhaps prove incongruous (Crowther et al. 2015). In contrast, an interpretive-inductive revelation of 'the facts' may be more useful than deductive reasoning. The interpretive method demands a 'qualitative approach that encourages the development of practical and theoretical understanding, and the generation of new and alternative theories and concepts...' (Shaw 1999, 60).

The research philosophy and approach adopted will underpin the research strategy and the choice of methods for the study (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). There is a range of research methods available: while some are distinctive to a particular paradigm, others can be used across paradigms. Within a subjective ontology and interpretive epistemology, narrative analysis, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study, are among the methods that can be used to investigate different interpretations, meanings and perceptions of realities (Creswell 2013; Cunliffe 2011). Narrative research is a type of inquiry owing its design to humanities studies which investigates the lives of individuals; whereas phenomenology is a type of inquiry deriving its design from philosophy and psychology which investigates an everyday world phenomenon, as viewed explicitly from the participants' perspective (Creswell 2013). Grounded theory owes its design to sociology and refers to a researcher-generated theory 'grounded' in the views of participants. Ethnography on the other hand is based on anthropology, which explores and understands cultural phenomena over a prolonged period of time (Patton 2002). Case study research represents an inquiry design found in many fields, especially evaluation, in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, which could be a festival, program, activity or organisation (Creswell 2013). Case study research can draw on different research methods and apply multiple methods of data collection (Simons 2009).



To explore how event managers and stakeholders interpret, make sense of, or manage expectations and relationships in events, a case study methodology was adopted for this study. Event studies scholars Fox et al. (2014) suggest that case study is a common approach in events research. Case study research can be beneficial as it allows the researcher to conduct a distinctive and intensive study of each event in its setting, so as to shed more light on what can be learned or known in each case, as well as across cases, for the purpose of theory building (Eisenhardt 1989; Yin 2009). The theoretical framework was used as an initial guide to project design and data collection, as part of an iterative process of data collection and analysis (Walsham 1995a). The researcher was not constrained by the framework, allowing for other trends or theoretical themes that might emerge (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). Case studies provide a rich understanding of the research context as well as uncovering findings specific to the case (Fox et al. 2014). The following section will further discuss the case study methodology and the justification for a case study research in this thesis.

### **3.4 Case Study Methodology**

Case study as a research strategy involves ‘an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon [in depth] within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence’ (Robson 2002, 178). Typically it combines various data collection techniques such as interviews, observation, archives and questionnaires. The evidence may be qualitative, quantitative or both (Eisenhardt 1989). The main intention is to gather comprehensive, organised, and in-depth information about each case of interest in its natural context (Patton 2002). Triangulation of multiple sources of data is meant to improve the validity of case studies. As such, case studies provide a rich understanding of the research context and a deep holistic view of the research problem (Yin 2009).

The case studies method may situate within both the positivist and the interpretivist philosophical traditions (Cunliffe 2011). Case studies can be used to achieve various research goals, including the provision of descriptions of phenomena and the development or testing of theory (Eisenhardt 1989). Hence they can be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory in nature, and may involve either single-case or multiple-case design, and numerous levels of analysis (Yin 2009). Often, case studies are used to explore areas where existing knowledge is limited, to discover new concepts and propositions, and to provide evidence for hypothesis generation (Eisenhardt 1989). However, case studies may not be the preferred method where understanding of a particular phenomenon is of little interest, or is already well-developed and mature, or where the real-life context is irrelevant (Darke, Shanks and Broadbent 1998). Yin

(2009) suggests that when ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are posed and the researcher has little or no control over a contemporary set of events, such a scenario is likely to favour the use of case study method.

### **3.4.1 Types of case study designs**

Yin (2009) suggests four types of case study design based on a 2 x 2 matrix. The four types of design are (1) single-case (holistic), (2) single-case (embedded), (3) multiple-case (holistic), and (4) multiple-case (embedded) designs. Within a case study, when attention is also given to the sub-units or embedded units, then the design would be called an ‘embedded case study design’ (types 2 and 4). In contrast, when the study ‘examines only the global nature of an organisation or of a program, a holistic design would have been used’ (types 1 and 3) (Yin 2009, 50).

A single-case study is appropriate where it represents a ‘critical’, ‘typical’, ‘extreme’ or ‘unique’ case, or the case is ‘revelatory’ or ‘longitudinal’ in nature (Yin 2009, 47-48). Single cases allow researchers to investigate situations in depth to provide rich description and understanding (Walsham 1995b). On the other hand, a multiple-case design allows cross-case analysis and comparison, and the investigation of a particular situation in diverse settings. Other authors have referred to this type of design as a multi-site (Herriott and Firestone 1983) or collective case study (Stake 2000). Yin (2009, 54) argues that multiple-case design should be selected to predict similar results (a literal replication), or to predict contrary results, but for anticipatable reasons (a theoretical replication). Similar to multiple experimental design, a multiple case study design may generate robust research results. In sum, a case study approach can be used in various research contexts and paradigms, utilising a range of data collection and analysis methods, and producing valid research findings (Darke, Shanks and Broadbent 1998; Yin 2009).

### **3.4.2 Justification for case study methodology selection**

A case study research strategy was chosen for this thesis as such a strategy is ideal for exploring the complex social relations entailed in how and why event managers prioritise their stakeholders and what are the stakeholder interests and influence in tourism events in East Malaysia, Borneo. No other similar research could be found regarding event stakeholders in Borneo, so the use of case research is especially critical. Case study research provides insights into areas of research that are less known, and is an excellent method for theory building (Eisenhardt 1989). It is a favoured choice when there is the prospect of discovering new

insights to the event tourism field which is lacking in theoretically-oriented research (Getz 2008, 2012) such as research pertaining to event stakeholder salience and influence.

From another point of view, the events field lends itself to a case study approach because each event needs to be understood in its context. When examining stakeholders, it is also necessary to examine a particular organisation, so this again points to a case study approach. The case study method adopted for this study allowed for in-depth analysis of the different event organisations and their stakeholders, and optimised the understanding of multifarious stakeholder relationships in event tourism contexts. It also allowed the researcher to examine this social phenomenon in its natural setting and from the perspective of the participants, to provide a more holistic explanation (Walsham 1995b).

The value of using a case study methodology is well acknowledged (Myers 2009; Swanborn 2010; Woodside 2010; Yin 2003). Yin (2009) observed that the use of case studies has increased and it is a common research method in psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, social work, business, information systems, education, organisational research and community studies. Case study methodology is the most widely used research method to address a variety of subjects or issues in tourism (Xiao and Smith 2006), such as community tourism planning (Grybovych 2012), destination networks (Scott, Cooper and Baggio 2008), eco-tourism (Hitchner et al. 2009), cultural tourism (Arnaboldi and Spiller 2011), golf tourism (Markwick 2000), and so forth. In fact, previous studies of event stakeholders typically have used a case study approach (e.g. Getz et al. 2007; Prebensen 2010; Spiropoulos et al. 2006; Todd, Leask and Ensor 2017; Xue and Mason 2011). In addition, since case study is a theory-building research strategy that is deeply rooted in rich empirical data, building theory from cases is likely to generate theory that is 'accurate, interesting and testable', complementary to the mainstream deductive research (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007, 26).

It has been suggested that case researchers need to be explicit about the stance, methods, choices and procedures they have undertaken, so that case readers can follow the logic to comprehend the outcomes (Lincoln and Guba 1990; Walsham 1995a). Yin (2009) proposes that the development of and adherence to a clear case study protocol would enhance the reliability of case research. The next section will provide greater detail of the case study research design for this study and highlight relevant rigorous measures taken at various phases of the research. The aim is to carefully walk readers through the various milestones of the research process, and so facilitate the transparency and methodological soundness of this case research (Gibbert and Ruigrok 2010).

### **3.5 Case Study Research Design**

A research design is ‘the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions’ (Yin 2009, 26). The research questions underpinning this thesis have already been stated in Chapter 1. The ‘how’ and ‘what’ questions asked are relevant to case study research as it is used in this study. The unit of analysis or what constituted the ‘case’ (Yin 1994) in this thesis was the event and the relationships between an event organiser and its stakeholders. These relationships were studied from both the perspectives of the organiser and the stakeholders. A multiple-case research design was adopted in this study to understand stakeholder salience and influence in event tourism, from the perspective of East Malaysia, Borneo. The study context has been presented in Chapter 1, subsection 1.2.1. A multiple-case study design was used as such a design allows for cross-case analysis, provides more compelling evidence, is robust, and gives a stronger base for theory development (Yin 2009).

#### **3.5.1 Selection and number of cases**

Perhaps the most unique and important aspect of case study is the selection of cases to study, as understanding of the critical phenomena depends on choosing the cases well (Patton 2002; Stake 2000). Case researchers have highlighted the inappropriateness of random sampling in case study method, but have supported purposeful and theoretical sampling, which posits the selection of information-rich cases for study in depth (Eisenhardt 1998, Patton 2002; Yin 2009). Establishing the criteria for purposeful sampling directly reflects the aim of the study, and drives the identification of information-rich cases (Merriam 2014). In this research, the criteria used to guide case selection included: (1) the event is a recurrent annual event listed on the tourism events calendar; (2) the event is representative of the destination and of the event category; (3) the event must be at least five years old to be considered established and prominent; and (4) the event has to involve various groups of people or organisations, in order to have sufficient stakeholders to enable the research questions to be answered. These criteria were selected because events meeting these criteria are considered well-marketed and popular tourism events, worthy of in-depth study. Such tourism events are particularly helpful in shedding light on complex event environments and stakeholder relationships, and thus, relevant to the research topic. Also, if the chosen criteria are fulfilled in common across all cases, then cross-case comparability may be enhanced (Yin 2009).

Six tourism events meeting the above-mentioned criteria were selected and they are presented in Table 3.1. These events are selected because they are well-established tourism events

funded or supported by the government, involving public, private and community sectors, offered a diverse range of event stakeholder types to the study. As mentioned in Chapter One, event tourism development in Malaysia is perceived as a significant public service provided by the government, to serve the interests of society and contribute to regional development. Some individuals or groups see themselves as being 'legitimate' tourism players will want to be part of the events. Others exercise power, use personal contacts or informal political connections to gain managerial attention and seek to influence the events. Therefore, these cases are particularly suitable for illuminating complex event-stakeholders relationships, offering theoretical insight and contributing to the development of TSIS. Within the set of cases, certain cases were chosen based on literal replication with an expectation of predictably similar results, while others were chosen based on theoretical replication, anticipated to predict contrasting results (Perry 1998). The expected similarities (literal replication) and differences (theoretical replication) in research outcomes stemmed from (1) the orientation and function of the events, and (2) the form and ownership of the events.

First, the orientation and function of the events can be compared from two different perspectives – 'destination perspective' versus 'event-centric perspective' (Getz 2008, 406-408). As mentioned in Chapter 2, section 2.2, some events initially are conceived with little or no thought given to their tourism appeal. But later they are perceived to have tourism prospects and so are elevated into the event tourism portfolio. Such events principally remain event-centric. Refer to Table 3.1, where cases 3, 4 and 6 are examples of such events. Conversely, events that are normally organised or supported by the government agency or destination-marketing organisations (DMOs) are primarily intended to promote tourism to a destination. Such events are essentially destination-oriented. Cases 1, 2 and 5 listed on Table 3.1 are primarily destination-oriented events. With differential agendas at play, it was expected that different emphasis would be given to different groups of stakeholders at the destination. Second, events can be distinguished by their form and ownership. As in other mixed industries, events can be owned by public, non-profit and private organisations, resulting in different management implications, in terms of event governance, structure and content (Andersson and Getz 2009a). Different forms of events offer different experiences and products for exchange, and need different resources for this exchange (Getz 2012b). Comparing cases with similar or different characteristics improves the transferability of the case study findings (Eisenhardt 1989).

Some researchers have suggested that to maximise the variation in sampling, extreme or deviant cases should be included as they help to improve the credibility of the research (Silverman 2013; Patton 2002). In this study, there was no deliberate hunt for a deviant case phenomenon at the initial design phase (Miles and Huberman 1994). However, as the researcher progressed through the data collection stage, it was found that most prominent tourism events at the destination were organised by the public sector. Therefore, the researcher decided to look for an exception. It was also for theoretical sampling reasons that an event owned by a not-for-profit organisation (see Sport Event 6 in Table 3.1) was included in this research. Theoretical sampling implies that a case is selected for its potential to offer additional theoretical insight (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007).

The concern of information richness is also vital to selecting the number of cases. Unfortunately, there are no fixed rules regarding the number of cases to be included in case study research (Perry 1998). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that in purposeful sampling the sampling is terminated when a point of saturation or redundancy is reached. Eisenhardt (1989) argues that a sample of four to 10 case studies offers sufficient analytical generalisation for theory building. Other researchers have recommended four to six cases as a reasonable minimum, and 12 to 15 as the maximum number for a major project (Miles and Huberman 1994; Perry 1998). Considering the time and costs involved in data collection, this research selected six cases based on purposeful and theoretical sampling. This study also largely depends on the theoretical framework developed from prior theory. To ensure a range of event types and subgroups of cases, the study purposely chose two music festivals, two community events and two sports events, so that the theoretical replications across subgroups were complemented by literal replications within each subgroup. Table 3.1 displays the blend of theoretical and literal replication, and other characteristics of the selected cases. All cases, organisations and interviewees in this study remained anonymous and were disguised by a coding system.

**Table 3.1: Six Selected Tourism Event Cases from Borneo**

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Orientation &amp; Function</b>	<b>Form &amp; Ownership</b>	<b>Age</b>
Music Event 1 (ME1)	Primarily organised to promote the destination by a DMO; attracted mainly regional and local expatriate population, and a small number of international visitors.	A music festival, private-ticketed performances, state-owned, staged at a private venue in a different city from ME2.	Since 2006

Music Event 2 (ME2)	Primarily organised to promote the destination by the same DMO that organised ME1; attracted a large number of regional and international visitors.	An award-winning music festival, private-ticketed performances, state-owned, staged on a private venue located 35 km from the capital city.	since 1998
Community Event 3 (CE3)	Primarily a community event organised to promote the town and conserve ethnic cultures; attracted regional visitors and local population.	A community cultural event, no entrance fee, organised by a municipality, staged on a public space in a town.	Since 2002
Community Event 4 (CE4)	Primarily a community event for the local population's enjoyment; at the same time attracted a small number of international participants and regional visitors.	A community recreational event, no entrance fee; municipal-owned event, staged on a public space in another town different from CE3.	Since 2005
Sport Event 5 (SE5)	Primarily organised to promote the destination, marketed internationally through interest group networks; attracted a small number of international yachting enthusiasts.	A water sports event, private yachting race, no fee involved, state-owned, sponsored by private corporations.	Since 2003
Sport Event 6 (SE6)	Primarily organised to promote interest in running; gained international marketing support from DMO, attracted a large number of regional and international participants.	A sports event, private marathon race on public streets; registration fee involved, owned by a not-for-profit running club.	Since 2008

### 3.5.2 Case study protocol

A case study protocol (see Appendix A) is a central vehicle in the design and application of case study research (Yin 2009). Essentially, it will offer an overview of the study, the field procedures, interview questions and a guide for the case study report. The development of the case study protocol benefits the research in two ways. First, the protocol allows the researcher to plan in advance the data collection processes and requirements. Second, the protocol gives direction, structure and some flexibility to the investigation, as well as improving the dependability of the research findings (Perry 1998). It also provides the structure for writing the case study reports as part of the analysis in this study. In terms of the timing of observations, this study adopted the cross-sectional approach, that is, it studied the phenomenon at a particular time (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009).

As previously discussed in subsection 3.4.2, the interest of this study lies in theory generation from qualitative-inductive case study research. For the six case studies involved, qualitative data and evidences were collected from multiple sources. The primary source of information was the semi-structured interview data from event managers and stakeholders. The heart of

the case study protocol is a set of interview questions reflecting the research line of inquiry (Yin 2009). Interviewing people is necessary when we want to find out from them things that we cannot directly observe, things which are on their mind, and examine events that are impossible to replicate (Patton 2002). Interviewing allows the researcher to enter the participants' perspective.

A wide range of data was collected from secondary sources, including event website and social media materials, managerial archival records (e.g. meeting minutes, planning documents, reports), and stakeholder communications and documentation (e.g. emails, letters, news archives, contracts and forms, programme booklets). Refer to Table 3.9 for secondary data collected for each event. Field visits were made to the events, which created the opportunity for direct observation of stakeholder behaviour and interactions (Yin 2009). Casual data collection activities included talking to the stakeholders and assessing the practices at the event site to gather further evidence. Further data were also recorded in a field notes journal. Use of multiple empirical evidence gives a more comprehensive and precise perception of events and enhances the reliability of case studies (Eisenhardt 1989, Yin 2009).

At the start of the data collection process, event websites provided useful information on the event background, the organising team, relevant stakeholders, news archives, and event policy and process. These data yielded introductory information regarding the events and their stakeholders, as well as generating a preliminary sampling contact list. Mindful of the power structure and local culture, the researcher wrote formally at a very early stage of data collection, to the state tourism minister office and tourism board, informing them of the research project and inviting them to participate in the study. The two offices responded positively to the invitation, and the tourism minister's office even provided an endorsement letter stating its support for this research. This ministerial endorsement letter subsequently helped the researcher gain access to each event and organisation involved in the study.

### **3.5.2.1            *Interview protocol***

There are three formats for interview design when collecting qualitative data: (a) informal conversational interview, (b) general interview guide approach, and (c) standardised open-ended interview (Patton 1990). This study adopted the general interview guide approach or semi-structured approach (Merriam 2014) because it allows a degree of flexibility and adaptability in getting information from the participants (Turner 2010). An interview guide is a list of questions prepared to make sure that basically the same information is obtained from each participant interviewed. However, the researcher is required to adapt both the wording



and sequence of the questions to specific participants in the context of the actual interview (Patton 1990). The interview questions were open-ended, intended to trigger ideas on potential areas of discussion, and allowed the participants to express their own views freely (Patton 2002).

A case study protocol (see Appendix A) was developed to guide the interview process and enhance the dependability of the research (Yin 2009). At the beginning of every interview, the researcher obtained some basic details about the participant being interviewed, explained the purpose of the interview and recorded the interview date, time and location. A participant information sheet (see Appendix B) was handed out to explain the purpose of the interview to the participants and address the confidentiality issue. Similarly, a consent form (see Appendix C) had to be signed by each participant, indicating their informed consent to participate in the study. Permission to audio-record the interview was sought before each interview began and it was mostly granted, except in one interview where the researcher had to take notes. The advantages of audio-recording interviews are the resulting accurate record of what was said and the ease with which direct quotes can be extracted when writing the final thesis (Walsham 2006). In addition, audio-recording frees the researcher to concentrate on engaging with the participants and capturing the non-verbal elements of an interview.

Two sets of interview guides were developed, one for interviewing the event managers, the other for interviewing the stakeholders. The interview questions were formulated and adapted from the previous empirical studies by Parent and Deephouse (2007), and were correlated directly to each of the research questions in this study. Both sets of interview guides had opening and closing questions. The opening question was designed to relax the participants, to discover their roles and background knowledge about the event. The closing question tried to gauge participants' recommendations and future intentions, and allowed room for other issues to emerge. The event manager interview guide comprised questions pertaining to research issues such as identifying and prioritising the event stakeholders, stakeholder relationships, and stakeholder interests and influence. Additional tools were developed to help event managers identify their stakeholders. A table shown in Appendix D was provided to event managers during the interview, asking them to list and rank their stakeholders in terms of their importance to the event. Unfortunately, only a few managers took the time to contribute to the Appendix D table as provided. A show card with a list of event stakeholders, derived from the literature, (see Appendix E) was available to facilitate event managers' identification and discussion of stakeholders. The stakeholder interview guide encompassed questions on stakeholder goals/interests in events, stakeholder influence strategies and their relationships with other stakeholders.

### **3.5.3 Participant sampling**

Getz, Andersson and Larson's (2007) list of key stakeholders for events was used as the basis for the stakeholder sampling framework since it includes a diverse range of event stakeholder types and has been adopted by other event researchers (Karlsen and Nordstrom 2009). The event managers of each case had first to be identified, contacted and interviewed. One way of achieving this was through the tourism board's events calendar or the events websites, to research each event secretariat's contact details. Event managers were then contacted via email and phone, with a request to participate in the study. Interviews with managers disclosed which stakeholders they interacted with and the managers were asked to refer the researcher to stakeholders for subsequent interviews.

To avoid managerial and gatekeeper bias, some stakeholders were identified solely from the event websites, press releases and also at the event site, then contacted to solicit their participation in the study (Myers, 2009). Events offer a multifarious context, hence examining stakeholder relationships collectively from both the organisers' and multiple-stakeholders' perspectives gives a more complete picture of the phenomenon under investigation, and reveals a richness and breadth of knowledge (Crowther et al. 2015). The researcher sought to include a sample from each stakeholder group, as interviewing people from different perspectives can be a valuable approach (Yin 2009). However, practical issues such as the availability of the event organisers and stakeholders, and their willingness to participate, played a part in the sampling within each case as well as in the selection of cases.

Initially, eight to 10 interviews were planned within each of the six cases. Hence, it was anticipated that a total of 50–60 interviews would be conducted with event organisers and their stakeholders, such as vendors, sponsors, volunteers, suppliers, local businesses, government entities and media. Although there are no set rules, Perry (1998) suggests that a doctoral thesis requires about 35–50 interviews. Referring to a study on event stakeholder management by Reid (2011), she interviewed 54 stakeholders from three rural events. Studies that feature a relatively similar number of interviews include: Stokes (2008) – 48 interviews; Yaghmour and Scott (2009) – 46 interviews; and Lamberti et al. (2011) – 45 interviews. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended sampling be terminated when no new information is forthcoming from new sampled units, or until a point of saturation or redundancy is reached. The following Table 3.2 shows the total number of interviews conducted in this study.

**Table 3.2: Total Number of Interviews Conducted**

Event	Manager interviews	Stakeholder interviews
Music Event 1 (ME1)	4	10
Music Event 2 (ME2)	5	7
Community Event 3 (CE3)	4	6
Community Event 4 (CE4)	3	5
Sport Event 5 (SE5)	3	6
Sport Event 6 (SE6)	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>61</b>	

The contextual details of each event are provided in Chapter 4. The following tables present a brief profile of each participant within each case. The first case was a music festival named Music Event 1 (ME1) in this thesis. The interviews were conducted between April–September 2013. Four managers and 10 stakeholders participated in the interviews. The researcher talked informally with audiences, service suppliers, local residents and businesses at the event site.

**Table 3.3: Case Study Participants in Music Event 1 (ME1)**

Participant	Participant's role in the event	Length of involvement
ME1-manager 1	Chairperson & team member	8 years (since inception)
ME1-manager 2	Senior director	4 years
ME1-manager 3	Project manager & team member	8 years (since inception)
ME1-manager 4	Operation manager	4 years
ME1-stakeholder 1	Venue provider	8 years (since inception)
ME1-stakeholder 2	A local volunteer leader	8 years (since inception)
ME1-stakeholder 3	International volunteer	8 years (since inception)
ME1-stakeholder 4	Vendor	7 years
ME1-stakeholder 5	Food vendor	2 years
ME1-stakeholder 6	Local performer	1 year
ME1-stakeholder 7	Corporate sponsor	8 years (since inception)
ME1-stakeholder 8	Tourist service provider	8 years (since inception)
ME1-stakeholder 9	Media – a local blogger	2 years
ME1-stakeholder 10	Local government representative	4 years

The second case was another music festival named Music Event 2 (ME2) in this thesis. The interviews were conducted between April 2013 and June 2014. Five event managers and five stakeholders participated in the interviews. Two stakeholders preferred to give responses via email. The researcher talked informally with food vendors, audiences, media, local residents and businesses at the event site.

**Table 3.4: Case Study Participants in Music Event 2 (ME2)**

Participant	Participant's role in the event	Length of involvement
ME2-manager 1	Director	3 years
ME2-manager 2	Project operation manager	3 years
ME2-manager 3	Project director & marketing	17 years (since inception)
ME2-manager 4	Program director	15 years
ME2-manager 5	Marketing manager	10 years
ME2-stakeholder 1	Local volunteer	16 years
ME2-stakeholder 2 (email)	Supplier & sponsor	3 years
ME2-stakeholder 3	Venue provider	17 years (since inception)
ME2-stakeholder 4	Tourist service provider	8 years
ME2-stakeholder 5	Tourism association & business	10 years
ME2-stakeholder 6 (email)	Ethnic organisation & performers	1 year
ME2-stakeholder 7	Craft association & vendors	7 years

The third case was a cultural festival named Community Event 3 (CE3) in this thesis. The interviews were conducted between April 2013 and August 2014. Four event managers and six stakeholders participated in the interviews. The researcher talked informally with food vendors, volunteers, audiences, suppliers, local residents and businesses at the event site.

**Table 3.5: Case Study Participants in Community Event 3 (CE3)**

Participant	Participant's role in the event	Length of involvement
CE3-manager 1	Committee chairperson	9 years
CE3-manager 2	Secretariat	12 years (since inception)
CE3-manager 3	Councillor & committee	4 years
CE3-manager 4	Councillor & ethnic community leader	7 years
CE3-stakeholder 1	A private company in charge of trade & exhibition zone	5 years
CE3-stakeholder 2	Tourism association & business	12 years (since inception)
CE3-stakeholder 3	Designer & supplier	9 years
CE3-stakeholder 4	Artistic director of a dance society	12 years (since inception)
CE3-stakeholder 5	Advertising agency & service supplier	2 years
CE3-stakeholder 6	Ethnic organisation's leader	12 years (since inception)

The fourth case was a kite festival named Community Event 4 (CE4) in this thesis. The interviews were conducted in July 2014. Three event managers and five stakeholders participated in the interviews. The researcher talked informally with vendors, audiences, local residents and businesses at the event site.

**Table 3.6: Case Study Participants in Community Event 4 (CE4)**

Participant	Participant's role in the event	Length of involvement
CE4-manager 1	Secretariat	10 years (since inception)

CE4-manager 2	Manager	10 years (since inception)
CE4-manager 3	Chairperson	3 years
CE4-stakeholder 1	Local Kite Flyer Club (leader)	10 years (since inception)
CE4-stakeholder 2	Local Kite Flyer (International liaison)	10 years (since inception)
CE4-stakeholder 3	International Kite Flyers (participants)	2 years
CE4-stakeholder 4	Tourism business	1 year
CE4-stakeholder 5	Tourism Ministry representative	10 years (since inception)

The fifth case was a yachting race named Sport Event 5 (SE5) in this thesis. The interviews were conducted between June 2013 and July 2014. Three event managers and six stakeholders participated in the interviews. The researcher talked informally with volunteers, local residents and businesses at the event site.

**Table 3.7: Case Study Participants in Sport Event 5 (SE5)**

Participants	Participant's role in the event	Length of involvement
SE5-manager 1	Organising chairperson (a minister)	10 years (since inception)
SE5-manager 2	Secretariat (staff of a tourism board)	5 years
SE5-manager 3	Local government body	10 years (since inception)
SE5-stakeholder 1	Voluntary working chairperson (a marina owner)	10 years (since inception)
SE5-stakeholder 2	Voluntary secretary (marina management)	8 years
SE5-stakeholder 3	Logistic & technical volunteer	6 years
SE5-stakeholder 4	Sponsor hotel management	10 years (since inception)
SE5-stakeholder 5	A marina manager	1 year
SE5-stakeholder 6	International race participants	1–3 years

The sixth case was a marathon named Sport Event 6 (SE6) in this thesis. The interviews were conducted in July 2014. Four event managers and four stakeholders participated in the interviews. The researcher talked informally with local residents and businesses during a field visit.

**Table 3.8: Case Study Participants in Sport Event 6 (SE6)**

Participants	Participant's role in the event	Length of involvement
SE6-manager 1	Race director	3 years
SE6-manager 2	Treasurer	7 years (since inception)
SE6-manager 3	Secretariat	7 years (since inception)
SE6-manager 4	Logistics director	3 years
SE6-stakeholder 1	IT Volunteer	7 years (since inception)
SE6-stakeholder 2	Beneficiary organisation	6 years
SE6-stakeholder 3	Partner & sponsor	7 years (since inception)
SE6-stakeholder 4	Runners & participants	2 years

### **3.5.4 Data collection procedures**

The data collection stage involved following the case study protocol, the gathering of multiple sources of evidence, creating a case study database, and maintaining a chain of evidence (Yin 2009). Event managers and their stakeholders were contacted via email or phone, with a request to participate in the study. A participant information sheet detailing the background and purpose of the research and interview procedure was emailed to the potential participants, together with the Ministry support letter. Some stakeholders however did not respond to the invitation to participate until the researcher used personal networks to open the gate for further access. Once the participants had agreed to be interviewed, an interview date and venue was arranged. Most of the participants in the study had asked for a list of interview questions to be sent to them prior to the interview for their preparation. A reminder was sent to the participant one or two days before the scheduled interview date, to ensure the interview will take place as scheduled.

Most of the interviews were arranged to take place at the participants' offices, where they felt more comfortable to share information. Some interviews were arranged at a public place such as a café. In general, event managers and stakeholders were not available for interview closer to the event dates or immediately after the event, because those pre- and post-event periods were their busiest times. Strategically, the ideal time to interview the participants would be two to four weeks after the event while the experiences are still fresh in their minds. Unfortunately, not every case will go according to plan. Sometimes the process of gaining access to the participants stalled despite several attempts, and some refused to be interviewed. Thus, in most cases, the process of obtaining access to all the participants within a case was lengthy. The entire data collection process for the six cases spanned more than 18 months, from March 2013 to August 2014. Refer to the previous section for the detailed interview schedule for each case.

At the interview, the researcher followed the interview protocol which is outlined in previous sub-section 3.5.2.1. All interviews were conducted in English, except two in Mandarin Chinese, which were then translated to English in the process of transcribing. The translated transcripts were subjected to back-translation to the participants, to ensure accurate records of the interviews (Chen and Boore 2010). The interview time ranged from 30 to 90 minutes' duration. There were two participants who preferred to answer questions via email, so a list of questions was emailed to them. The disadvantage of this method was that the responses given were relatively short and any emerging area of vagueness then had to be probed with follow-up questions either through phone calls or emails. However, this was the only way to include

these participants. The researcher, as a 'neutral' observer (Walsham 2006), has no direct personal stake in the events and the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity in the study plays a role in the participants' relatively frank expression of their views.

At the end of each interview, the researcher would consistently ask the participants if she might view their documents, reports, communications evidence and other non-confidential relevant materials regarding the event. Sometimes the request was rejected but other participants willingly provided copies of such evidence to the researcher. A thank-you email was sent to these participants immediately following the interview. Soon after each interview, a full transcript was developed from the audio-recorded interview and sent to the participant involved to cross-check for any discrepancies in the data. This participant-check process helps to ensure the dependability and accuracy of findings (Creswell 2003; Lincoln and Guba 1985).

Besides interviews, field visits to the events created the opportunities for direct observation of stakeholders' behaviours and interactions (Yin 2009). The researcher has attended or participated in all the selected events, except SE6, due to the distance and untimeliness of event. The proximity of the location of the researcher to ME1, ME2, CE3 and SE5 allowed the researcher to attend several editions of these events. Each field visit to the event's city lasted from three to five days. In the event settings, the researcher made observations by using photographic and video images, artefacts, merchandise, programmes, and any other sources that help to document the events (Mackellar 2013). Data were also gathered through casual conversations and informal interviews with stakeholders such as attendees, volunteers, vendors, media, local residents and businesses. Direct observation and casual conversations were used extensively both inside and outside of the events, to explore why people got involved or did not get involved in the events, and to understand their expectations and perceptions of the events. Field visits have assisted the researcher to better capture the precise context of the events and understand the relationships between stakeholder groups, as well as those contexts between the activities of the event and the stakeholders (Mackellar 2013). All data collected from field visits were recorded in a field note journal. A case study database was created and maintained, which included audio-recorded interviews, interview transcripts, documentary evidences and field notes. The use of a case study database enhances the reliability of a study (Yin 2009). A list of all secondary sources of data and relevant documentary evidence collected on each case is listed on Table 3.9 below. The type of evidence collected varied from case to case.

**Table 3.9: Secondary Data Collected for Each Event**

<b>EVENT</b> <b>DATA TYPE</b>	<b>Music Event 1 (ME1)</b>	<b>Music Event 2 (ME2)</b>	<b>Community Event 3 (CE3)</b>	<b>Community Event 4 (CE4)</b>	<b>Sport Event 5 (SE5)</b>	<b>Sport Event 6 (SE6)</b>
<b>Managerial/admin document</b>	Gantt chart. Organisational chart. Media schedule.	Presentation slides. Logistics plan.	Publicity flyers & posters. Site layout.	Organising committee list.	Meeting minutes. Presentation slide reports.	Event reports.
<b>New archives/releases</b>	Mostly downloaded from event website.	Mostly downloaded from event website.	Hard copy newspaper releases.	Mostly downloaded from event website.	Mostly downloaded from event website.	From event website & social media.
<b>Stakeholder communication</b>	Emails. Audience survey. Programme booklet.	A booklet about ME2. Festival guides.	3 copies of yearly programme booklets.	Event schedule. Press kit.	All years' programme booklets.	Letters to government, sponsors, suppliers.
<b>Stakeholder contract/form</b>	Vendor contract. Media contract. Volunteer form.	Vendor contract. Media contract. Volunteer form.	Vendor form. Performer form.	N/A	N/A	Participant form.
<b>Site photos</b>	site photos	site photos	site photos	site photos	N/A	N/A

### 3.5.5 Data analysis and interpretation procedures

Data analysis is a systematic process that attempts to find the meaning of data collected and draw conclusions in a study (Silverman 2013). Data analysis consists of three concurrent flows of activity: (1) data condensation, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing/verification (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014). Data condensation involves analytic choices made by the researcher that sharpen, sort, focus, simplify, and organise data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified. Such an organised and compressed assembly of information needs to be systematically and inventively displayed in the form of texts, tables, matrices and networks, so that readers can see what is happening and draw justified conclusions (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014).

Data analysis and interpretation are not only influenced by the researcher's ontological, epistemological and methodological approach but will also reflect the concepts and theories that structured the study in the first place (Merriam 2014). In this study, for the purpose of understanding, exploring, and explaining the phenomenon of stakeholder salience and influence in event tourism, Mitchell, Agle and Wood's (1997) TSIS was used as the initial



guide to the design of data collection and data analysis. This approach allows a considerable degree of openness for the field data, the iterative research process and the final product, the thesis itself (Walsham 1995). When looking for the presence or absence of each attribute, the researcher referred to the descriptions in Chapter 2, section 2.4 of the definitions and construct bases for each attribute. For example, stakeholder power is present when a stakeholder has a resource upon which the event is dependent, be it time, money, materials, skills, knowledge, or influence. The legitimacy of stakeholders could be represented in a contractual relationship, a moral claim or by virtue of a stakeholder having something at risk. Events by nature are time-sensitive as they are held within a finite time period. If the managers take actions to address a stakeholder's claim, then the stakeholder possesses urgency. If no action, or delayed action, is taken, this means the stakeholder does not have urgency. However, the analysis applied to this study was not constrained by the Mitchell et al. (1997) framework; that framework was only used as a guide to structure the analysis, allowing other ideas to emerge.

In this study, the computer-assisted qualitative data-analysis software (CAQDAS) NVivo version 10 was used to code, categorise and manage data; however the post-computer thinking, analysis and interpretation was done according to the researcher's own analytic rationale (Yin 2009). All documentary evidence was converted into analysable text, and along with interview transcripts and field notes was uploaded to NVivo 10 software for analysis. This study has followed the analytic practices suggested by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014), beginning with First Cycle coding, then using Second Cycle or pattern codes, and also the process of developing themes through jottings and analytic memoing.

### ***3.5.5.1 First Cycle coding***

First Cycle coding is a method of summarising segments of raw data (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014). A careful reading of the interview transcripts, field notes and documents was the initial step. The First Cycle of coding was the process of assigning codes or nodes which rendered the research questions and themes as relevant data chunks of varying size. Coding is primarily an interpretive act. A code is a researcher-generated construct that captures a datum's primary content and essence (Saldana 2013). In this study, descriptive coding serves as an elemental coding approach as it is helpful for studies with a wide variety of data forms (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014). A descriptive code is often a noun (a word or a short phrase) assigned to a passage of qualitative data which suggests an observable concept (Saldana 2013). Table 3.10 shows an example of three coded passages reflecting stakeholder power, taken from the interview transcripts in this study. The same code was repeated throughout when repetitive patterns of phenomena and consistencies in human activities were found in the data sets. Later

these coded passages could be retrieved to compose a more detailed inventory of the topic and to construct a narrative describing stakeholder power in the study (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014).

**Table 3.10: Example of Descriptive Coding about Stakeholder Power**

Sponsors are important because without their funding this event might not go on...	SPONSOR/POWER
Certain areas have been locked in, e.g. beverages and wines, by sponsors...so there is no other vendor for beverages and wines...they decide what brand of beer to serve at the event...	SPONSOR/POWER
Human resources are important...we cannot afford to pay hundreds of staffs to work...we only come in a very skeletal team and the rest we need the support of the university. It has to be a long-term sustainable kind of partnership. That's why now we decide to have a MOU or partnership program in terms of internship and volunteer program.	VOLUNTEER/POWER  VOLUNTEER/LEGITIMACY

Other coding approaches such as In Vivo coding and Simultaneous coding were applied as needed (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014, 62). In Vivo codes emerged directly from participants' words or phrases in the data sets. Simultaneous coding is the use of two or more different codes to a single qualitative datum. See an example in the last row of Table 3.10 above. This coding format is appropriate when the data's content suggests multiple meanings, thus requiring more than one code (Saldana 2013).

### 3.5.5.2 *Second Cycle coding*

The Second Cycle coding method generally works with the First Cycle codes that have already emerged. Second Cycle coding is also called 'pattern coding'; it groups the summaries emerging from the First Cycle coding process into more meaningful and parsimonious units of analysis (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014). Pattern codes are explanatory or inferential codes that identify an emergent theme. For example, a Second Cycle review of the descriptive coding in Table 3.10 suggests that the stakeholders' power is utilitarian or resource-based – sponsors bring in cash or in-kind sponsorships, and universities contribute volunteers or manpower required by the event. Later, these pattern codes were mapped and linked with other relevant codes to construct an account of the local perceptions of stakeholder salience in events.

In the process of analysing and writing the final thesis, the researcher-author's reflections, commentaries, interpretations, and inferences were jotted down separately in a memo diary.

These various different jottings and memoing items, primarily conceptual in intent, were organised and synthesised into a final written narrative offering a coherent set of explanations for within-case as well as cross-case analysis (Saldana 2013). In a multiple-case study, there are two stages of analysis – the within-case analysis and the cross-case analysis. Both the processes of within-case and cross-case analysis are guided by the theoretical framework, and the materials are analysed to answer what were in this study the three initial research questions (Merriam 2014).

For the within-case analysis, the researcher seeks to identify and cumulate segments of meaningful data that are responsive to the research questions, then develop a descriptive and analytical case report consisting of participant quotations and other supporting evidence, with the aim of generating insights into and rich understanding of each case. Each case is treated independently and contextually, allowing the unique patterns of each case to emerge before the researcher pushes on to generalise patterns across cases (Eisenhardt 1989). After the analysis of each case is completed, the researcher commenced cross-case analysis. All evidence across cases for a particular theme, for example ‘stakeholder power’, was brought together to make comparisons and look for similarities and differences. Cross-case analysis offers a unified description across cases. It seeks to build abstractions across cases and to generate a general explanation that fits the individual cases (Merriam 2014). This type of analysis can result in building theory, offering an integrated framework covering multiple cases (Eisenhardt 1989). Case studies that apply both within- and cross-case analysis have been found to be more valuable in developing theoretical frameworks and formal propositions than studies employing only within-case or only cross-case analysis (Barratt, Choi and Li 2011). The next section will outline a range of strategies built into this study to enhance the quality and credibility of case research.

### **3.6 Criteria for Judging Quality of Case Research**

Case studies are a popular and relevant research strategy used in building theory, based on a rich and diverse bank of empirical data concerning particular instances of a phenomenon (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). Studies that build theory from cases are often regarded as motivating, inspiring, illuminating and interesting research (Bartunek, Rynes and Ireland 2006; Sigelkow 2007). However, the quality and rigour of case studies are at the centre of unresolved debates between two broad camps of researchers, the positivists and the interpretivists (Gibbert and Ruigrok 2010; Pratt 2008). The central bone of contention in the argument stems from the potential assignment of validity and reliability to qualitative research findings (Kapoulas and Mitic 2012). Considering the wide variety of qualitative research,

there are bound to be differences in the criteria for validity and reliability (Merriam 2014). Yin (2009) adopted the same four common criteria used by any empirical social research – construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability – to address the quality of case studies research, the content of which has commonly been dismissed as fiction by adherents to the positivist tradition. Other researchers have proposed the notion of ‘contingent criteriology’, that is, different appropriate evaluation criteria to be contingently deployed when assessing work emanating from a different philosophical stance (Johnson et al. 2006, 147).

Qualitative researchers themselves have recommended alternative assessment criteria to establish the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Patton 2002). For example, credibility or authenticity as the analogue to internal validity; transferability or applicability as the analogue to external validity; confirmability as the analogue to objectivity; and dependability or consistency as the analogue to reliability (Johnson et al. 2006; Lincoln and Guba 1985; Patton 2002). Some researchers have suggested categories of validity, including descriptive, interpretive, theoretical, evaluative and ecological validity (Hammersley 1992; Huberman and Miles 2002). An empirical research study has showed that reviewers of qualitative manuscripts for European management journals use differing evaluative criteria. The top 10 criteria commonly used to assess qualitative materials include rigour, formulation, coherence, originality, relevance, explication, positioning, contribution, rationale and delimitation (Savall et al. 2008).

Based on its subjective world view and interpretive philosophical assumptions, this case studies research project has applied several techniques to improve its rigour, some of which have already been mentioned earlier under the relevant sections dealing with research design, data collection and data analysis. The following subsections will further discuss the trustworthiness or rigour of this research with reference to the four criteria recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Credibility, transferability, dependability/consistency and confirmability have become widely adopted criteria in qualitative research (Merriam 2014; Patton 2002).

### **3.6.1 Credibility**

Credibility is similar to the traditional criterion of internal validity (Lincoln and Guba 1985). It refers to the extent to which a procedure leads to an accurate representation of reality (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). What is being investigated in this research is people’s constructions of reality, which are multidimensional and ever-changing. It is important to understand the perspectives of those involved in the construction of reality, ‘to uncover the

complexity of human behaviour in a contextual framework, and to present a holistic interpretation of what is happening' (Merriam 2014, 215). In this research, the researcher was the primary instrument of data collection and analysis; interpretations of reality were accessed directly through interviews, observations and interactions with actors; and the researcher, being native to the studied context, was able to articulate more accurately the context and to present a finding closer to reality (Lincoln and Guba 1985). However, the researcher was obliged constantly to maintain a self-critical, self-examining and self-challenging perspective, conscious of her own personal values and preconceived notions, in order to improve the rigour of the study (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Merriam 2014).

To meet the test of credibility, the researcher has used a multi-method qualitative data collection technique, encompassing in-depth interviews, field visits, observation, documentation and archival records (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). Refer to the previous section 3.5.4 for the details of data collection procedures and a list of multiple data sources, which includes events' managerial documents, news releases, stakeholder communications and contracts, and site photos. Employing multiple sources of evidence permitted the triangulation of data sources and encouraged convergent lines of inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Moreover, interview data were collected from people with different perspectives and participants reviewed the interview transcripts after interviews, hence these modes of triangulation contributed to the credibility of the study (Merriam 2014). Another approach to dealing with the credibility issue is to look for variation in the understanding of the phenomenon (Patton 2002). The inclusion in this study of a different case analysis of an event not owned by the public sector was theoretically useful to the study. The techniques of asking broad and open questions during interviews, audio-recording the interviews to establish referential adequacy (Lincoln and Guba 1985), and carefully transcribing these audio-recordings as well as presenting long extracts of data in the research report (Silverman 2013) were among a number of ways this study worked to increase credibility. The use of thick description through quotes in findings is another evidence of trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln and Guba 1985).

### **3.6.2 Transferability**

Generalisability in the statistical sense and the applicability of results to other settings both seem unachievable in qualitative case study research, since the cases examined are context-specific. Lincoln and Guba (1985, 298) suggest the notion of transferability, in which the original inquirer can provide 'sufficient descriptive data' to make transferability possible. Patton (1990, 489) also recommends extrapolating rather than generalising: 'Extrapolations

are modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar, but not identical, conditions...Extrapolations can be...based on information-rich samples and designs...’

A way to enhance case transferability is to have multiple-case studies which can facilitate the horizontal accumulation of knowledge (Eisner 1991). Similarly, Eisenhardt (1989) argues that cross-case analysis involving four to 10 case studies offers analytical generalisation. In analytic generalisation, ‘the investigator is striving to generalise a particular set of results to some broader theory’ rather than to a population, as in statistical generalisation (Yin 2009, 43). To generalise to a theory is to present some evidence that supports a theory but does not necessarily prove it conclusively (Perry 1998). To enhance the transferability of this research to another similar setting, a rich description of the sampling was reported in section 3.5.1 and a detailed description of each case context was provided at the beginning of each case analysis in Chapter 4; this allows readers to evaluate the researcher’s sampling choices and to comprehend case context, and makes transferability judgements possible (Lincoln and Guba 1985).

### **3.6.3 Dependability/consistency**

Dependability or consistency is defined as the extent to which the results of a study are consistent with the data collected (Merriam 2014). The various techniques of data collection and triangulation outlined above in relation to credibility also demonstrate the dependability of the inquiry (Lincoln and Guba 1985). The use of the triangulation method, for example, can be seen as a technique for obtaining dependable and consistent data. The audit trail is a technique suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to ensure consistency and dependability. Three tactics deployed to ensure the consistency and dependability of this research were the creation of a case study protocol, the development of a case study database (Yin 2009), and the use of computer software for efficient management of qualitative data (Silverman 2013).

The case study protocol includes an overview of the study, the field procedures, interview questions and a guide for the research report which provides a standard account of the research steps undertaken (Yin 2009). The protocol was consistently applied to each case study and interview. The maintenance of a case studies database was another case in point. The database comprised audio-recordings of interviews, interview transcripts, case study field notes, and documents and narratives collected during the study. These were organised and stored, ready for access and examination when required. Considering the large amount of qualitative data gathered, the use of NVivo 10 software, which offered a mechanism for data coding, sorting,

classifying and retrieving (Bazeley and Jackson 2013), also contributed to the trustworthiness of the research. Thus, a systematic operation at the levels of research design and data collection, and careful documentation and data management, facilitated internal coherence and ensured the dependability and confirmability of this research.

### **3.6.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability is concerned with establishing that the study conclusions have been logically drawn from the data (Lincoln and Guba 1985). The data triangulation tactic previously outlined in relation to credibility and dependability can also be cited to address the confirmability of the study. This tactic entails the use of multiple data sources and collection methods to cross-reference and support the objectivity of findings by showing their convergence and consistency of meaning (Miles and Huberman 1994). The member-checking process (respondent validation) was used to ensure that participants' responses as given at the interviews were accurately reflected in the interview transcripts (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Another tactic is to walk readers through the detailed case study method, including case selection, data collection, and data analysis (refer previous section 3.5), to demonstrate the objectivity of the researcher (Gibbert and Ruigrok 2010). Confirmability is enhanced when the researcher provides a plausible causal argument with logical reasoning to defend the research conclusions, based on the 'horizontal accumulation of knowledge' (Merriam 2014, 228). This study's multiple and varied cases, and cross-case analysis, make its findings stronger and better grounded, and improve the likelihood of building accurate and reliable theory (Eisenhardt 1989).

In brief, by being internally reflexive throughout the entire research process, developing a well-considered set of actions, keeping a clear trail of evidence, and relaying clearly to the readers the methodological choices, decisions and actions taken, the researcher enhances the rigour of case studies research (Perry 1998; Yin 2009). The focus must be on transparency about the concrete research actions taken, so that readers can appreciate the logic and purpose of these actions in the context of the specific case study (Gibbert and Ruigrok 2010; Pratt 2008). Various tactics have been applied at different phases of this research to improve the rigour of the methods used, thus also demonstrating the quality of this study.

## **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

To a large extent, the credibility and dependability of a qualitative case research study depends upon the researcher's own sensitivity and ethical values (Merriam 2014). Along with much

qualitative work, case study research entails taking a strong interest in participants' personal opinions and circumstances. With the researcher as the main instrument in a qualitative inquiry, the study and the researcher inevitably enter the 'private space' of participants, which automatically implies that the researcher's manners must be good and his/her code of ethics strict (Stake 2000). Ethical dilemmas are most likely to emerge from the data collection and interpretation processes, as well as from the dissemination of findings (Patton 1990).

To address the ethical concerns of this research, the study followed the research guidelines prescribed by Curtin University's Human Research Ethics Committee. The researcher started the field work only after approval of the research was granted by the Ethics Committee. In fulfilment of the ethical considerations underlying this research, all participants involved were fully informed of the research purpose, processes, and their own role within the study. A copy of the participant information sheet (refer Appendix B) was provided and explained to all participants before commencement of their interview. Informed consent was a fundamental requirement of the ethical procedures, so a consent form (see Appendix C) was prepared for each participant to fill in, indicating their voluntary participation in the study and their right to withdraw from the study at any stage.

Interview transcripts were sent to participants for cross-checking; there was no feedback from any participants about any discrepancy in the transcripts. Great caution was taken to protect participants' anonymity. All responses were treated confidentially throughout the research process. Each event, organisation and participant remains anonymous and has been disguised in the final reportage. Participant codes were used, with only the researcher knowing the real identities of the participants. However, there existed a possibility that the events could be identified through this form of case research method. All data were securely managed and stored, with access restricted to the researcher and the supervisors, to maintain the integrity of the data (Miles and Huberman 1994). Hard data consisting of notes and documents are securely stored in the researcher's office at Curtin Malaysia campus, in a locked cabinet, while soft data in the form of electronic documents are kept in a password-protected personal computer, with back-up copies on an external hard disc and on Curtin Malaysia's server. With the above precautions, the risk to those participating in the research will be minimal.

### **3.8 Reflexivity**

The author believes in the concept of relativism, and accepts the fact that there is no value-free, position-free, neutral, or objective factual knowledge in social science research. Thus, in adopting an interpretivist paradigm in this study, the author did not experience cognitive



dissonance, but was constantly reminded of the need to maintain an open mindset in the research process. Being an academic with pre-existing working relationships with some event managers may have opened doors for interviews and data collection, but it also might influence participants' responses during the interviews as well as the researcher's analysis of the data (Myers 2009). Thus, the case study protocol was carefully followed and a research diary maintained, to ensure that no stones were left unturned, that multiple realities were constructed by the participants, and views from different perspectives were included in the study.

The researcher comes from the same sociocultural context as the research participants, a factor which might facilitate the understanding of local meanings and everyday symbolic worlds but also potentially blocks the researcher from seeing things from a fresh and new perspective, and presents the risk of taking things for granted (Walsham 2006). To minimise this potential bias, the researcher has tried to step back from the data frequently and has maintained a sceptical attitude, in order to make rational and logical interpretations. Similarly, prior theories and assumptions that the author may have had, have been discarded or disregarded so that the true 'voice' of the research participants can be heard through the entire research process (Lincoln and Guba 1990). Having two research supervisors from a different cultural background also helped in viewing things from a different perspective and maintaining a critical view of the study. Offering transparency about the researcher's own values, background and experience, provides readers with a clearer and more critical lens through which the case study report and its conclusions can be viewed and understood (Johnson et al. 2006; Shaw 1999).

### **3.9 Limitations of Case Research**

In common with any research project, this study was limited by the methods chosen. These limitations can be identified in two main areas. First, the interview data were the experiences and perceptions of the event managers and their stakeholders, at the time of the interviews. In collecting such data, a purposive sampling strategy was employed, so some of the participants participating in the research might be known to the event managers or other stakeholders. It is possible that some participants might not be truthful in their responses for various reasons. It is also possible that people in an Asian culture tend to be more reserved in sharing their thoughts and feelings, and often hide the negative aspects of their knowledge. To facilitate the participants' willingness to share their experience and knowledge more freely and openly, most interviews were conducted at the participants' premises. Participants were reassured about confidentiality concerns at the beginning of each interview. A conversational and relaxed style of interviewing was another strategy used to improve participants' willingness to

share information. With the use of multiple methods and data sources, and the deployment of data triangulation strategy, it was expected that the risk of participant bias could be minimised.

Second, the aim of this research was simply to generate a substantive understanding of event-stakeholder relationships within a particular context, and to develop theory inductively, not to provide any definitive theory on the research topic (Parkhe 1993). As a result, the extent to which the findings emerging from this research can be generalised to the wider population of events is limited. The transferability of findings to other events under similar, but not identical, sociopolitical and economic conditions could potentially be viable (Patton 1990). Another criticism that has been directed towards the qualitative case methodology is that it generates voluminous data resulting in the development of overly complex theories, and the qualitative case method has also been critiqued for producing findings that are only narrowly idiosyncratic to particular cases (Eisenhardt 1989; Parkhe 1993). However, the use of established prior theories to develop a theoretical framework and specific research questions in this study has helped it to overcome these possible issues of theory complexity or idiosyncrasy.

### **3.10 Chapter Summary**

A qualitative-inductive case study, situated within an interpretivism paradigm, was deemed appropriate for this thesis, as little is known of how event managers perceive the salience of event stakeholders or how these stakeholders influence the events. A multiple-case study method was adopted. Based on purposeful sampling and replication logic (Yin 2009), six tourism events from East Malaysia, Borneo, were selected for the study. Data collection techniques and materials included semi-structured interviews with event managers and stakeholders and a wide range of secondary sources such as event websites, documentation, archival records, field visits and observation. Various measures were employed throughout the research to enhance the quality and credibility of the case study methodology. Systematic data analysis and interpretation procedures were then used to condense data, identify emergent themes, and map patterns for the final written account of each case study. The next chapter, Chapter 4, will present the findings on all the six cases relating to the research questions. Then Chapter 5 will report on the cross-case analysis, comparing and contrasting the information gathered from each case study.

## CHAPTER 4

# INDIVIDUAL CASE FINDINGS

### 4.1 Chapter Overview

The previous Chapter 3 has outlined and justified the case study methodology. In this chapter, within-case analysis will be reported. The cross-case analysis report will be presented in the next chapter, Chapter 5. This chapter consists of six case reports. The case analysis reported is based on the collected data, analysed to answer the three research questions. To facilitate readers' understanding of case findings and reporting, the following paragraphs will first explain the data findings presentation format, and the concepts and terminology used in the chapter.

Each of the six cases will be presented one by one. In each case, an overview of the event will first be presented to give an insight into the event context, then the event stakeholders will be identified and mapped. Next, the case examines stakeholder attributes – power, legitimacy, urgency and proximity – in relation to the stakeholders' salience. Then the case discusses stakeholders' interests in the event. Lastly, stakeholder influence strategies will be examined, and the case report concludes with a summary. To simplify the presentation of findings for each research question in each case, tables and figures are used to provide a visual display of results, as well as facilitate the cross-analysis in Chapter 5. Direct quotations from the participants and other sources are used to give evidence of the patterns found in the data.

The construction of event network structure in each case is based on a range of case data collected through interviews, documentary evidence, direct observation and informal interviews in the fields. These data were integrated to identify stakeholders' connection with one another in the event organising process. In analysing and presenting the event stakeholder network structure, a distinction is made between *ad hoc* and regular ties among the stakeholders. A regular tie is a direct link which exists throughout the entire event organising process, that is, before, during and after the event. An *ad hoc* tie is a direct link which existed only during the event period itself, and occurred only for a specific event and operational need. For example, volunteers are assigned impromptu to assist the performers and media, an assignment allocated just before the event commences, and ended when the event is over. This *ad hoc* tie is an unplanned short-lived interaction among stakeholders that mostly occurs at the event site. Based on the data in each case, a network diagram is drawn to show which stakeholders have network power. Yellow-coloured nodes represent stakeholders who have

five or more regular ties with others, or control over others, and thus are more central and have network power. A continuous line or a broken line is used to differentiate a regular or *ad hoc* tie respectively in the stakeholder network diagrams.

In each case, a table displaying the presence or absence of stakeholder salience attributes will be presented to give a summary of stakeholder salience as perceived by the event managers. As mentioned in subsection 2.4.2, two types of stakeholder power will be examined – resource dependence and network centrality. Resource-based power is distinguished by whether the resource the stakeholder brings to the event is critical or replaceable. On the other hand, network-based power is differentiated by a marginal or central position within the event network. A stakeholder which has both critical resources and central position is considered to command high power. A stakeholder which has only either critical resources or central position is considered to hold only medium power. A stakeholder which has neither critical resources nor central position is considered to hold low power. A stakeholder with low or no power is considered to not possess the power attribute at all.

Different types of legitimacy will be discussed for each of the stakeholders, and then categorised into two temporal dimensions, either episodic or continual legitimacy, as adapted from Suchman (1995). Episodic legitimacy refers to the temporary possession or existence of legitimacy, lasting for one event only. For example, a band performs only once in an event and not every year, or might be invited back to perform again after several years. On the other hand, a stakeholder with continual legitimacy is involved with the event almost every year: this relationship with the event appears to be permanent.

A stakeholder commands the attribute of urgency when a time-bound priority has been assigned to its claim and managers consequently have addressed that claim with immediate attention and action. As for the proximity attribute, if a stakeholder is geographically near the event site, the stakeholder then possesses the proximity attribute. As adopted from Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) and Haigh and Griffiths (2009), stakeholders who possess four attributes are classified as primary stakeholders; possession of three attributes denotes definitive stakeholders; possession of two attributes is the mark of expectant stakeholders; and possession of just one attribute points to a latent stakeholder. Stakeholders' interests in the event are examined across five dimensions – economic, social, cultural, political and environmental.

The following sections will separately report the six cases. First, the two music events, namely ME1 and ME2, will be presented in sections 4.2 and 4.3. After that, the two community events,

namely CE3 and CE4, will be reported in sections 4.4 and 4.5, followed by the two sports events (SE5 and SE6) in sections 4.6 and 4.7. After the sixth case report, a chapter summary (section 4.8) summarises the findings, which will then lead to the next chapter, on cross-case analysis.

## **4.2 Case Study 1 – Music Event 1 (ME1)**

### **4.2.1 ME1 – Overview**

***Event Nature:*** A two-night ticketed jazz music festival on an outdoor stage. Audiences could purchase a wide selection of food and beverages, souvenirs and craft products offered by the vendors at the festival venue.

***Event Organiser:*** The owner of the event was a state tourism board, the marketing arm of the state tourism ministry. Its board of directors was made up of representatives from tourism-relevant government bodies, NGOs and corporations. Annually, an event project team consisting of six to eight staff members from the tourism board was formed to organise the festival. The event project team determined the festival concept, design, programming and budget, provided event leadership and worked closely with the stakeholders at the host city to stage the festival. Almost the same staff members were in the event project team every year. The festival was perceived as a ‘government event’, organised by a permanent institution. This music festival was among other events organised by the tourism board. The tourism board had a significant role in the direction and success or failure of the event.

***Event Venue & Audience Size:*** Since the inauguration of the festival in 2006, it had always been held at a private beach resort in a second-tier city. The audience numbers had been approximately 7,000–8,000 over the two-night festival, according to the organiser.

***Event Objectives:*** The festival was introduced as a tourism product aimed at positioning the city on the tourism map, portraying the city as cosmopolitan, and at the same time serving as a springboard for promoting hinterland tourism destinations. It was also designed as part of a month-long city fest program which celebrated and commemorated the city’s being granted official city status in Malaysia in 2005. The festival did not aim to make a profit for the organisers but was positioned more as a destination marketing and branding tool, to influence tourist arrivals, create economic benefits and offer fun and entertainment for local residents.

#### 4.2.2 ME1 – Stakeholder identification

Based on the interviews and documentary evidence collected for this case study, it was found that there was a range of actors from the public and private sectors directly involved in ME1. As shown in Table 4.1, 12 groups of stakeholders were identified and mapped. Some stakeholders filled multiple roles. For example, a beach resort which is a tourism business, provided the venue, partly sponsored the facilities, and was a leading vendor on the festival ground.

**Table 4.1: ME1 – Stakeholders**

	Stakeholder	Details
1	Governments	There are three parties in this group of government stakeholders, (1) the State Ministry of Tourism; (2) the local City government; and (3) the public authorities such as police, health, immigration, customs, and the airport authority.
2	Venue provider	A private beach resort offers its entire beach-front and function facilities as the festival site.
3	Sponsors	An international brewing company and a few large energy companies regularly provide cash sponsorships. Airlines and other corporations support with in-kind contributions.
4	Education institutions	Schools and colleges consistently supply student volunteers needed for the event, and collaborate in pre-event activities.
5	Volunteers	Student volunteers and a small community of expatriates in the City, who are loyal fans of the festival, consistently volunteer their time and skills to the event.
6	Performers	Every year, seven or eight groups of international musicians/bands, and one or two Malaysian bands, are engaged to perform at the festival.
7	Media	Consists of international and local journalists, writers, reporters, bloggers, photographers, and broadcasters. Media can be categorised into (1) traditional media, and (2) social media.
8	Tourism businesses	They are the tourist service suppliers at the host city, including tour operators, hotels, ground transport operators, and places of interest.
9	Service suppliers	This group of stakeholders are the contractors who supply marquees, stage, audio-visual and other equipment needed at the event, including an online ticketing agent.
10	Vendors	They are the local restaurants and entrepreneurs who set up food stalls and craft marts on the festival ground.
11	Audiences	Festival-goers were mainly from the local population as well as the locally- and regionally-based expatriate population, and some international visitors from Singapore, Peninsular Malaysia, Australia, and other parts of the world.
12	Local communities	Residents, and local non-tourism businesses.

### 4.2.3 ME1 – Stakeholder attributes and salience

In this section, stakeholders' power, legitimacy, urgency and proximity attributes are examined in relation to stakeholder salience. In this case study, the event project team members from the tourism board were the event managers. All four interviewed managers have broadly identified and categorised their stakeholders. For example, the chairperson [ME1-manager1] has categorised stakeholders into three groups of people to whom the event appeals, i.e. the sponsors, the audiences and the host community:

First we work to attract sponsors and sponsors come in to bear the costs. Then, we try to attract audiences, the right audience, especially the expatriate community, because that was the one that drove the bulk of audience numbers. Eventually the local community groups came into play, as in the welcoming ceremony, welcoming dinner at Ritz Hotel, the pre-festival program, then, a consistent number of local entrepreneurs involved in the food and craft mart, while local residents support the event by attending and forming part of the audiences...media is important from Day 1...as it is an image-building event. [ME1-manager1]

When asked to rank stakeholders for salience, only one manager did so. This operations manager [ME1-manager4] ranked the volunteers, local government and agencies, local entrepreneurs, then performers, in that order, as the top four most important groups of people in the event. These four groups of stakeholders were salient to the operations manager because they were the stakeholders that the operations manager mostly dealt with. The other three more senior managers felt that it was 'quite impossible to rank' [ME1-manager3] because of the different roles and stakeholders' interdependent relationships. A senior director [ME1-manager2] explained:

It's very difficult to rank in order, like, who is more important. I would see it as a symbiotic relationship...It's like all these [stakeholders] are spokes in a wheel. One goes, then it would be a problem, and you'd start to limp. Two go, even worse, so every spoke is required...easy to say the government can be Number 1 but really, what is the point of having an event when there is no audience? So who is Number 1? Audience or the government? So you can debate about it...

#### 4.2.3.1 *Power*

Broadly, the event managers perceived salient stakeholders as groups which 'made the event happen' or which 'benefited from the event' [ME1-manager2]. These two types of salient stakeholder were not mutually exclusive, due to some stakeholders having multiple roles in the event. Salient stakeholders who made significant contributions to ensure that the event occurred were perceived by the managers to be more powerful and salient than the beneficiaries of the event.

### Resource dependence

The importance of the tourism board in organising this festival was unchallenged. Nonetheless, the tourism board alone could not organise the event. To ensure the event took place, the organiser was highly dependent for critical resources on salient stakeholders at the host city, such as the city government, corporate sponsors, education institutions, and venue providers.

According to event managers, the most critical element in organising the event is funding, which comes in the form of a government grant, corporate sponsorship and ticket sales' [ME1-manager2], and the grant from the tourism ministry was the most important factor in sustaining the event production. For example, when asked the question, 'Who do you think the event depends on for survival?' [ME1-manager3] responded:

The ministry's grant, of course! Because for this event, as much as we talked about sponsorships and ticket revenue, the amount received was never enough to cover the cost...before we start, a project planning paper and budget has to be approved by the board of directors, whereby it actually goes through the ministry. With the approved figures and concept, then we form the project team to start organising the event.

The managers also commented that government 'has to be there [event] because they facilitate things, make it a lot easier for permits and approvals...' [ME1-manager2]. The city government-sponsored publicity and other materials required at the destination level, helped to mobilise concerned public authorities, and provided ground support at the host city. The event depended on governments and public authorities mainly due to the need for technical compliance and regulatory approvals. The event was also highly dependent on corporate cash sponsorships. One manager [ME1-manager1] commented that any withdrawal of major sponsors would have impacted on the organisation of the event because their sponsored amounts were quite substantial.

From the event website and site visits, it was noticed that the festival was highly dependent on volunteers to carry out various operational tasks such as logistical arrangements, merchandise and ticket sales, backstage support, and event secretariat and media assistance. A 'Memorandum of Understanding' (MOU) was signed between the tourism board and higher education institutions in the destination city, cementing a partnership for internships and volunteer programs. The tourism board also collaborated with higher education institutions in organising pre-event activities such as a tree-planting ceremony, a festival T-shirt design competition and an on-campus ticket sales blitz. The education institutions consistently



supplied student volunteers needed for the event, even for last-minute requests. The student volunteers often exhibited more than satisfactory levels of performance in their assigned tasks, and were committed and trusted loyal supporters of the festival who returned annually to volunteer their services. When asked whether the event depends on the volunteers, a local volunteer leader [ME1-stakeholder2] replied:

I would say it's a symbiotic relationship. Without the event, I would not be there to experience it and have fun. At the same time, without a team of volunteers like me and my friends, the event might not run as smooth as they would hope it to be.

According to the event managers, the beach resort had provided a non-substitutable, ideal venue for the festival. It offered a wide variety of essential facilities and services that were crucial to the major actors, for example, the event organisers, performers, foreign media and volunteers. From the very start of the event, the resort had been the only beverage seller because the festival was held on its premises. Over the years, the event managers did consider moving the event to other venues, but failed to find a suitable alternative which could offer matching physical surroundings and ambience for the festival.

The hotel's ambience is still the best, and because of that...they know that we need them a little bit more than they need us (laugh)...that's where the market force can be detected, so a lot of the time, we tend to give in to them... [ME1-manager1]

The resort manager [ME1-stakeholder1] believed that through several years of developing a working relationship, they had gained the trust of the organiser in delivering the standard required for the event. Thus, in recent years the resort had been entrusted by the organiser to manage the food and craft mart. The resort became the gatekeeper in the vendor selection process. Evidently, the venue provider, the resort, had become more powerful in this event. From the festival site visit and talking to the vendors on site, it was noted that there had been a gradual increase in their monopoly of food sales, while there was a decrease in the number of external vendor stores available on site over the years. Evidence suggested that this could be due to the venue provider's late call for vendor applications. Historically, vendor management had been handled directly by the tourism board. From the email communications between vendors and the tourism board, it was found that the calling of vendor applications originally commenced as early as four to five months before the festival. However, the venue provider now managing the vendors, the resort had been calling for vendors by invitation only, just two months before the event. When asked to respond to the issue of the decreasing number of external vendors, the resort manager [ME1-stakeholder1] replied:

This is an international event. We are looking for quality vendors who can deliver what we require. Not to say that we are not keen to take in those street vendors, but we are

looking for something big. Unfortunately, this year a few of the vendors that we invited, well, they have another event. They can't make it... We want to maintain the standard. So we'd rather reduce numbers than risk reduced quality.

Conversely, stakeholders such as the local community, tourism businesses, service suppliers, vendors and audiences were perceived to be less powerful and salient. These stakeholders were acknowledged by the organiser as the intended beneficiaries of the event. Local businesses competed or applied for their place at the event, and needed to abide by the rules and regulations set by the organiser and venue provider. Any substandard service quality would result in their contract being discontinued and service replaced. In other words, the resources that these stakeholders brought to the event were replaceable. For example, a local food vendor [ME1-stakeholder5] who was happy with the event believed that any vendor withdrawal from the event would have no impact on it, because the organiser had a choice of alternative vendors.

From stakeholder interviews, it was observed that, in general the local community and businesses did not realise their own stakeholder status, and were not vocal in protecting their interests in the festival. For example, an NGO which had always been given a free booth since the inaugural event, had been excluded since 2013. The leader of this NGO [ME1-stakeholder4] described the organisation's participation in the festival as 'not important because people going to the festival are not there to buy crafts, so with or without us [NGO], the event still goes on.'

The event organisers did mention that ticket sales were an important source of funding in organising this festival; they conducted audience surveys to improve event operations and marketing for their benefit. From the results, it emerged clearly that the main purpose of the event was to market the destination and offer entertainment. The festival was not profit-orientated, and relied heavily on public funding and corporate sponsorship. Casual discussion with some audience members during the field visit found that quite a large portion of the audience attended the event using the free tickets issued by the corporate sponsors.

### Network structure

As the event organiser, the tourism board was directly connected to almost all the stakeholders except the vendors and local communities. From the food mart application form, it was evident that the venue provider managed the vendors, including the collection of stall rental. Being a key tourism player in the host city, the venue provider had been very supportive of government tourism initiatives, and was recognised by many event organisers as an ideal co-partner in the

event's organisation. Also, the venue belonged to a corporate conglomerate, thus the property owner had embedded relationships with the city government and corporate sponsors. In general, corporate sponsors did not participate or interfere in the organisation of the event, except for an international brewing company which monopolised the beer supply inside the festival area.

The traditional and social media were salient in terms of facilitating the flow of information between the event organiser and stakeholders, particularly the audiences. The event had an active website and social media presence, disseminating information about the event and the host city, and featuring the performers. The advance of social media had reduced the event's dependence on traditional media, as a manager [ME1-manager1] affirmed:

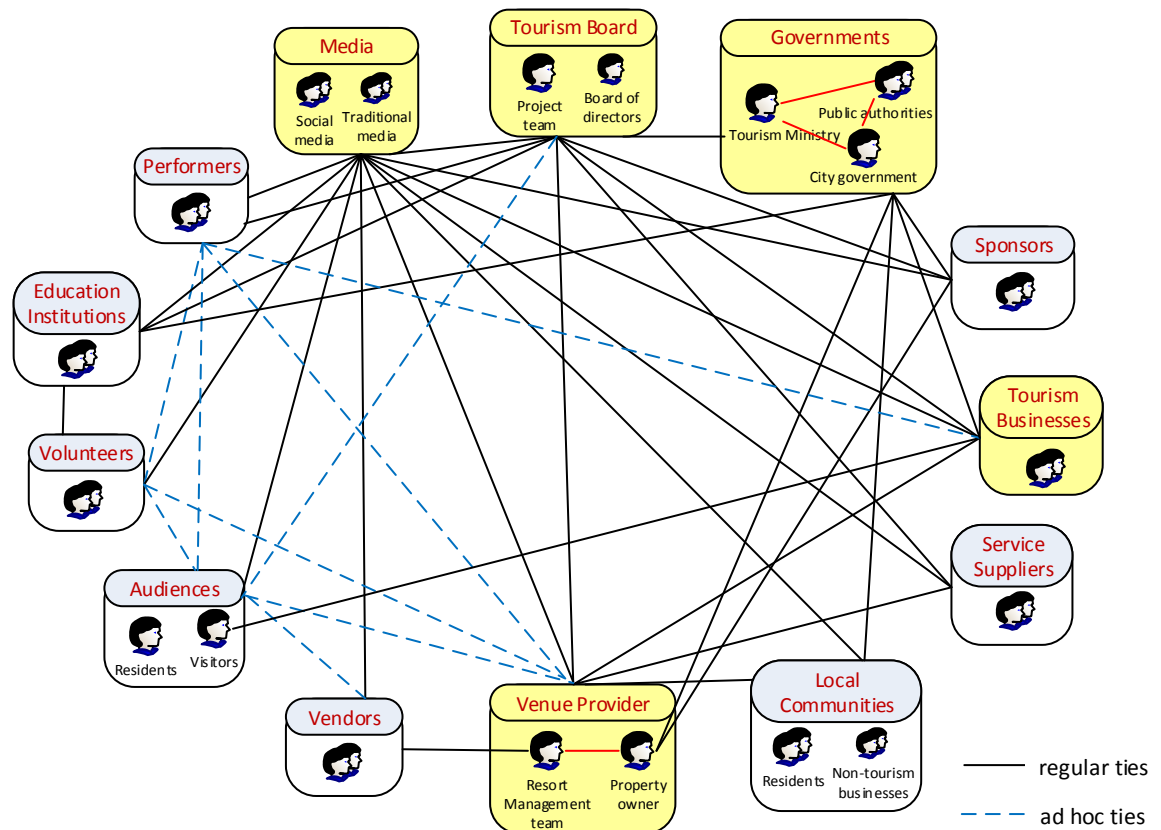
Social media has certainly been empowering the event organiser to reach out to more people. It gives us the channel, the platform, to showcase what we want to showcase, in the way we want to portray the event, using the angle we want. Very often we are at the mercy of the third-party media or traditional media, but social media gives us an opportunity to say our piece, to say what we want to say, in a way to have more control.

To the tourism board, this music festival was a tourism event, thus, most of the marketing communications concentrated on overseas markets. Based on the stakeholders' interview transcripts, stakeholders desired and proposed to the organiser to increase the local publicity effort and promote the festival earlier. Many local residents were not aware of the event objectives, dates or early-bird ticket availability, and this lack of information had deprived them of the chance of participation. For example, a vendor [ME1-stakeholder5] commented:

At least [the organiser] should have to let people know what this event is about...for what purpose. Frankly speaking, I also don't really know the exact purpose of having this event. When I was approached to join, I just joined not knowing what to expect... When I talk to some friends about the event, some still don't even know the event exists, some told me they have some tickets, which maybe were given them by some sponsors.

Some tourism businesses had transactional relationships with the tourism board, visitors and the venue provider. They provided tourist services, designed tour packages, referred visitors to the event, and promoted their services and packages in the media. Stakeholders such as volunteers, vendors, and service suppliers did not have the opportunity to interact with other stakeholders in the network, except when performing tasks for the event. Similarly, the audiences had only *ad hoc* links with the vendors, volunteers, performers and venue provider on the festival site.

Based on the case data, this event network diagram is shown in Figure 4.1. The five yellow-coloured nodes – tourism board, governments, media, venue provider and tourism businesses – have network power. These stakeholders are more proactively obtaining and sharing event information, and have more regular ties with other stakeholders. All other stakeholders who made the event happen or benefited from the event were less central stakeholders within the network.



**Figure 4.1: ME1 – Stakeholder Network Structure**

#### 4.2.3.2 Legitimacy

All stakeholders were perceived by event managers to be legitimate. Some stakeholders had more than one type of legitimacy. All stakeholders had pragmatic legitimacy as they were involved in a direct exchange relationship with the festival, except for the local communities in general. Pragmatic legitimacy is related to stakeholders' ability to instrumentally affect the event organisation, due to the event's dependence on and exchange relationships with the stakeholders. Local communities and tourism businesses have moral legitimacy as they are the intended beneficiaries of a tourism event. The governments have permanent sociopolitical and regulative legitimacy in the event. A senior director [ME1-manager2] expressed it thus:

Let's say if I run this event commercially and was not dependent on government's support, well I can do it. But I would still want the government to support me because what I am doing for the event is good for the community, and what is good for the community is going to go back to [government], that's the way.

As a tourism event, the festival aimed to promote a destination, so plausibly the media had legitimacy as well. Inevitably, the legitimacy of the governments, local communities, venue provider and tourism businesses in the event was continual in nature. Based on the MOU signed between the tourism board and the higher education institutions, the student volunteers had also established continual legitimacy. A few corporate sponsors like the beer supplier and energy companies, who have had a long-lasting relationship with the event, could also be considered to have continual legitimacy. Other stakeholders, including the performers, media, service suppliers, vendors and audiences, were perceived to have episodic legitimacy because their resource exchange relationships only lasted for one event or were subjected to yearly renewal or change.

#### **4.2.3.3            *Urgency***

The results indicated that the governments, venue provider, sponsors, performers, tourism businesses and service suppliers had implementation-based urgency attributes. From a managerial document, the event Gantt chart, it was found that the first thing managers did was to obtain the tourism ministry's approval on the event budget, before they could proceed with other activities. In addition, the managers also had to adhere to the procurement procedures and timelines set by government and the relevant public authorities. For example, when they were looking for suppliers to the event, the tender process had to open three months in advance. Likewise, when applying for performers' visas and obtaining various permits, it was critical to meet the timelines.

The event Gantt chart also indicated that performer selection and sponsor line-up were sourced and confirmed at the very early stages of implementation, as the information was needed for event publicity purposes. Similarly, publicity for the tour packages was carried out earlier. Given that the venue provider was non-substitutable, it was logical to perceive any claim from the venue provider as urgent. It was the usual practice for the organiser to earmark the next year's event dates and venue at the event finale. This action secured the venue, and the resort would then block off the rooms and facilities for the next event. The booking contract had to be formally signed by the organiser at least three months ahead of the event date.

From the event’s website and social media conversations, it was noticed that potential audiences were not able to find event information such as how and where to get early-bird tickets. Similarly, as previously discussed in subsection 4.2.3.1, the call for vendors and volunteers was made close to the event dates. From the evidence it could be inferred that education institutions, volunteers, vendors, audiences and local communities had no urgency attribute.

#### 4.2.3.4 Proximity

All stakeholders from the host city had geographical proximity. The audience was attributed proximity because they were mostly local residents and regional visitors. Local private-sector stakeholders such as the venue provider and corporate sponsors had demonstrated their support for government’s idea of having this festival since its inception. From the documentary evidence and interviews, these private-sector stakeholders were considered as partners, involved in the early years of planning and organising the festival. These partners readily offered assistance, gave advice, made decisions and supported government in establishing the festival for the common good.

Table 4.2 below summarises stakeholder attributes and salience in this music festival. In short, governments and a few large entities at the host city who continuously contributed greater and critical resources which made the event viable were the more powerful and salient stakeholders. Small local businesses or individuals involved in or benefiting from the event were perceived to have less power and relatively less salience because their resources were replaceable and their legitimacy was episodic in nature. Stakeholders who were proximate and had less power were perceived to have no urgency. No latent stakeholders were found in this case.

**Table 4.2: Summary of Stakeholder Attributes and Salience in ME1**

Attributes Stakeholder	Power			Legitimacy		Urgency	Proximity	Salience*
	Resource	Network	Level	Episodic	Continual			
<b>Governments</b>	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Venue provider</b>	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Sponsors</b>	critical	marginal	Medium		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Education institutions</b>	critical	marginal	Medium		√		√	Definitive
<b>Volunteers</b>	critical	marginal	Medium		√		√	Definitive
<b>Performers</b>	critical	marginal	Medium	√		√		Definitive
<b>Media</b>	replaceable	central	Medium	√				Expectant
<b>Tourism businesses</b>	replaceable	central	Medium		√	√	√	Primary

<b>Service suppliers</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√	√		Expectant
<b>Vendors</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√		√	Expectant
<b>Audiences</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√		√	Expectant
<b>Local communities</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low		√	√	Expectant

*\*Notes: refer to subsection 2.4.5.1, salience framework of Haigh and Griffiths (2009). 4 attributes = primary stakeholder; 3 attributes = definitive stakeholder; 2 attributes = expectant stakeholder; 1 attribute = latent stakeholder*

#### 4.2.4 ME1- Stakeholder interests

As mentioned above in subsection 4.2.1, the objective of this music festival was to bring economic and social benefits to the host city through tourism-related spin-offs. According to a local news release in 2013, the organiser anticipated the festival would generate spin-off benefits of RM 15 million (about US\$ 3.8 million). Inherently, most stakeholders' interests in this tourism event were economic and social in nature. There was an absence of cultural interest in this event, but some political and environmental interests were found.

Government expected the event to bring positive tourism outcomes and community development to the host city. A representative from the local government [ME1-stakeholder10] disclosed:

We are ear-marked by the state government to be the 'resort' city. So, we have an additional task, i.e. to promote tourism... So, any event or tourism products that promote the city, we fully support... as they lead to more tourist arrivals and revenue, and this will create economic spin-off. All the tourism stakeholders will benefit from all these tourism events. [This event] coincides with the city's anniversary, so we are happy to support it.

The beach resort's property owner and management team referred to their collaboration with the tourism board in organising the festival as primarily for the city's tourism development. Additionally, serving as the festival's official venue adds value to the hotel brand and performance. A hotel manager [ME1-stakeholder1] responded:

We are very proud to be a part of something big for the city. It also promotes our hotel and group image... It is okay that we sponsor these things so long as we can in a small way help the state tourism industry and also the city, why not?... Making money is important to the hotel, but we also look to the big picture.

Corporate sponsors were involved in the event either for financial or political reasons. For example, an international brewing company which provided cash sponsorship annually could monopolise the beer supply inside the festival area. On the other hand, a multinational energy

company saw their long-term cash sponsorship as vital for maintaining relationships with government and achieving their company's goals.

In the past we have contributed a lot to the progress of the city...we have a large number of foreign employees... to get these people to keep on working here, we have to help the government make the city an exciting place to live in...creating, developing, and progressing together with the government for mutual benefit. [ME1-stakeholder7]

The student volunteers were motivated to contribute their time to the festival as the experience helped build their personal capacities in terms of acquiring event management knowledge and skills, and socialising and communicating with different people. The volunteer work gave the students an opportunity to develop their personal network, which could benefit their future careers. The event also gave them an opportunity to meet international performers, media and visitors, at the same time as having fun and entertainment.

The primary rationale for the performers to be there at the festival was a performance fee, and international fame. The performers were also given the opportunity to meet with their fans, and sell their music and merchandise at the event. To the foreign performers, another highly attractive aspect of their participation was that they earned a 'free' trip to Borneo, a much sought-after destination, and they enjoyed the fine hospitality arranged by the organiser. To the local performers, it was the international musical exposure and inspiration that appealed. A local band leader [ME1-stakeholder6] answered:

Our members get to meet international musicians, learn, and see how other bands play and perform...I think that's helped us make a big improvement not only as a band, but also to our music careers generally...It really lifts our spirits to keep on doing what we are doing, because life is not about making money only, but also about improving, contributing and ensuring that younger musicians have a better place in Borneo.

The mass media may not have had specific interests in the festival. Instead, they were normally invited by the organiser to cover the event. A media centre was set up at the festival site to provide information and attend to the needs of the media personnel. Social media writers or bloggers however had personal interests in being involved with the festival. A local blogger [ME1-stakeholder9] replied:

Working with a big organisation like the tourism board is a rare opportunity among the bloggers. I need to grab the opportunity as it is a good platform for me to build rapport with them [tourism board], to gain exposure and experience...it helps my website and blog, adds more interest, attracts more traffic to my blog.



Business-oriented stakeholders, which included the tourism enterprises, service suppliers and vendors, basically were looking for an additional avenue to promote their products and gain extra revenue. Conversely, the audiences sought leisure, fun, entertainment, and socialising at the festival. Table 4.3 displays the stakeholders and their interests according to five categories of interest – economic, social, cultural, political and environmental. In general, stakeholders’ goals and interests converged in this event.

**Table 4.3: ME1 - Stakeholders and Interests**

Stakeholder	Interests				
	Economic	Social	Cultural	Environmental	Political
<b>Tourism Board</b>	Destination marketing & revenue	Destination development, event knowledge & skills development		Event waste management	Event leadership
<b>Governments</b>	Destination marketing & spin-off benefits	Destination development		Environmental stewardship	City image & public service
<b>Venue provider</b>	Hotel revenue & publicity, food & drink sales	Destination development		Event waste management	Symbolic affiliation corporate relations
<b>Education institutions</b>		Student learning & exposure		Pre-event tree planting collaboration	Industry affiliation, corporate relations
<b>Sponsors</b>	Product sales	CSR			Symbolic affiliation, corporate relations
<b>Volunteers</b>		Friendships, fun & edutainment			
<b>Performers</b>	International fame & remuneration	Musical exposure & inspiration			
<b>Media</b>	Media content & credentials	Enjoy music			
<b>Tourism businesses</b>	Business gain & product promotion				
<b>Service suppliers</b>	Business gain				

<b>Vendors</b>	Product promotion & sales	Enjoy music
<b>Audiences</b>	Value for money & event quality	Fun & entertainment, socialising
<b>Local communities</b>	Spin-off benefits	Fun & entertainment, socialising.

#### 4.2.5 ME1- Stakeholder influence strategies

This section reports how salient stakeholders influenced the event and what strategies were used to achieve their goals and interests. It was notable from the interviews and site visit that stakeholders in this case study were generally cooperative and supportive. In general, most stakeholders chose direct involvement rather than withholding strategies. For example, when asked whether as a stakeholder he would withdraw his involvement due to a decrease in audience numbers, a vendor [ME1-stakeholder 5] replied:

I will continue to be involved in the event. Certainly sales are important, but I would like to continue introducing my product to more people. It is not a bad deal...can do some business, at the same time enjoy the music...I like jazz music.

Salient stakeholders continued to supply the resources needed to sustain the event production. Government, the venue provider, and the volunteers perceived that they had interdependent relationships with the festival. From the local government perspective, the city council relied on the tourism board's initiatives to promote the 'resort city', so the council willingly 'provided the entire festival logistic backup, waived all the charges, facilitated the transport, offered any help the organiser needed.' [ME1-stakeholder10] Other than giving its direct services to support the festival, the local government also encouraged and persuaded local corporations to support the festival. One might infer from the responses of the local government representative that some political pressure had been applied to obtain sponsorship from local corporations:

Government on its own cannot do everything...the council has constraints on its budget...that's why we need others to come in...from our side here, the government has to do a lot of prompting and pushing...that is what we are doing – keep publicising, keep emphasising. So, we do what we can to engage and we see this as one of our community initiatives. [ME1-stakeholder10]

The results of this study show that local sponsors neither withheld their financing nor used their potential power to influence the event organisation. They chose to remain in the festival

and maintain an embedded relationship. On the contrary, the venue provider, considered to be partly sponsoring the festival, increased its involvement and influence. By consistently delivering quality service standards and improving capabilities, the venue provider achieved a more central and influential position in relation to other stakeholders, and was thus entrusted by the organiser to manage the festival food mart. The resort manager [ME1-stakeholder1] stated:

I believe it is from their trust after they [tourism board] have seen us doing things for them. We know their special requirements and standards, and we fulfilled those requirements, and we delivered what we promised to them. So, when they wanted to streamline the operation and improve on other aspects, they gave us this task, to handle the food mart.

Long-serving volunteers also increased their influence on the festival. Because of their work quality and dedication to the festival, they gained the trust of the organiser to conduct the recruitment and supervision of new volunteers. Individually, they might not be able to influence the event, but collectively they could. A volunteer leader from a university [ME1-stakeholder2] responded:

They [tourism board] started to move towards giving us [university] full responsibility for supplying them quality volunteers. It's because we have proven ourselves over the years...our volunteers stay at their posts, keep the job going, and they do everything right, basically. In a way, they [tourism board] trust our judgement when we select volunteers, so usually when we submit the volunteer name list, they will accept it on the spot.

Likewise, the local bloggers took advantage of their affiliation with the tourism board and festival to add to their credentials through their writings and blog posts. They were a well-organised group of bloggers. Through the bloggers' society, only the good and creative bloggers were selected to cover the event. Besides using their blogs, these bloggers also innovatively used various social networking services such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to promote the festival. One of the bloggers' leaders [ME1-stakeholder 9] commented, 'When the tourism board looked at the coverage that we did, they were quite impressed. So, the following year they gave us more media passes...we are seen as very aggressive bloggers.'

Most local businesses did not see their businesses as overly dependent on the festival. For example, a tour operator [ME1-stakeholder8] responded:

It is only a once-a-year thing, a two nights event, so we are not really depending on it. But it would be good if we do have the event, right!!... [it would] help in generating extra business and at the same time it's important to get exposure for our brand.

Only a limited number of tourism businesses leveraged the event for their business interest. For example, in 2013, only four tour operators were found to promote their tour packages on the event website, and there were none in 2014 and 2015. Evidence suggested that tourism businesses, service suppliers, vendors and local communities who were the intended beneficiaries of the festival were generally passive in voicing their interests within the festival. Some readily conformed to the event regulations in order to be at the festival. Some were episodically involved, while others chose to leave the event if they felt little direct benefit from it. In general, stakeholders with relatively low power did not appear to use either indirect or alliance strategies to influence the festival and accommodate their interests. A local government representative [ME1-stakeholder10] described the situation:

I would think it is the people's culture. Our people here are very easy-going, so that's our good point. But in terms of business, we need some of the Singaporean *kiasu* [fear of losing] mentality to boost ourselves up. Our people here are very laid-back, easy-going, very 'relax'...so, that is a good and a bad thing.

#### **4.2.6 ME1- Case summary**

To sum up, based on the findings from interviews and all other evidence collected for this case study, it was found that:

- a) Public- and private-sector stakeholders collaborated in event production for destination marketing and community development purposes.
- b) Event managers broadly identified their stakeholders and perceived those which were involved in making the event happen and which benefited from the event to be salient stakeholders.
- c) Government, the venue provider and sponsors which continuously supplied the critical resources needed to sustain the event production were powerful and highly salient stakeholders. Large corporate sponsors which had the potential to exert influence chose not to use their power.
- d) The event beneficiaries, who were less salient, could continuously perform a direct involvement strategy by consistently delivering high service standards to shape their salience and influence in the event.
- e) As the event goals and stakeholders' interests converged, the stakeholders tended to collaborate more and work more effectively to receive extrinsic or intrinsic benefits.
- f) Stakeholders did not appear to use either indirect or alliance strategies to influence the festival. Some stakeholders did not recognise that they had stakeholder status in the festival.

## **4.3 Case Study 2 – Music Event 2 (ME2)**

### **4.3.1 ME2 – Overview**

*Event Nature:* A three-day ticketed world music festival with afternoon music workshops, hands-on crafts workshops and traditional games complementing the evening performances on an outdoor stage. The festival site also had a variety of food and beverage stalls, and a stall for festival collectables, souvenirs and CDs by the performing artists, as well as an arts and crafts area. The festival offered a unique and authentic ‘Borneo experience’ to the audiences.

*Event Organiser:* Since 1998, the same tourism board that owned ME1, had organised ME2 as well. However, a larger event team was involved in organising ME2 than in ME1, due to differences in event size and location. The festival was perceived as a ‘government event’ involving mostly government-linked tourism enterprises.

*Event Venue and Audience Size:* The festival had always been held within a rainforest environment at a cultural village located 35 km from the state capital city. Festival-goers, accommodated in the city centre, had to use and pay for a designated shuttle bus service to enter the festival ground, since no private vehicles were allowed site access, only authorised vehicles. Visitors, accommodated at nearby resorts, could walk, or use the shuttle service to the venue. From the initial approximately 300 attendees, the festival had grown to be a world-renowned award-winning music festival attracting audiences of over 20,000 annually.

*Event Objectives:* According to the event managers, press releases, and other documentary evidence, the music festival had two specific purposes. Initially, it was organised to showcase and conserve the almost lost indigenous musical heritage of Borneo and to provide local indigenous musicians a platform to perform alongside international-class musicians. Secondly, it was instrumental in promoting Borneo as a culture-rich destination, to attract and increase tourist arrivals.

### **4.3.2 ME2 – Stakeholder identification**

As ME2 was a large music festival and the longest enduring tourism event in Malaysia, it had directly and/or indirectly affected or been affected by a large number of people. Looking at all the data collected for this case study, the following 16 groups of people were potentially the stakeholders of ME2.

**Table 4.4: ME2 – Stakeholders**

	<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>1</b>	Governments	Three groups of government stakeholders, (1) the State Tourism Ministry; (2) the City governments; and (3) the public authorities such as police, security forces, health, immigration, customs and the airport authority.
<b>2</b>	Venue provider	A cultural village which housed the major ethnic traditional houses of Borneo. Semi-surrounded by rainforest and situated about 45 minutes' drive from the city centre. A government-linked enterprise.
<b>3</b>	Tourism businesses	All types of businesses which supplied facilities and services to visitors at the destination, such as hotels and lodgings, tour operators, local attractions and places of interest for visitors, transporters and taxi operators, souvenirs and crafts.
<b>4</b>	Ethnic organisations	NGOs established to preserve and promote the local indigenous culture and heritage, usually including music societies, ethnic orchestras, performers and cultural troupes.
<b>5</b>	Local performers	Local musicians or artists, who played folk or traditional music, may or may not be affiliated with ethnic organisations.
<b>6</b>	Craft council	A not-for-profit organisation (NPO) promoting and marketing ethnic handicrafts. A government-supported organisation.
<b>7</b>	Craft businesses	Local craft artisans and entrepreneurs who were the craft vendors at the festival.
<b>8</b>	Foreign performers	International musicians and artists from all continents who performed folk or traditional world music.
<b>9</b>	Media	Two types of media, (1) traditional; (2) social media, local or international. Some were sponsoring media.
<b>10</b>	Education institutions	Supplied student volunteers, studied or researched into ethnic musicology.
<b>11</b>	Volunteers	Mostly were students from colleges or universities. Some working professionals or civil servants who were audience participants returned to be volunteers.
<b>12</b>	Sponsors	Sponsors could participate with cash or in kind.
<b>13</b>	Service suppliers	Businesses which supplied marquees, furniture, security services, online ticketing services, audio-visual and other equipment needed by the festival.
<b>14</b>	Vendors	Two groups of vendors who supplied services to audiences, (1) on-site food & drinks; (2) bus shuttle to and from venue.
<b>15</b>	Audiences	Two groups of audiences, (1) tourists or visitors who consumed various kinds of services and event experiences at the destination; (2) local residents.
<b>16</b>	Local communities	Residents and non-tourism businesses.

### 4.3.3 ME2 – Stakeholder attributes and salience

The event-organising team members from the tourism board were considered to be the event managers in this case study. The five interviewed managers conceptualised the tourism board as a key stakeholder in the event network. They considered all governmental organisations and institutions to be internal stakeholders while all non-governmental stakeholders were deemed to be the external stakeholders of the event. The five interviews with the event managers produced several descriptions of event stakeholders. For example, a marketing manager [ME2-manager5] said, ‘All those providing assistance in making the event successful are stakeholders’, then listed and ranked government, hotels, bus and coaches, volunteers, airlines, restaurants and visitors as the event’s key stakeholders. Another director [ME2-manager3] defined:

Stakeholders are people who have an interest in the festival...people who are in the tourism industry, e.g. the hotel, travel agents, airlines...because this is a tourism event...other stakeholders include those people who provide services, e.g. the restaurants, food vendors, ...the other major stakeholders are local people who are most concerned and want to promote Sarawak culture...these are the three types of people that are considered to be stakeholders.

It was interesting to note that this particular director [ME2-manager3] did not grant stakeholder status to audiences, foreign performers or sponsors. According to this director, people or entities who were not themselves concerned with the accomplishment of the event goals and objectives were not event stakeholders. It was also puzzling that none of the interviewed managers classified the performers as a stakeholder. For example, a program director [ME2-manager4] expressed this view:

The bands come and they give the shows and they are the ones that make the shows, but are they stakeholders in the festival? Not really... I am a bit worried whether my concept of what a stakeholder is can be right or not. The bands are replaceable, I suppose, yes, because every year they change.

From the above responses, it seems that the event managers in this case study had alternative views of the stakeholder concept. In general, they narrowly defined government, the tourism industry, local businesses, and local community groups as stakeholders, because they were the ‘consistent stakeholders’ [ME2-manager3].

#### 4.3.3.1 *Power*

When asked to rank the stakeholders in terms of their importance or salience, a common response from the managers was that ‘all stakeholders are important depending on the

situation' and they avoided using the word 'power'. For example, when asked the question 'who is powerful in influencing the event?', a manager [ME2-manager2] responded, 'I couldn't say who is powerful...it depends...it will not be one party because we have to look at our objectives of doing the festival.' Another director [ME2-manager3] equated power to money, commenting, '...I don't think they [sponsors] have that much of influence because the money they give is not that great anyway.'

### Resource dependence

This music festival was a very high-cost event, so managers perceived the stakeholders who could affect the event's cost and revenue structure to be important to the event's survival. Stakeholders who were the source of funds and contributed revenue to the event included the ministry that provided the grant, private sponsors for cash sponsorships, audiences for ticket revenue, and businesses that paid fees and rentals to be involved in the event. However, only the tourism ministry and large sponsors were perceived to have power in the event.

The tourism ministry was certainly a powerful stakeholder in this event. Besides its economic power, the ministry had formal, political and coercive power over tourism event policy, and over governance and development in the state. The event-organising team had to produce a post-event report for the ministry every year. Being part of the machinery of government, the ministry could facilitate smooth execution of the event and helped to reduce event expenditure in terms of securing fee waivers. A manager [ME2-manager2] explained:

The ministry gave a grant to us to work on the festival and also supported us in the implementation process. For example, helped us to apply for fee waivers on permits and immigration visas...so lowering our costs...because this is a government-initiated event, so we really need their support in that sense.

A designated manager was appointed to look after sponsor-relations and actively sought sponsors. It was found that in 2014, five corporate sponsors and six media sponsors were listed on the event website. These sponsors were regarded as the event's 'big customers', hence they were given seats in the special designated VIP zone at the event and had access to the government officials and politicians seated in the designated zone. A brewing company-sponsor monopolised the on-site beer supplies. Other entities sponsored teams of performers to attend and perform at the event, directly contributing to the quality of the evening shows. A director [ME2-manager3] emphasised this:



It is not an easy and cheap event to organise. We do need sponsorships. Without them, then we will not be able to give the very best, for example to bring in top-tier groups of performers. We can't because we don't have that much spending margin.

On the other hand, diffused groups of stakeholders such as the audiences had no real power in the event and could not affect any aspect of the event's organisation, even though the festival was dependent on ticket revenue. Food vendors and shuttle service contractors who paid rental or fees to be at the event were perceived to have low power as their services were replaceable, and subject to the yearly tender or selection processes. Tourist service providers and their service quality could affect the event operation and the experiences of the other stakeholders. However, their voice was largely ignored by the organiser. A service provider [ME2-stakeholder4] expressed unhappiness with this situation:

The guests did complain about the traffic congestion...all these comments; we actually are waiting for a post-mortem so that we can speak up. But they [tourism board] are very worried that the private sector will speak up, so after the event they do an in-house post-mortem...[but] they won't involve you...I took photographs of the traffic, told them about the problem, gave them suggestions...but there was no corrective action, same problem every year.

When asked whether the event management might consider a dialogue or post-mortem with the tourism stakeholders, a manager [ME2-manager3] defended the management position thus:

We only do our project closure internally. We don't give our report to the others except for the government. We do share information with them [tourism stakeholders], such as the number of arrivals, satisfaction survey results and all that ...but we don't dwell on each and everything that is connected to the operation. Or else we will be hearing too many suggestions and comments.

From a different perspective, the venue provider for ME2 was perceived to be powerful because the cultural village had provided a non-replaceable, ideal and memorable 'festival-scape' to the festival since its inception in 1998. A manager [ME2-manager2] confirmed, 'The village is beautiful and there is no way we can replace it and move the festival to somewhere else that could have this kind of setting.' Yearly, the village collected RM100,000 (about US\$ 24,000) in venue rental from the festival and was also involved in various operational and production aspects of the event. As the festival's home venue, the cultural village leveraged the event to build its own brand awareness and reputation nationally and internationally, and to make its musicians famous worldwide. A director [ME2-manager3] said:

As a result of this festival, the cultural village is now being able to champion the cause of Borneo musical instruments to the world. A local group has found fame in the world

of traditional music. They were sent to the United States, won awards for their performances there...something that they can be proud of.

Nonetheless, as a government-linked enterprise, the cultural village had not been able to increase its venue rental as it had wished. From the interviews, it was observed that a power struggle had taken place between the tourism board and the cultural village when the festival was first mooted, as to which of the two should be the festival's lead organiser. The representative from the village [ME2-stakeholder3] described the relationship with the tourism board as being 'like cats and dogs', but 'professionally still partnered to make sure the festival goes on, because of Borneo'.

Similar to the finding for ME1, the volunteers for ME2 were loyal supporters of the festival, highly dependable and committed. They repeatedly contributed their time and effort to the festival and had saved the event substantial labour costs every year. These dedicated volunteers were highly valued by the event managers and perceived to have some power as a group.

#### Network structure

It was evident in this case study that the managerial power of the event project team increased after a change in the event's organisation structure. From the initial committee-style of organisation which had involved relevant volunteers or representatives from the external stakeholder groups, the format changed so that the main organising team now consisted of tourism board staff members only. The voice of other stakeholders on the main organising committee disappeared. As the venue provider's representative [ME2-stakeholder3] pointed out:

When we first started we used to have different ethnic associations' representatives in the committee. I think it should be done that way...these people must pull together, that's how we develop...now I don't see that any more.

The event planning was centralised with the tourism board and its internal stakeholders. Other than the media, the tourism board occupied the most central position in the event network structure. Similar to the finding in ME1, the media had network power as they facilitated communication between the festival and all other stakeholders, especially with potential visitors and audiences. According to a manager's presentation slides, at its height the festival had attracted more than 200 local and international media to cover the event. A director [ME2-manager3] emphasised:

The festival has grown because of the media generating awareness and interest on the festival world-wide. Media write on events that are interesting and unique...bloggers

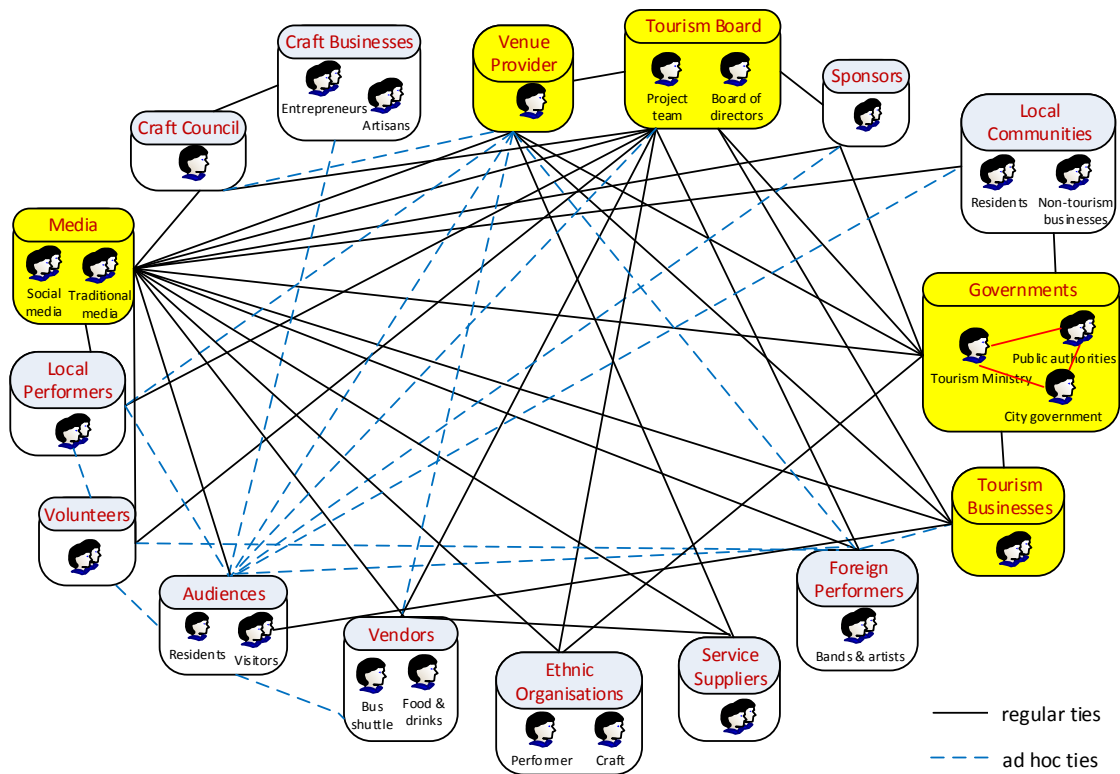
and twitters coming in...but then again as far as the publicity returns to the destination are concerned, the festival is relying on traditional media to bring in the success.

International performers were perceived to have some network power. These popular artists had their own followers and media connections in their home countries. 'By running the story that they [bands] are performing at a world music festival in Borneo, they indirectly promoted the festival and destination abroad at no additional cost to the event.' [ME2-manager3]. From the local media releases, it was observed that these artists stimulated extra news stories and triggered media coverage and publicity for the event as well as for the artists.

The venue provider was also well-connected with other stakeholders, either for event operational needs or tourism industry linkages. Being a government-linked tourism enterprise, the cultural village had access to government bodies and tourism industry networks. As stated on its website, the cultural village was an award-winning living museum, one of Borneo's 'must-see' attractions, offering an excellent introduction to local cultures and lifestyles. The village offered a unique venue setting to all kinds of events. It had an ethnic-music orchestra and cultural dance troupes. The village also recruited students from various ethnic communities to learn traditional music, dance and audio-visual production skills.

Tourism businesses proactively promoted and referred guests to the festival. According to an official survey report in 2012, 73% of festival-goers were visitors to the city. These tourism businesses had embedded relationships with the tourism board, government, the cultural village, media, visitors and all other tourism players. Even though they had a central position in the event network, they had limited power to affect the decisions of the event managers.

Other stakeholders such as sponsors, vendors, volunteers and local performers were less central, as their interactions with one another were more operationally-based and *ad hoc* in nature. Figure 4.2 depicts the ME2 network structure. Akin to ME1, the five yellow nodes – the tourism board, government, media, the venue provider and tourism businesses, held a more central position in the network, thus have network power.



**Figure 4.2: ME2 – Stakeholder Network Structure**

#### 4.3.3.2 *Legitimacy*

As discussed in subsection 4.3.3, all stakeholders identified by the event managers were conferred legitimacy, but it was observed that there were several different types of legitimacy. Managers perceived ‘consistent stakeholders’ [ME2-manager3], i.e. those which were directly concerned with the event’s interests and goals, as having continual legitimacy. Institutional stakeholders such as government, tourism businesses, craft councils, and the venue provider, were taken for granted as permanent stakeholders in the event, as ‘these are the people who are fully involved in the tourism business’ [ME2-manager3]. These stakeholders had a shared vision and complementary goals with the event, and readily collaborated to achieve the event goals.

Conversely, stakeholders who exchanged resources with the event had pragmatic legitimacy. For example, event attendees purchased tickets, performers put on the shows, volunteers contributed their time, sponsors provided cash, and businesses supplied their services. However, these groups of stakeholders had no immediate concern for the event’s goals, and their resource exchange relationships were usually episodic. They sought to optimise their personal and business interests, and chose to be involved as and when they were able. Therefore, they might not be recognised as event stakeholders by some event managers. As in

ME1, the media were inevitably and favourably sought to promote the festival and destination. The media were assigned legitimacy as their actions were desirable and necessary.

#### **4.3.3.3            *Urgency***

Similar to ME1, at the end of each ME2 season, the next event dates were announced, so that all parties concerned could set aside their time, and plan for the next festival. From stakeholder interviews, it appears that only a few stakeholders such as the tourism ministry, the venue provider, sponsors and performers, possessed the urgency attribute implied in event implementation requirements and budget-related concerns. For example, the booking of international bands and artists needed to be done well in advance, as renowned bands are mostly already taken during festival peak seasons. Likewise, key corporate sponsorships were sought out mostly at the beginning of the year when these companies' budgets were being set.

Some urgent stakeholder claims did not seem to be getting the event managers' attention and action. For example, an in-bound tour agency [ME2-stakeholder4] required timely readiness of event information, tickets and incentives to put together tour packages for sale. Delayed managerial action hindered the tour agency's interests and goals attainment, caused frustration, and compromised inter-organisational collaborative relationships between the event organiser and their tourism partners. The event managers agreed that they were dependent on tour businesses to market this event. However, these tour businesses did not seem to have the power to induce a positive change in management's attention to their time-sensitive claims.

#### **4.3.3.4            *Proximity***

From a site visit to the festival, it was found that the on-site food vendor business was contracted to a local government-linked enterprise. This was evidence that some biased priority might be accorded to 'government-linked' stakeholders. This case study considered all government-linked stakeholders such as the cultural village and craft council as having a claim to the 'proximate' attribute, since the festival was considered a 'government event'. Local businesses such as lodging operators, food and drink outlets, souvenir shops, and shopping malls, had no direct relationships with the event, but were physically and geographically proximate to the event and benefited from the influx of visitors at their usual business premises. A tourism association's representative [ME2-stakeholder5] described the situation:

Hotels were very highly occupied. A few years ago, the occupancy rate was at the 95% level and above. Now, it's probably more like 80%. Because there are so many now and

even along the way to the cultural village there is plenty of small establishments, home-stays...more choices for visitors to stay here and there.

In essence, government was the primary stakeholder in this event. Its roles and functions at the event were non-replaceable. The saliency and primacy of government in tourism events is evident in this case study. Thus government-linked organisations, such as the cultural village, craft council and education institutions, were expected to continuously cooperate and collaborate in making the event a success. Stakeholders such as performers, vendors, audiences, and volunteers, were the most visible groups of actors at the festival. But these groups of stakeholders were found to be relatively less salient because they were largely diffused, replaceable, and acted in conformity with event regulations. Stakeholders which were geographically proximate had low power, and no urgency. Table 4.5 summarises the presence or absence of salience attributes for different stakeholders in this event.

**Table 4.5: Summary of Stakeholder Attributes and Salience in ME2**

Attributes Stakeholder	Power			Legitimacy		Urgency	Proximity	Salience*
	Resource	Network	Level	Episodic	Continual			
Governments	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
Venue provider	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
Tourism businesses	replaceable	central	Medium		√		√	Definitive
Ethnic organisations	replaceable	marginal	Low		√		√	Expectant
Local performers	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			√	Expectant
Craft council	replaceable	marginal	Low		√		√	Expectant
Craft businesses	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			√	Expectant
Foreign performers	replaceable	central	Medium	√		√		Definitive
Media	replaceable	central	Medium	√				Expectant
Education institutions	critical	marginal	Medium		√		√	Definitive
Volunteers	critical	marginal	Medium		√		√	Definitive
Sponsors	critical	marginal	Medium	√		√		Definitive
Service suppliers	replaceable	marginal	Low	√		√		Expectant
Vendors	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			√	Expectant
Audiences	replaceable	marginal	Low	√				Latent
Local communities	replaceable	marginal	Low		√		√	Expectant

\*Notes: refer to subsection 2.4.5.1, salience framework of Haight and Griffiths (2009). 4 attributes = primary stakeholder; 3 attributes = definitive stakeholder; 2 attributes = expectant stakeholder; 1 attribute = latent stakeholder

#### 4.3.4 ME2 – Stakeholder interests

From its very beginning, ME2 aimed to promote indigenous musical instruments, songs and dances, and to create a greater awareness and appreciation among young indigenous people of their cultural heritage. Unfortunately, as the cultural village representative [ME2-stakeholder3] commented, ME2 had become too ‘commercialised’ and the interests of various ethnic communities in the festival had been sidelined. The festival’s initial intention to promote ethnic music had been overshadowed by its economic and entertainment values. A survey conducted in 2012 revealed that 69% of festival-goers were aged between 20 and 35 years old. According to an event manager:

Young audiences’ interest is only to enjoy themselves for the weekend...mix around and get to know people. Basically, they are not interested in local culture, local ethnic music...sponsors are only interested in the number of people who come, or acceptance of their product, and not in the music itself. [ME2-manager3]

There was a concern that the ‘ethnic representation’ of Borneo in the festival programme was low, and decreasing. From the event website, it was found that in 2013, among the 19 groups of performers, only five were from Borneo. In 2014, 23 groups of performers were listed and only four were from Borneo. An ethnic organisation’s orchestra which had performed at the festival 10 years previously wrote to ask for another performance opportunity in 2013:

Our [ethnic orchestra] goal is to watch again other famous musicians from other parts of the world performing. And we are wanting to participate again in this prestigious event in order to gain more experience and also to get new ideas and new skills...it is important if we could once again be given the opportunity to showcase the various traditional instruments... [ME2-stakeholder6]

This ethnic orchestra was unable to get a programme slot and was told that its application was too late. Like other ethnic organisations, the cultural village [ME2-stakeholder3], which also had a strong sociocultural interest in this festival, expressed dissatisfaction during the interview for this study, stating that in 2013 its performers were given only five instead of 30 minutes to perform.

From the managerial perspective, this world music festival is an international event, thus managers felt they ‘have to be very selective’ in finding musicians or performers [ME2-manager3], otherwise the festival might lose its audience. A large proportion of the event budget was spent on importing foreign bands and artists to perform at the event. As highlighted by the programme director [ME2-manager4], the prestige of the festival had attracted great

interest from international musicians wanting to perform at the festival. But local musicians were found to be passive in seeking opportunities to perform at the festival:

We have built up a reputation that we get very good bands. International bands are bombarding me with emails and letters, sending me press kits saying ‘please get me there! Here is my music! Here is my link!’ Our local ethnic musicians haven’t reached that kind of commercial level yet. They don’t approach me. I have to go and approach them. [ME2-manager4]

There was a divergence of goals and interests among the event stakeholders. The tourism board, ministry of tourism, local government, and tourism businesses certainly had tourism goals in mind. These tourism stakeholders were mainly interested in tourist numbers and expenditures, and the impacts of the event on the host destination. Other public authorities and agencies might not have specific interests in the event. They were involved mainly due to their institutional roles and obligations.

Local corporations and businesses came in as sponsors, contractors, vendors or suppliers to the event. This group of people or enterprises was looking for business gains, financial returns, and business opportunities from the event. They used the event to promote and sell their products and services. For example, a supplier-cum-sponsor [ME2-stakeholder2] commented that, ‘this festival is one of the most important musical events in Malaysia and a great portal for us to introduce our solutions and hardware to the market in a real and live set-up’.

Foreign musicians worked for their performance fees and the sale of their music. Media looked for interesting stories to tell through their various channels. A large number of individuals repeatedly volunteered at the event for personal, social and edutainment interests. These volunteers positioned themselves as loyal members of the ‘family of volunteers’, enjoyed working and learning at the event, and ‘reconnected with old friends and met new friends every year’ [ME2-stakeholder1]. In brief, stakeholders such as volunteers, vendors, suppliers, sponsors, foreign musicians, and media were largely not concerned with the conservation of indigenous cultures, the promotion of local traditions, or tourism outcomes. They did not share the cultural objectives and interests of the event. Table 4.6 summarises stakeholders and their interests in ME2 according to five categories – economic, social, cultural, political and environmental interests.



**Table 4.6: ME2 – Stakeholders and Interests**

Stakeholder	Interests				
	Economic	Social	Cultural	Environmental	Political
<b>Tourism Board</b>	Destination marketing & revenue	Event skills and knowledge development	Promotion of culture	Event waste management	Event gatekeeper
<b>Governments</b>	Tourism & economic spin-off	Social development	Cultural heritage development & promotion	Environmental stewardship	Public service & policy maker
<b>Venue provider</b>	Venue rental & publicity, food & drink sales	Staff skills and knowledge development	Conservation & promotion of tradition and culture	Event waste management	
<b>Tourism businesses</b>	Tourist arrivals & potential business gain				
<b>Ethnic organisations</b>		Skills and knowledge development	Conservation & promotion of tradition and culture		
<b>Local performers</b>	International fame & remuneration	International music exposure & inspiration	Promotion of ethnic music		
<b>Craft council</b>		Promotion of quality crafts	Conservation of lost arts	Promotion of eco-crafts	
<b>Craft businesses</b>	Entrepreneurial opportunity	Craft skills development	Promotion of craftworks	Promotion of eco-crafts	
<b>Foreign performers</b>	International fame & remuneration	music exposure & inspiration			
<b>Media</b>	Media contents & credentials	Enjoy music		Rainforest issue	
<b>Education institutions</b>		Student learning & exposure	Conservation & promotion of tradition and culture	Pre-event tree planting collaboration	Industry affiliation & corporate relations
<b>Volunteers</b>		Friendships, fun & edutainment			
<b>Sponsors</b>	Product testing & promotion target marketing				Symbolic affiliation, corporate relations
<b>Service suppliers</b>	Business gain				

<b>Vendors</b>	Business gain & product promotion	Enjoy music		
<b>Audiences</b>	Value for money & quality of service	Fun & entertainment, socialising	Experience of local culture (for tourists)	Eco-products (for tourists)
<b>Local communities</b>	Business opportunity & spin-off benefits	Fun & entertainment, socialising		

### 4.3.5 ME2 – Stakeholder influence strategies

Event stakeholders felt that they were not overly dependent on the event for their business, as it was a once-a-year, three-day event only. However, stakeholders did acknowledge that involvement with the event brought benefits to their business. A representative from the tourism association [ME2-stakeholder5] said, ‘I am sure a lot of businesses piggyback on the event. It is definitely an added value to us.’ Stakeholders from the private sector were seen to enter or leave the event when they liked, while government-related stakeholders tended to stay in the event network.

Stakeholders from the private business sector, such as tourism enterprises, sponsors, contractors, vendors and suppliers, which had only a short-term financial interest in the event, usually chose to leave direct involvement in the event network when their involvement no longer produced a positive gain or worthwhile relationship. This resulted in constant changes to the network structure. For example, a tourist service provider [ME2-stakeholder4] expressed:

I don’t think any travel agent would want to do that; for the money, it is not worth, when you weigh out the profits that you are making...the consequences are really too big for all of us...some of our guys only sleep like two hours continuously for maybe five or six days...after the event, most of them get sick...Yeah. I really don’t know how we make it but we made it, but the rest of my partners said ‘no, we are not going to do it again...not worth it’!

Every year the contractors, vendors and suppliers chose whether or not to tender for the project, depending on their other business commitments. Tourism businesses were perceived to have the ability to walk away from the relationship without affecting their regular business performance. Some visitors who were world-music enthusiasts were ‘put off by the rowdy behaviour of the youngsters who drink too much alcohol’ and chose not to return to the festival [ME2-stakeholder5].

On the other hand, stakeholders which were government-linked companies or organisations might not be able to withdraw voluntarily. Ministerial power and intervention coerced these stakeholders to remain passively involved in the event, thus stabilising the event network structure. For example, the cultural village, which had failed to increase its venue rental, compromised by staying in the event, and even upgraded its infrastructure and facilities to meet the growing needs of the festival:

We [cultural village] have always been very positive. They [organiser] paid RM100,000, we are not making profit. Never mind! We look at the promotion side. The festival is promoting the village's name...so we are OK. [ME2-stakeholder3]

It could be inferred that the venue provider had a symbiotic relationship with the festival. Thus, the cultural village continued to supply the event venue, and also used the festival to build awareness of the village and to promote its musicians worldwide. During a site visit, it was also noted that the craft council, a stakeholder which had only a complementary role at the event and a low interdependence relationship with it, viewed its reciprocal exchanges with the event as beneficial and so chose to stay in it every year, collaborating for the sake of the common good and collective benefits.

They [organiser] are giving us tickets and giving us the space free, and the cultural village maintains the space, checks all the lights and that kind of stuff. Everyone [craft businesses] sees the value of this I suppose, and I said OK, I come and help, and we are doing not too badly. [ME2-stakeholder7]

Similarly, the volunteers, who delivered a high standard of work and earned the trust of the managers, repeatedly volunteered for the sake of mutual benefit. State-wide, there was no event as big as this festival that could match the international exposure and edutainment experience that the festival offered to these volunteers. Many volunteers looked forward to the dates of the event each year. A long-service volunteer [ME2-stakeholder1] proudly responded:

Every year when I see the same guys volunteering, see them grown into very good seniors and they can teach all the other new guys, I am happy that with my experience I have helped them along to get to that point.

As previously mentioned, the ethnic organisations and local artists in this case study were found to be passive when soliciting their performance opportunities and had little power when negotiating a performance fee. Those who were selected to perform were proud to be the local representatives in the festival programme, even though they were paid only an 'honorary performance fee' [ME2-stakeholder6]. However, the popular international bands and artists

were paid bigger fees because they could add media mileage to the event and the destination. Good and famous bands commanded wide media interest.

#### **4.3.6 ME2 case summary**

In this case study, the tourism ministry and its agencies were found to be actively involved in organising a tourism event. From a site visit and evidence collected, it appeared that government-linked tourism enterprises were either prioritised as event stakeholders, or else were obligated to get involved in staging the music festival. To sum up:

- a) Event managers had alternative views of the stakeholder concept: event stakeholders were either people who had an interest in the event goals or people who were in the tourism industry.
- b) Event managers perceived the tourism board, government and sponsors to have high power and salience. Conversely, stakeholders such as local tourism businesses, vendors, suppliers, and audiences were perceived to have no power. These diffused stakeholders were salient in the event only due to their pragmatic legitimacy or geographical proximity. Geographically proximate stakeholders with low power had no urgency.
- c) The increase in the festival's popularity and entertainment value had led to a neglect of local ethnic cultural interests in the festival, resulting in it becoming too commercialised.
- d) Stakeholders from the private sector who did not share the event objectives, participated primarily for business gain. These stakeholders chose to directly withhold their resources when their involvement in the festival was no longer beneficial to them.
- e) On the other hand, government or non-government organisations which shared the event's interests and goals, might not be able to withdraw voluntarily, either for political reasons or because of the event's demands. These stakeholders tended to collaborate for their collective benefit.

### **4.4 Case Study 3 – Community Event 3 (CE3)**

#### **4.4.1 CE3 – Overview**

*Event Nature:* Community Event 3 was a free-entry outdoor cultural festival over 10 nights. Each year, attendees had the opportunity to witness various ethnic performing arts, participate in various traditional games and activities, and buy and taste authentic traditional dishes rarely found in normal markets. The event chairperson [CE3-manager1] broadly defined culture as 'a way of life'. Besides the staged cultural performances and activities showcased at the event,

a trade fair and commercial activities were also other important features of the event. CE3 was the largest event in a town which had suffered from brain drain. The economy of this town was dominated by a few big timber-based companies.

***Event Organiser:*** From the interviews and managerial documents, it was found that the local municipal council was taking the lead as the facilitator, bringing together the disparate parties needed to organise this cultural festival since 2002. In 2013, the main organising committee had 35 members, comprising employees and councillors of the municipality, as well as representatives from government departments, the private sector and ethnic associations. The members of the organising committee were all considered volunteers as it was not part of their usual job to organise the festival.

From the interviews, site visits and media archives, it was noticed that a family-owned diversified conglomerate with global business interests, BH Corporation, was involved in and supported the festival in several ways. One of BH Corporation's directors was the local municipal council's chairperson, who was also a parliamentary candidate for a local constituency. One of its subsidiary businesses, R-Company, was the co-organiser of the festival, in charge of the Trade and Exhibition (TRADEX) zone of the festival. BH Corporation contributed resources to sustain the organisation of the festival, such as financial support, manpower supplies and media coverage, among others.

***Event Venue and Audience Size:*** In 2013, the festival was organised on a 20-acre town square, with an estimated 100,000 attendees over the 10-day event. One side of the town square consisted of three ethnic pavilions offering food fairs and community stage performances. The other side was a trade and exhibition zone with limited food stalls. The event attracted mainly local residents and some regional visitors.

***Event Objectives:*** The event objectives were: (1) To generate interest and promote the uniqueness of the town; (2) to promote and conserve the rich and diverse ethnic cultural heritage of Borneo; (3) to promote cultural understanding and social integration among the various communities.

#### **4.4.2 CE3 – Stakeholder identification**

According to the organising committee chairperson [CE3-manager1], it was the municipality's intention to 'make the festival into a community-based activity, involving as many organisations as possible.' Hence various community groups, such as ethnic associations,

private companies and government departments were co-opted into the organising committee. This could imply that the municipality was adopting a stakeholder management approach to the organising of the festival.

However, it was noticed that because the festival took place in a small town, CE3 stakeholder relationships were clustered around a few key players and it was common to find stakeholders holding multiple roles. Thus, it was quite difficult to categorise the stakeholders in this festival. An obvious example was the BH Corporation and its subsidiary, R-Company. The company had multiple and overlapping roles in this festival. It formed part of the local government, as well as being a key member of the local Chinese association. It gave sponsorship and co-organised the TRADEX zone. BH Corporation also owned a national Chinese newspaper which gave media coverage to the festival. The company employed a large proportion of the local residents, hence the local residents and the local economy were heavily dependent on the company. Therefore, for the purpose of this case study, this stakeholder was classified as ‘co-organiser’ in the following Table 4.7. CE3 was found to have 12 groups of people or organisations as its stakeholders.

**Table 4.7: CE3 - Stakeholders**

	<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>1</b>	Municipal Council	Local government bodies and public authorities, such as police, Health & Education Department.
<b>2</b>	Ethnic associations	Three NGOs representing the interests of the three main local ethnic communities – Chinese, Dayak and Malay/Melanau. Their leaders were members of the event organising committee.
<b>3</b>	Co-organiser	R-Company, a subsidiary of BH Corporation, was appointed to organise the TRADEX zone. A representative from R-Company was on the organising committee.
<b>4</b>	Performers	Those involved in producing and presenting the cultural content of the festival such as dance troupes, artists, music and drama groups, and calligraphers.
<b>5</b>	Local media	Local Chinese-, English- and Malay-language newspapers.
<b>6</b>	Service suppliers	Private businesses were engaged as contractors to provide the necessary services such as audio-visual equipment, advertising, promotional materials, and landscaping.
<b>7</b>	Sponsors & donors	Local businesses or individuals who sponsored or donated cash or in kind to support the event.
<b>8</b>	Vendors	Businesses or organisations which rented food stalls or exhibition booths at the event.
<b>9</b>	Audiences	Local residents and regional visitors who supported the event by attending, volunteering and spending at the event.
<b>10</b>	Local communities	Residents and other non-tourism businesses.

11	Tourism businesses	Consisted of hotels, tour operators, taxi association. A local representative was appointed to be a member of the organising committee.
12	Tourism authorities	State Tourism Ministry and Tourism Board.

#### 4.4.3 CE3 – Stakeholder attributes and salience

As mentioned in the case overview, CE3 was organised by a local municipal council, with inputs from various community groups. This case study treated the two staff members and two councillors of the municipality participating in the interviews as the event managers. The other six participants were stakeholders from the local community groups such as the ethnic associations, local businesses and interest groups. The four event managers perceived stakeholders to be those who were ‘involved in organising and affecting the event’s success’ [CE3-manager1].

During the interviews, when event managers talked about ‘community groups’, they were referring to the three ethnic associations and their members. The three ethnic groups were the Chinese, Dayak and Malay/Melanau community. When asked to rank their stakeholders in importance, the four event managers ranked community groups, government, the business sector, residents and media, among the top five. A manager [CE3-manager2] highlighted:

The most important are the local community groups. Without them, I think there is no festival because as the organiser we don’t have those resources like their traditional dances, full costume etc. I think these are the most important. Next one of course is the local government which plays an important role here. We are the main pusher, the leader behind.

In the above quotation, the event manager defined salience as having the critical resources required to organise the event. The following subsections will analyse the event organiser-stakeholders’ resource interdependence relationships, and then their network structure, to determine stakeholder power in CE3.

##### 4.4.3.1 *Power*

It was not difficult to understand the power of the local government as it was the focal organisation in the festival. Government laid down the broad policy and legal framework of the event, provided the necessary venue, the marquees, utilities, staff, and funding. Every year, the festival cost the municipality close to RM800,000 (about US\$200,000). The municipal council was also universally responsible for event marketing and publicity. However, it delegated most of the content programming and staging work to the three ethnic associations

that represented the Chinese, Dayak and Malay/Melanau communities in the town. The event chairperson [CE3-manager1] and the secretariat [CE3-manager2] strongly emphasised that this was a ‘partnership’ where ‘the local community’s input [has] sustained [the festival]...Government is only a facilitator.’

### Resource dependence

When asked the question, ‘who do you think the event depends on for survival?’, a manager [CE3-manager3] spoke of the financing that came from the municipality and local sponsorships. All four managers described extensively how dependent the festival was on the three ethnic associations’ input for its success. The municipality had allocated a seed fund of RM30,000–35,000 (about US\$8,500) to each ethnic association, and the associations were fully responsible for their assigned pavilions and community stages. The event chairperson [CE3-manager1] elaborated:

The associations will do the entire planning, source for whatever they need...we [municipality] leave the details to them. They are the ones doing actual organisation on the ground and giving us the report at the [committee] meetings...In terms of promotion of the whole event, the council is doing it.

According to the Chinese associations’ leader [CE3-stakeholder6], each association formed its own working committee, which then managed finances, planned community stage shows and activities, sourced talent, and managed food stalls within its assigned zone in the town square. Local talent was largely sourced from the schools, performing arts societies and associations, and was paid token fees to perform on the community stage. In fact, event managers believed that it was the ‘high spirit of volunteerism’ among the local performers that kept the festival going [CE3-manager2]. This festival was less dependent on international performers. Every year, only three to four groups of international cultural performers were invited, in the name of ‘cultural exchange’, to perform on the central stage during the three-day finale [CE3-manager3].

From a media release, it was found that as many as 103 food stalls operated at the festival site in 2013. The event’s *2014 Chinese cultural programme* booklet indicated that the ethnic associations set the food stalls’ terms and conditions, and collected rental. Food stall rentals for the entire 10 days could range from RM1,000 to RM2,700 (US\$250–660), depending on the stall size and whether the member or non-member price was being charged. Besides stall rental revenue, the ethnic associations also relied on their members for sponsorships and volunteer labour. The *2014 Chinese cultural programme* booklet listed 26 cash sponsors, with



sponsored amounts varying from RM100 to RM5,000. It was not possible to estimate the in-kind contribution, as the in-kind donors were normally acknowledged only by the master of ceremonies, on stage. Most of the sponsors and donors were perceived to have given in 'philanthropic spirit' or to promote 'good business relations' [CE3-stakeholder6]. It was noticed that among the three ethnic associations, the Chinese association was the most resourceful and thus the most powerful.

It was evident that this community-oriented cultural festival was highly dependent on local businesses and residents for various resources. The local residents in general supported the festival by attending and were perceived to have the power to influence the festival. Without local residents' continuous support the festival would have come to an end. From a local news story [BERNAMA, 25 November, 2011], it was found that in 2011, this annual event was cancelled after the party dominating the local government, including the municipal council chairperson, lost its parliamentary seats to the opposition party. This apparent act of retribution provoked a public outcry and even the opposition party volunteered to organise the festival on behalf of the municipal council. After much public pressure, the council came up with the diplomatic excuse of having insufficient time to organise the event, and then the following year the festival was resumed. This finding suggested that the festival had achieved 'institutional' status in the local community, hence the organisers could not simply ignore the community's expectations of the festival. As the event chairperson [CE3-manager1] put it, 'sustainability of the festival depends on the community's response.'

When it came to the TRADEX zone, the municipality depended on R-Company to manage the entire operation. Being a subsidiary of BH Corporation, R-Company had strong resources, wide business networks and political power. During the interview, the R-Company representative [CE3-stakeholder1] mentioned that the company had been given '100% authority and power' to run the TRADEX zone. A team of 10 employees from R-Company was involved in organising TRADEX, managing 70–80 exhibition booths, including fun and amusement rides. The company collected the exhibition booth rentals, which were priced between RM1,500–RM16,500 (about US\$360–4,000) for 10 days, depending on the size of the booth. R-Company was fully responsible for the site set-up, safety and security, vendors and exhibitors' selection and management, content and programming, manpower and finance. The council provided only the venue, and garbage collection and cleaning services. The company representative [CE3-stakeholder1] further described their authority in the event:

It is not that if they [exhibitors] have the money and they want to pay, then they can come in. We select them...They have to tell us exactly what products they are selling and promoting. For example, cigarettes and liquors are totally prohibited...If we see

even one bottle and they claim that they drink it themselves, the next day they are out!  
They know the rules very well.

From media archives, it was noticed that R-Company also carried out additional marketing and publicity on TRADEX. R-company's network power will be discussed further in the next subsection.

### Network structure

In CE3, an individual or group often played multiple roles in the event organisation. For example, an individual businessman, who was a prominent member of an ethnic association, could be a sponsor of or donor to the festival as well as an exhibitor at TRADEX. This being a small and close-knit community, the businesses in the local network seemed to know each other well and had relationships with one another. The community groups or individuals in the town seemed to have many embedded interrelationships and thus were involved one way or another in the festival.

From an interview with a service supplier (an advertising agency), it was found that the supplier [CE3-stakeholder5] had business connections with other stakeholders such as the ethnic associations, sponsors, vendors and exhibitors. Event stakeholders were inclined to use the same advertising agency in this case. This suggests that it could be inferred that business opportunities were usually given to associates.

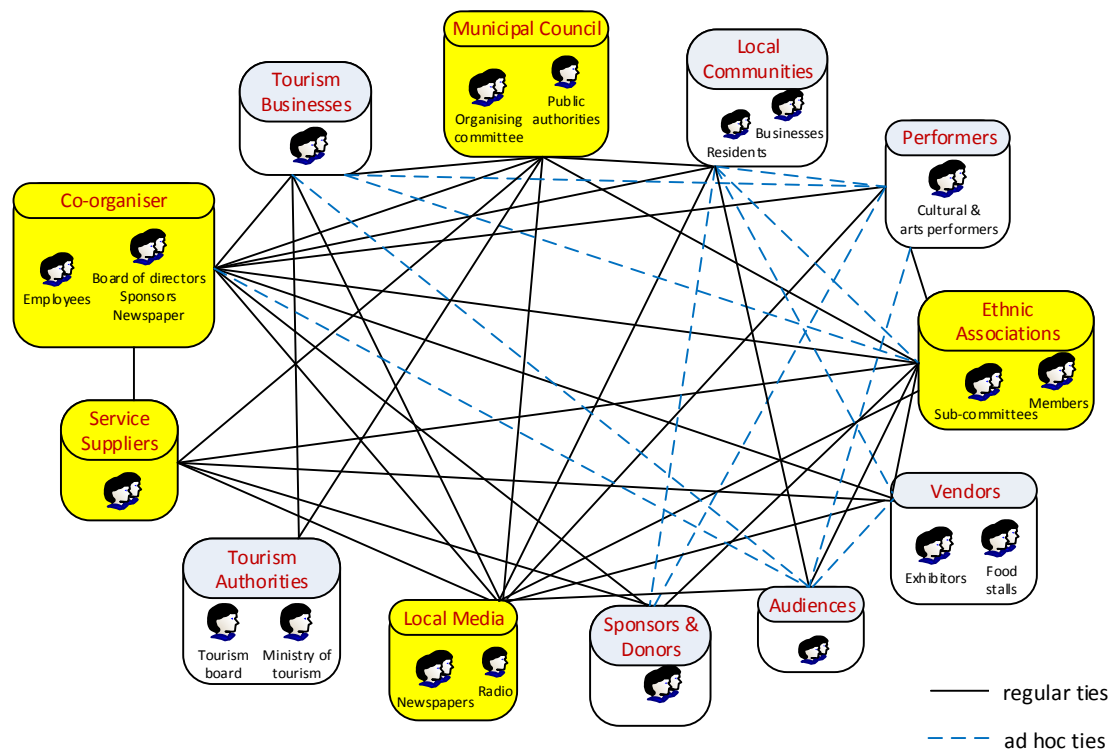
The co-organiser of the TRADEX zone, R-Company, was perceived to have a highly central position in the festival network and also embedded relationships with many festival stakeholders. The economy of the town was dependent on BH Corporation. When organising the festival, the company made good use of its business networks. Using its corporate networks, R-company had no difficulty in finding exhibitors and sponsors for the TRADEX zone:

Our BH group suppliers, in order to maintain a good relationship and also a win: win situation, they will become our sponsor-class exhibitors during the festival. For example, a lot of our corporate funds all go to our group's official banker, so in return, they are our sponsors and exhibitors as well. [CE3-stakeholder1]

Moreover, BH Corporation also owned a Chinese newspaper, which provided 'pages and pages of coloured editorial coverage on the festival' [CE3-manager2]. The event secretariat [CE3-manager2] stressed the strategic role played by local newspapers and radio in shaping the festival's profile for projection to the local community and promoting the event to a wider

audience across the state. These media groups provided editorial stories plus information about the event programme, and road closures, and also encouraged good public behaviour such as no littering, recycling, and obeying traffic and parking rules.

Figure 4.3 shows the basic network structure of CE3. Most of the local stakeholders can be seen to be well-connected. The five yellow nodes reflect the stakeholders which had network power. The tourism authorities and tourism businesses were most peripheral as they were not actively involved in the festival. Other stakeholders such as the performers, sponsors, and vendors were salient, but required less interaction with other stakeholders in the network.



**Figure 4.3: CE3 – Stakeholder Network Structure**

#### 4.4.3.2 *Legitimacy*

CE3 was a cultural festival potentially affecting all levels of society in the town. Thus, the whole local community was perceived to have a stake in the festival. Individuals or groups had legitimacy either because they were contributing resources or helping to source resources, and disseminating information about the festival. An ethnic association’s leader [CE3-stakeholder6] commented that when the local residents travelled out of town, ‘the festival is one of the things that they mentioned to their friends or relatives and in this respect, unconsciously it’s already in their mind.’ The local community had enjoyed a positive experience with the festival and was proud to share it with others.

Since CE3 was a community event which aimed to attract more visitors to the town, the event organisers attached high importance to the tourism authorities, which were both salient and legitimate organisations in terms of marketing and promoting tourism in the state. However, the tourism board [ME2-manager3] did not recognise the festival's legitimacy:

It is not a true tourism event. If it is a tourism event, the elements of politics, self-interest, domination by one party or favouring one culture or tradition or one group should be taken off. Otherwise, it will destroy everything.

Although CE3 was seen as highly legitimate among the local community, it appeared not to have cultural-political legitimacy in the eyes of the tourism authorities. Thus, its normative claim was ignored by the tourism authorities, and this factor limited the event's opportunities for international marketing.

#### **4.4.3.3      *Urgency***

In this case study, CE3's event-organising structure was perceived to promote equal urgency and saliency among different stakeholder groups, and to facilitate greater efficacy in communication, decision-making, and transparency. Therefore, urgency in this case was viewed by the event managers as more a matter of the urgency of organising the event, rather than the urgency of stakeholders' claims. CE3 was held annually in July. The event secretariat [CE3-manager2] highlighted the frequency of organising committee meetings:

Our committee meeting usually convenes at the beginning of each year. We [council] tell them [committee] what is our direction and then hear what do they want, their problems, their issues, their requests...we meet once in two months at the beginning of the year, and towards July it would be more often, maybe once or twice a month.

Any stakeholder claims could be brought to the meeting table and issues resolved at the committee meetings. The event organisation and implementation usually progressed according to the timelines set by the committee. Distantly located stakeholders, such as international performers, usually required an earlier invitation and booking confirmation, as compared to the local ones. The event's image designer [CE3-stakeholder3] said that his new design concept had to be ready for presentation to the committee by the beginning of each new year. From the event media archive records, it was found that a press conference and media releases about the festival were completed as early as four months ahead of the event date. In 2013, the application form for stage performances closed on 29 March. The findings implied that the organising committee did not respond at the last minute and most stakeholders' claims were

addressed in a timely manner, according to the event’s plan. No stakeholders raised any urgent issue during interviews. All stakeholders in this case were attributed urgency, except for the tourism businesses and authorities, because they did not proactively seek out or become engaged in the event.

#### 4.4.3.4 Proximity

All stakeholder groups were physically and geographically proximate to the event, except for the tourism authorities, which were located in the state capital city and also did not share the event’s interests. The event organising committee members generally knew very well what the event’s objectives were, and shared and supported them. However, it emerged that continuous efforts toward better communication and also education of the local community on the festival’s objectives may still be required; this will be further discussed in the next section on stakeholder interests.

In summary, Table 4.8 shows that all stakeholder groups were primary, definitive and highly salient in this community event, except for the tourism businesses and authorities. The tourism authorities were a latent stakeholder, not interested in marketing or promoting the festival. The local municipal council partnered with the local community groups and businesses in organising the festival. Local resources were successfully mobilised to implement and sustain the festival.

**Table 4.8: Summary of Stakeholder Attributes and Salience in CE3**

Attributes Stakeholder	Power			Legitimacy		Urgency	Proximity	Salience *
	Resource	Network	Level	Episodic	Continual			
<b>Municipal council</b>	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Ethnic associations</b>	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Co-organiser</b>	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Performers</b>	critical	marginal	Medium	√		√	√	Primary
<b>Local media</b>	replaceable	central	Medium	√		√	√	Primary
<b>Service suppliers</b>	replaceable	central	Medium		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Sponsors &amp; donors</b>	critical	marginal	Medium	√		√	√	Primary
<b>Vendors</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√		√	√	Definitive
<b>Audiences</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			√	Expectant
<b>Local communities</b>	critical	marginal	Medium		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Tourism businesses</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low		√		√	Expectant

<b>Tourism authorities</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			Latent
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\*Notes: refer to subsection 2.4.5.1, salience framework of Haigh and Griffiths (2009). 4 attributes = primary stakeholder; 3 attributes = definitive stakeholder; 2 attributes = expectant stakeholder; 1 attribute = latent stakeholder

#### 4.4.4 CE3 – Stakeholder interests

From evidence gathered, it was observed that all stakeholders which were actively involved in this festival had some kind of economic interest. But the concern to promote cultural understanding and social integration was limited to the intent and interest of the organising committee and those actively involved in the festival’s programming, such as the performers. To many local residents, the festival was just ‘a fun-filled enjoyable annual event for everybody’ and a ‘time to taste special food not normally available in the marketplace’ [CE3-manager3].

Business-interest oriented stakeholders such as service suppliers, vendors and exhibitors were there for business gain, networking, and/or product promotion. Some businesses also mentioned that their involvement was partly out of concern for the town’s interests. For example an advertising company’s boss [CE3-stakeholder5] expressed it thus, ‘I just want to advertise my company. Little profit is okay, so long as it could cover my staff salary...Also, sometimes just do it for the purpose of helping our town.’

The R-company which co-organised the TRADEX zone claimed that their involvement was ‘part of the company’s CSR project’ and said they wanted to ‘showcase the town’s business potentials’ [CE3-stakeholder1]. Their motives could not be seen as entirely altruistic however, as the company was charging the exhibitors and vendors. The rentals collected were revenue to the company.

During the interviews, the event managers emphasised that there were no partisan matters involved in organising the festival. Nonetheless, the local council’s political interest appeared to be a *sine qua non* of the festival, as had emerged clearly in 2011, when the festival was cancelled as a result of the municipal council chairperson’s defeat in a parliamentary election. To win the votes of young voters in future elections and to make the event more relevant to the younger generation, in 2014 the organisers initiated a ‘youth pavilion’. The act of ‘doing something to suit the taste of the younger people’ [CE3-stakeholder6] could be viewed as propaganda. Possibly it was because of the political agenda surrounding the festival that the state tourism authorities remained unconvinced of the event’s tourism value.

To the ethnic associations and performers, the festival was a fund-raising opportunity for their associations or schools. A Chinese councillor [CE3-manager3] explained the interests of the ethnic associations:

For the associations, they sell ethnic food to raise funds for their associations. They are NGOs, so actually all their staff come out every night on a volunteer basis...[to] let people try different kinds of food and traditions, at the same time promoting their associations, and letting the community see that they are well-established in the town.

Another councillor, from the Malay/Melanau community [CE3-manager4], highlighted the development of young local talent and young people’s eagerness to perform at the festival. The more talented groups further developed their performing skills at the festival and earned their opportunity to perform on bigger stages in other places.

From a site visit, it was noticed that the three major ethnic communities tended to patronise their own pavilions. This lack of integration among the three pavilions was mainly attributable to religious food restrictions and language differences. As stated by a leader from the Chinese association [CE3-stakeholder6], ‘we still have quite a long way to go in terms of integration.’ The same applies to environmental interests. The organiser had adopted some environmental protection measures such as prohibiting the use of polystyrene food containers and installing proper waste disposal systems. Unfortunately, it was an uphill task as ‘the public attitude and mindset change very slowly’ [CE3-manager1]. Table 4.9 below indicates that the majority of the stakeholders had economic and social interests in CE3. However, regarding the festival’s cultural and environmental aspects, positive reinforcement from the organisers may still be required.

**Table 4.9: CE3 – Stakeholders and Interests**

Stakeholder	Interests				
	Economic	Social	Cultural	Environmental	Political
<b>Municipal Council</b>	Local economic & tourism benefits	Social integration	Promotion & conservation of tradition and culture	Event waste management	Public service & constituency support
<b>Ethnic associations</b>	Fund-raising opportunity for organisations	Association’s identity & image	Promotion & conservation of tradition and culture		
<b>Co-organiser</b>	Rental revenue	CSR		Event waste management	Corporate relations

<b>Performers</b>	Fund-raising for schools or associations	Development of performing arts	Showcase of culture & tradition
<b>Local media</b>	Media contents	Public relations	
<b>Service suppliers</b>	Business gain & image	Partly social contribution	
<b>Sponsors &amp; donors</b>	Business relations	Partly social contribution & status	
<b>Vendors</b>	Business gain & product promotion		
<b>Audiences</b>		Food, leisure & entertainment	
<b>Local communities</b>	Spin-off benefits	Food, leisure & entertainment	
<b>Tourism businesses</b>	Business opportunity		Promote cultural tourism
<b>Tourism authorities</b>			No interest

#### 4.4.5 CE3 – Stakeholder influence strategies

As previously mentioned in subsection 4.4.3.1, the survival of this cultural festival was largely dependent on the local community, which was willing to contribute needed resources. By selecting the right co-organiser (R-Company) and co-opting the key community stakeholders (ethnic associations) into the festival organisation, the municipal council was able to mobilise and leverage local resources to produce a successful event. Stakeholders in this case were found to be conforming and cooperating for mutual benefit.

Through the three ethnic associations, the festival was able to access and connect with the wider community and business networks to gather resources. For example, the Chinese association was found to be resourceful and innovative in getting inputs from their members and achieving goals. Annually, to achieve optimal results from the festival, the Chinese association printed 500 copies of its *Chinese cultural programme* booklet for distribution to its prominent leaders, members, sponsors and donors before the event. Through the programme booklet, the association sold advertising space to its members to raise funds, and portrayed the efficiency and salience of the association and its individual members in



organising the festival. At the same time, this yearly programme booklet served as an event archive. The booklet contained a list of the names of the working committee members and their contacts, details of all programmes at the Chinese pavilion, names of the relevant person in charge, terms and conditions of participation, prizes, and lists of sponsors. More importantly, it also included a snapshot of the previous year's event successes and newspaper clippings. This content functioned to record evidence of achievements and the media coverage generated from the previous year's event.

Similarly, the co-organiser of TRADEX zone, R-Company, tapped into its parent company's network to identify and find sponsors, exhibitors, and vendors for the festival. From a site visit, it was noticed that a broad range of industries and businesses participated in the exhibition. For example, the plantation industry, heavy machinery companies, automobile businesses, NGOs, banks, educational institutions, fashion & handicraft/accessories and household equipment ventures, beauty and health as well as food and beverage retailers, were all present at the festival, as well as fun fairs and children's rides. According to the co-organiser [CE3-stakeholder1], the participating exhibitors had become quite stable over the years, with only a 20–25% annual turnover rate, mostly among the small businesses. This finding might imply that, in order to maintain their business ties with BH Corporation, most businesses had to remain and participate in the TRADEX. Nonetheless, an employee of R-Company believed that some exhibitors and vendors continued to support the festival because of 'friendships' and 'mutual trust' built over years of relationships. [CE3-stakeholder1]

To enter the event network, an advertising agency (service supplier) offered to find sponsors for the festival's publicity materials, such as roadside buntings and billboards. The agency used a mutually beneficial cooperative format in which the local council appointed the agency to solicit big brands such as Milo, Sony, F&N, and Pepsi to advertise jointly with the event. The advertising agency collected the cost of advertisements directly from the associated advertisers, so 'the council does not have to pay a single cent for advertising [the festival]' [CE3-stakeholder5]. The strategy had turned out to be a mutually beneficial partnership. Unfortunately, after two years, envious competitors complained to the council in the name of the advertising association, asking for part of the advertising business. Unable to reach a consensus with the competing agencies, this particular advertising agency withdrew its service and also influenced its clients or associates to stop the co-advertising of the event, causing a decrease in publicity for the festival.

Likewise, the state's tourism board and ministry of tourism, who had no strong interest in the festival, withheld their involvement and resources. The event secretariat [CE3-manager2] explained:

Ministry of tourism has not been helping us...they organised events for other cities. We asked them what about this town, they can't answer us...This year they said they'd give us a grant of RM50,000. That's it! Very disappointing! Why are we being singled out? That has been our grudge over the years.

Consequently, the festival was unable to tap into the tourism board's marketing resources and wider network to draw tourists from external markets. The organiser could only carry out event marketing and publicity in the vicinity of the town. Thus, stakeholders reduced or withdrew their resources which were needed by the festival, directly affecting the festival and its future. CE3 was perceived to be deeply embedded in the local community, with committed key stakeholders. It was believed that the festival had reached its optimal local attendance level. However, given that the festival had failed to obtain the backing of the state's tourism authorities, its stated goal of wanting 'the festival to be more regionally and internationally known' might now be difficult to achieve. [CE3-manager2]

#### **4.4.6 CE3 – Case summary**

This case finding can be summarised into the following six points:

- a) The local municipal council had taken the lead and co-opted local community groups into the event organising committee, to produce a community cultural festival for sociopolitical reasons.
- b) It seemed that a stakeholder management approach to planning and organising the event had increased the festival's legitimacy, and as a result, local community groups had willingly contributed resources to sustain the event.
- c) Stakeholders with financial and cultural resources, willing to volunteer their resources to the event, were perceived to be salient in this festival. Large corporations depended on their large resources to be powerful. On the other hand, ethnic associations depended on their wide network to obtain resources that made them powerful.
- d) Salient stakeholders such as ethnic associations and companies were leveraged for their direct association with the festival to build its image and capacity, and they often played multiple roles in event organisation.
- e) Less powerful stakeholders such as the service supplier (an advertising agency) in this case, had indirectly used their business network to influence the festival.

- f) It appeared that local government's political interests and various stakeholders' commercial interests in this festival might have overshadowed its cultural and tourism value. Thus, the festival had much at stake in its campaign to be perceived by the tourism authorities as an 'ideal' tourism event in the state.

## **4.5 Case Study 4 – Community Event 4 (CE4)**

### **4.5.1 CE4 – Overview**

*Event Nature:* CE4 was an international kite festival introduced in 2005 to a rapidly-developing coastal industrial town in East Malaysia, Borneo, by the state's chief minister. Annually, the event attracted local and international kite enthusiasts to gather in the town for kite-flying competitions and the showcasing of kite creativity and performances. During the four-day event, multitudes of kites in various forms, colours and shapes occupied the town airspace. Side activities such as kite-making workshops, children's colouring contests, night cultural performances, trade, food and fun fairs featuring about 140 stalls, were also held during the festival.

*Event Organiser:* CE4 was a 'government event' in that it was organised, funded and owned by the town's statutory development authority, in collaboration with various state ministries, government departments, agencies and the private sector in the town. The state's chief minister was the chairman of the development authority, which included local members. The public relations department of the development authority was entrusted to act as the event secretariat, and to manage the event. The event organisation structure had two levels of committees. The main organising committee consisted of 14 members who were primarily representatives from various ministries, and senior government officials, chaired by a tourism minister. The main organising committee met twice a year in the state capital city to decide on the event's policy, concepts, dates and budget, and receive event progress reports. Subordinate to the main organising committee was the local coordinating committee which consisted of 20 subcommittees, made up of local government departments and agencies, taking up different roles and responsibilities to implement the event.

*Event Venue and Audience Size:* This annual event was organised on a large field in the town centre. Entry was free to all. In a 2013 press release it was reported that over its four days' duration, the event recorded 120,000 visitors, with a total of 121 kite-flying participants from 32 countries involved. The event audiences consisted mainly of local residents and regional visitors.

**Event Objectives:** The event was organised to promote the industrial town and foster social integration, and to act as a catalyst for the promotion of the local kite-flying and tourism activities, as well as to promote kite-flying as a sporting activity. The event also aimed to provide business opportunities and enjoyment for local people.

#### 4.5.2 CE4 – Stakeholder identification

All three interviewed managers from the event secretariat team emphasised that CE4 was initiated by the chief minister and organised for the local people’s benefit, involving all local government departments, agencies, community groups and large private corporations. This study identified and mapped 12 groups of stakeholders, as shown in Table 4.10. Each stakeholder group played different roles in the event, and only minor overlapping of roles was noticed.

**Table 4.10: CE4 - Stakeholders**

	Stakeholder	Details
1	Governments	There were three parties in this group of government stakeholders, (1) the local Development Authority; (2) state ministries e.g. Tourism & Heritage, Social Development; (3) local government bodies and public authorities, such as Meteorological, Agriculture, Public Works, Police, Health, Education, Information Departments.
2	Kite Flyer Club	A local kite flyer club was formed in 2007 to promote kite-flying activities, and to assist in the organisation of the event. The club has about 20 active members.
3	Sponsors	Local large corporations, mainly from the energy and construction sector, which sponsored cash or in kind to support the event.
4	Community groups	Ethnic associations, social clubs, schools, and other NGOs which supported the event by sending cultural dance troupes and performers, or participated in various side-activities.
5	Performers	Through an event company, singers and artists from West Malaysia were recruited to perform at the night shows.
6	Vendors	Traders or businesses which rented trade/food stalls or exhibition booths at the event.
7	Foreign participants	These were the foreign kite-flyers brought in to showcase their kite-flying talent and skills, or participate in competitions. Some of them were kite-makers, journalists representing kite magazines, or serving as judges for the competition.
8	Service suppliers	Local businesses were engaged as contractors to provide the necessary services such as audio-visual equipment, stages & marquees, advertising & promotional material.
9	Volunteers	Students from local colleges and staff members of the development authority.

10	Media	Local newspapers & radio, and social media.
11	Audiences	Local residents and regional visitors who supported the event by attending and spending at the event.
12	Local communities	1) Local residents and villagers; 2) tourism and non-tourism businesses which might benefit from the organisation of the event at their usual business premises.

### 4.5.3 CE4 – Stakeholder attributes and salience

A secretary of the event [CE4-manager2] defined stakeholders as those ‘who have an interest in this event...people who benefited from it,’ then broadly pointed to ‘local people and businesses.’ Another event manager [CE4-manager1] listed the chief minister, the ministers, the tourism industry, corporate sponsors, audiences, kite-flyers, and local community groups as important stakeholders. During the interviews, all three managers acknowledged that the state’s chief minister was the man behind the scenes supporting the organisation of the event. The chief minister is the board’s chairman of the local development authority and the event was largely funded by the authority. The board allocated a budget of about RM500,000 (about US\$122,000) to each event.

#### 4.5.3.1 Power

From the interviews and documentary evidence, it appeared that the event secretariat team, which had about 10 staff members from the development authority, formed the focal point in the event network, and was empowered to operationalise it. The secretariat team leader [CE4-manager1] affirmed, ‘Basically the secretariat runs the whole event, starts from the budgeting, identifying and inviting kite-flyers...giving the local working committee the scope of work that needs to be done...trader/vendor application and correspondence with the sponsors.’ However, to implement the event, the secretariat team highlighted that they ‘need the help and support’ from local stakeholders [CE4-manager1]. The resource contribution of the various stakeholder groups will be discussed in the following section.

#### Resource dependence

A manager ranked kite-flyers as the second most important stakeholders in the event, besides the government stakeholders. Kite-flyers were the people who produced and presented the event content, so ‘without them, there is nothing to show’ [CE4-manager1]. A big portion of the event budget was spent on bringing in national and international kite-flyers to perform at the kite shows and entertain the audiences. Invited kite-flyers were provided with

accommodation, meals, T-shirts, ground transport, and an allowance to cover their airfares. The provisions varied, depending on their contracts, individually negotiated with the secretariat. It was noticed that in some years' event programmes, local tours were arranged for the kite-flyers. According to the organiser, there were more than 200 kite events in the world, so it was necessary to extend comprehensive hospitality and incentives to lure expert kite-flyers with attractive kites to participate in the event.

The local kite-flyer club members were found to be very passionate about their kite-flying hobby and had volunteered their service to the event. They contributed their technical knowledge and skills, played an 'advisory role', and were considered to be the 'backbone' of the event [CE4-manager3]. They helped to identify and recommend participants, manage the participants' welfare and the kite-show programs. In return for their contribution, the organiser gave the kite-flyer club and its members a token payment. For their part, government departments and agencies provided logistical support, transportation and manpower supplies. For example, the public works department offered its vehicles for ground transport and prepared the event field; the agriculture department arranged food catering for all workers and volunteers; the education department brought school students in to join the various event workshops. All the respective agencies and departments involved in effect had partly defrayed the costs of running the event by virtue of their own participation in it. For example, they helped meet the costs of staff mileage, overtime claims, and allowances.

The event obtained some sponsorship from local large corporations and also random grants from the tourism ministry. However, at an interview, an event manager [CE4-manager1] said that the event could still proceed even without sponsorships, because the sponsored amount was small as compared to the whole event expenditure. On the other hand, the organiser collected more than RM250,000 (about US\$61,000) from vendor stall rentals. With such a large income for the event, the secretariat team had to handle the vendor application process with care. A manager explained the process:

The rental ranges from RM1,000 to RM3,500 for the four days. It has been heavily booked, 140 stalls are not enough...traders come from all over Malaysia...we received more than 500 applications for various stalls...we want to be fair and transparent on the selection, so we cast lots to see who gets it...if they don't get it, come back and try their luck again next year. [CE4-manager1]

About 20 to 30 student volunteers contributed their time and energy to the event. Most of them worked as porters to assist the kite-flyers. Local community groups and NGOs sent cultural performers to perform at the nightly shows. They received some token payment for their

contribution. The audiences supported the event by being there to witness the kite shows, participating in various side activities, and consuming the products and services on sale at the event.

### Network structure

Since this was a government event which mobilised and co-opted all relevant government agencies into its local coordinating committee, the government stakeholder groups in this event were largely well connected and enjoyed embedded relationships with the other local stakeholder groups, such as the community groups, volunteers, vendors or the kite-flyer club. Similar to the development authority and government bodies, the local kite-flyer club was found to have a central position in the event network. The club leaders were members of the event organising committee. Through its members' personal networks and affiliations with various kite festivals, the club helped the organiser to identify and recommend foreign participants/kite-flyers for the event:

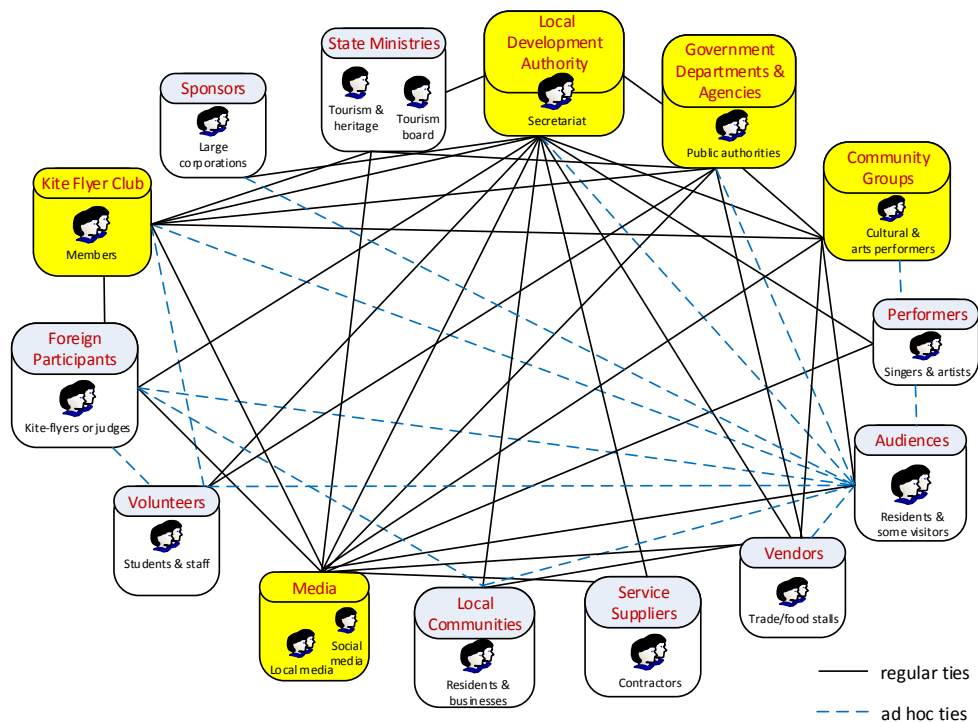
We have a lot of our networks outside...frequently communicate with them through Facebook...like from Japan, every year we have eight to ten persons coming...during the competition, the Japanese sport-kite association will bring in their judges, criteria and everything... we have associate members, like from Kuala Lumpur or Malacca, they help to take care of flyers who are passing by Kuala Lumpur... [CE4-stakeholder2]

The local community groups, such as the ethnic associations, schools, social clubs, and rural villages, passed on event information to disparate groups of people, sourced cultural performers for the event, and sporadically partnered with the event organiser to conduct some campaigns or community projects. For example, in 2010 the local Rotary Club partnered with the event organiser in an attempt to set a new *Malaysia Book of Records* record of 150 kite-flyers flying 50 train-kites simultaneously. The project raised funds to purchase fire extinguishers for the local village long-houses.

Through the state tourism board's website and marketing network, the 'tourism ministry was helping in terms of publicity for the event, promoting the event abroad, and distributing the event brochures as far as to the UK.' [CE4-manager1]. However, in terms of domestic publicity, the event manager said, '[they] have not really embarked seriously on marketing...just dispersing some brochures to other towns, and creation of an event website and Facebook...' [CE4-manager1]. The local media apparently had not used their network power to influence the event. A manager expressed disappointment with the local newspapers' coverage of the event:

We have problem with media... They are not acting like journalists. Journalists look for what to write but they are waiting for news, they are not looking out for it...I am finding ways to get the press to be with us. In fact, in this [secretariat] room we have allocated spare space for them but nobody turned up, so we cleared the space. [CE4-manager1]

Other stakeholders such as the vendors, kite-flyers, volunteers and performers had *ad hoc* ties with the audiences during the event and at the event site, and they were less central in the event network. But the event might not go on without them. The event network structure is shown in Figure 4.4. The five yellow nodes reflect the stakeholders which had central network position.



**Figure 4.4: CE4 – Stakeholder Network Structure**

#### 4.5.3.2 Legitimacy

CE4 was the main and largest event in the town. The event was initiated by the local government, organised through the collective efforts of various government bodies, NGOs and the private sector, for the benefit of the local people. It had the potential to affect all levels of the community, and every individual or group in the town was perceived to have a stake in the kite festival. The event was well-received by the community. Stakeholders who were directly involved in the organisation and also contributing their time, knowledge, skills, talents, materials and money had pragmatic legitimacy. Stakeholders who were involved in staging the event, such as the foreign participants, performers, service suppliers and vendors, had



episodic legitimacy, as they were subject to the annual contract renewal and tendering processes.

However, it appears that local tourism businesses were not cognisant of their own stake in the event. It was found that no organised tours had been arranged in conjunction with the event. Speaking to a hotel manager and a taxi driver, it was found that tourism businesses had not been proactively tapping into the business opportunities generated by the event. Tourism players did not perceive the event as a tourist-driven event and thus felt that it brought little direct economic benefit to their businesses. Interviews with two foreign participants found that they had attended the event three to four times. However, they had never ventured beyond the town or visited other places in Borneo, only the event location.

#### **4.5.3.3**            *Urgency*

As in other cases, CE4 event managers also viewed urgency as the urgency of organising and implementing the event, rather than the urgency of stakeholders' claims. Most stakeholder groups were found to be waiting for the organiser's call. The event was usually held towards the end of September. The main organising committee usually met between January and February each year to decide on the event date, concept and budget. After that, the local coordinating committee would meet four to five times for planning and implementation of the event. Often a press conference to launch the event was organised around April to May. All tenders or contracts for services had to be finalised three months ahead of the event's dates, following the government's procurement procedures. However, stakeholders such as the foreign participants had to be approached and confirmed much earlier. All local stakeholders such as audiences, vendors, service suppliers, volunteers and sponsors, were perceived to have no urgency attribute. Similarly the media had no urgency, as they did not proactively seek out the event.

#### **4.5.3.4**            *Proximity*

All stakeholder groups were physically and geographically proximate to the event, except the state ministries located in the state capital city, performers from West Malaysia, and foreign kite-flyers. According to the three interviewed event managers, all stakeholders, particularly at the grassroots level, had welcomed the event since its inception, and looked forward to it every year. In summary, Table 4.11 shows that the government entities and kite-flyer club were the event's primary stakeholders. All other groups were either definitive or expectant stakeholders. No latent stakeholder was found in this case.

**Table 4.11: Summary of Stakeholder Attributes and Salience in CE4**

Attributes Stakeholder	Power			Legitimacy		Urgency	Proximity	Salience *
	Resource	Network	Level	Episodic	Continual			
<b>Governments</b>	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Kite-Flyer Club</b>	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Sponsors</b>	critical	marginal	Medium		√		√	Definitive
<b>Community groups</b>	replaceable	central	Medium		√		√	Definitive
<b>Performers</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√		√		Expectant
<b>Vendors</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			√	Expectant
<b>Foreign participants</b>	replaceable	central	Medium	√		√		Definitive
<b>Service suppliers</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			√	Expectant
<b>Volunteers</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			√	Expectant
<b>Media</b>	replaceable	central	Medium	√				Expectant
<b>Audiences</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			√	Expectant
<b>Local communities</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√			√	Expectant

\*Notes: refer to subsection 2.4.5.1, salience framework of Haigh and Griffiths (2009). 4 attributes = primary stakeholder; 3 attributes = definitive stakeholder; 2 attributes = expectant stakeholder; 1 attribute = latent stakeholder

#### 4.5.4 CE4 – Stakeholder interests

This event was another case where government financially underwrote and organised the event for the economic benefit of all stakeholders. All stakeholders who were actively involved in staging the festival had received some form of direct economic benefit. For example, the service suppliers received contracts, vendors sold their products, performers received their performance fees, and foreign participants enjoyed the free hospitality provided. The event had provided fund-raising opportunities for the kite-flyer club, NGOs, and schools. ‘Some food stalls were reserved for [ethnic associations]...to sell traditional food.’ [CE4-manager1].

The large corporations that provided cash sponsorship sometimes participated in the name of CSR without expecting any direct financial return from the event [CE4-manager1]. It was found that these sponsors were not listed on the event’s website, press releases or other documents, and were only mentioned by the managers during the interviews. Nevertheless, a field visit to the event found that some sponsors and NGOs had reserved exhibition booths to promote their organisations. These findings may imply that corporations were providing cash sponsorships primarily to demonstrate their support to the development authority and government agencies. The event chairperson [CE4-manager3] explained the sponsor relationships:

We send sponsorship request letters signed by Datuk...to our subsidiary companies, our own contractors and those who have joint-venture agreements with the development authority...The response so far is very good. They have been very supportive...giving us such a very good cooperation in terms of monetary-aid sponsorship.

As far as promotion of cultural understanding and social integration was concerned, the event had achieved mixed results. On a field visit to the event it was noticed that it was well-attended by the residents from nearby villages. However, when speaking to a few local youths in the town researchers found that these young people had not attended the event, but just witnessed the kite shows from outside the event grounds. Possibly because of limited entertainment or event opportunities in the villages, the villagers were more enthusiastic about the event. The event had provided social and entertainment opportunities to all interested stakeholders. A foreign kite-flyer [CE4-stakeholder4] spoke of his sociocultural interest:

I really like to fly my kite with local people and that's why I like to spend time going along and handing the handles to people in the crowd, having a chat with them. The other thing is to meet with more people from various countries who also fly kites...I have been very fortunate to meet them for the last few years and it's like coming back to meet your best friends.

From evidence gathered, it was observed that weather and wind conditions were a big concern for the event. Reports culled from a newspaper archive revealed that a tropical storm had disrupted the event's closing ceremony in 2010, causing commotion, fear, and minor injuries to performers and audiences. A perfect wind blowing from the right direction is required for kites to be flown consistently. However, due to construction development around the event field, there was a concern about the potential for the wind direction being disrupted by the new buildings. The town-centre event site, formerly the town aerodrome, might have to give way to future town development and relocate to another suitable site. An event manager [CE4-manager2] stated that the development authority had a plan to reserve an area for kite-flying and a kite museum. Table 4.12 below summarises stakeholders' interests in the event:

**Table 4.12: CE4 – Stakeholders and Interests**

Stakeholder	Interests				
	Economic	Social	Cultural	Environmental	Political
<b>Governments</b>	Town promotion & tourist visitation, revenue	Social integration	Culture promotion	Conducive wind conditions & event waste management	Public service & town development

<b>Kite-Flyer Club</b>	Fund-raising opportunity for the club	Meet foreign kite-flyers & promote kite-flying hobby		Conducive wind conditions	Demonstrate support to development authority
<b>Sponsors</b>		CSR			Demonstrate support to government
<b>Community groups</b>	Fund-raising for schools or associations	Performing opportunity & promoting their organisation's cause	Showcase of culture & tradition		Demonstrate support to government
<b>Performers</b>	Performance fees & fame				
<b>Vendors</b>	Product sale & promotion				
<b>Foreign participants</b>	Free hospitality	Meet other kite-flyers	Experience local culture	Conducive wind conditions	
<b>Service suppliers</b>	Business gain				
<b>Volunteers</b>	Work requirement	Meet kite-flyers, edutainment,			
<b>Media</b>	Show limited interest				
<b>Audiences</b>		Fun & entertainment, socialising opportunity			
<b>Local communities</b>	Spin-off benefits				

#### 4.5.5 CE4 – Stakeholder influence strategies

According to the event managers, CE4 continued to exist because it drew a good crowd. The local community groups and residents were generally very supportive and looked forward to the event every year. To attract bigger crowds, different West Malaysian artists and singers were engaged to perform at the nightly shows. A site visit to the event noted that the event was well attended. Audiences enjoyed the kite shows and stage performances, visiting stalls and buying food and other goods. Large crowds also made the vendors very happy and prompted them to compete for access to the event. A manager [CE4-manager1] said:

We have to consider the stalls here. If the crowds are not that good, the stalls will not be making money... We purposely try to put the date of the event after pay-day...so that the people could come out and spend their money at the event.

In this case study, it was found that regular transfer of government officials has posed a constant challenge to the organisers, causing changes to the local coordinating committee membership and influencing the event organisation. The secretariat team has to re-group the sub-committee and re-establish the working relationships. A secretary [CE4-manager1] commented:

Government servants, they got transferred. The sub-committee officers come and go... This is where problems arise. We have to work nicely with the new officers. Get them to know about events... If the new boss is good, then OK. If he is not cooperative enough, then we have to face the challenge of how to convince him to be with us. We can't control everything. We just have to consistently check on them... monitor and bear with some delays.

The local kite-flyer club members regularly attended other kite events, expanded their networks and upgraded their technical skills. With such exposure and experience, they would be able to 'give ideas and suggestions on how to organise... and improve on the organisation of the event' [CE4-stakeholder2]. A leader of the kite-flyer club expressed this idea:

We mix with the international kite-flyers... ask them to introduce good and committed flyers that they know... we also use Facebook to communicate... every year we go out of the country two to three times to participate in events or competitions, such as to France, Thailand, Jakarta, India, Singapore, and from there we also see how other organisers manage their festival. [CE4-stakeholder1]

The kite-flyer club members also monitored regional kite festival dates and established linkages with other festivals. Their strategy was to seek cost-sharing with other regional kite festivals when importing international kite-flyers from the American and European regions. Such a move had contributed to reducing the event's cost. Foreign participants were found to be very committed in executing their roles at the event. To keep the audiences interested, not bored by seeing the same kites every year, foreign participants tended to bring in new kites from time to time. These committed kite-flyers had been invited back repeatedly to participate in the event:

These westerners [foreign participants], when they go into the field, they are like, working. Morning, 8.30 am, they enter the field, bring all the kites. Depends on the wind, if wind is good, they fly their kites... once the kites go up, they just sit there the whole day. Field crews bring boxes of mineral water and lunch packs for them. That's the time, we can see which one is the committed flyer. [CE4-stakeholder1]

The local media and tourism businesses had no strong interest in the event and did not proactively seek out the event, reacting only when requested to cover, or else they withheld their involvement. Consequently, the event had limited media coverage and publicity in nearby towns and regions. No event package was designed, nor was a concerted effort made to increase tourist visitation to the event and nearby destinations. Interviewing a hotel manager [CE4-stakeholder5], this study found that the local tourism industry had not leveraged the event to find new business opportunities. The event had consequently remained popular only among the local residents and villagers.

#### **4.5.6 CE4 – Case summary**

The CE4 case findings can be summarised into the following five points:

- a) The local development authority took the lead, and co-opted various government departments and agencies into the event-organising committee to produce a community festival and to promote the town.
- b) Stakeholders with the required technical skills and knowledge and networks were found to be powerful and highly salient in the event.
- c) Large corporate sponsors that provided cash for the event did so essentially to demonstrate their support to the local government, but did not interfere with the event organisation.
- d) Local community groups and businesses stood to benefit from their direct involvement in the event. These diffused stakeholders were geographically proximate but had no urgency in the event organisation. They were not powerful and did not attempt to exert any influence on the event.
- e) Strong demand and support from the local community had propelled the development authority to continue organising the event.

### **4.6 Case Study 5 – Sport Event 5 (SE5)**

#### **4.6.1 SE5 – Overview**

*Event Nature:* SE5 was an annual yacht race, which commenced in 2003 to promote sailing and tourism activities in northern Borneo. The race was usually held in July, timed to coincide with the schedule of ‘Sail Malaysia’, a program supported by the Malaysian government and designed to promote discovering Malaysia by sea. In 2013, the event was a week-long regatta involving different categories of yachts, participating in a two-passage race and two harbour

aces, stopping over in three destinations along the northern shoreline of Borneo. For case study purposes, the three destinations were named Destination 'A', 'B' and 'C'. Destination A was the starting point of the race, Destination B was a night stop-over, and Destination C was the end-point of the race. SE5 was more of a cruising-class rather than an international racing-class event, with three rally stops involving hotel accommodation, receptions, dinners, cultural activities and optional tours for the race participants. Participants were not required to pay any registration fee. SE5 was 'practically unknown' to the local community because it was a 'non-spectator event', and perceived to be an elite event involving and benefiting a small group of people [SE5-manager1].

**Event Organiser:** The event was initiated and organised by Destination A's state tourism ministry and sports ministry, involving various government departments, agencies, and the private sector. From 2003–2008, the two Malaysian states in Borneo were involved in co-organising this event. Since 2009, the two state governments and a federal territory had collaborated to organise the event. The principal organising committee was a joint committee with representatives from the three entities, chaired by a minister from Destination A. This minister had been appointed to chair the committee ever since the inauguration of the race. Each state government and the federal territory then formed its own local working committee, with local stakeholders co-opted to implement the event plan at their destination. The members of the local working committee were volunteers – they were not employed to organise the event.

In the 2006 event booklet, it was highlighted that government would like the private sector to take a more active role in organising the event, while the government agencies carried out supporting roles. Subsequently, the responsibilities of the local working committee chairperson and secretariat roles were transferred to the private sector. A director of a large corporate conglomerate, which also owns the marina at Destination A, was asked by the minister to take charge of the event organisation. This was a situation where a stakeholder had become a manager and was also leading the local working committee in organising the event. The salience of this stakeholder will be further illustrated in subsection 4.6.3 below.

**Event Venue & Size:** This yacht race was held in the northern waters of Borneo, involving three destinations in northern Borneo. In the 2003 inaugural race, 14 boats from six countries participated, involving only Destinations A and B. In 2009, the race was extended to Destination C. Participation peaked in 2012, with 47 boats from 10 different countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa and the UK, taking part in the race.

**Event Objectives:** From the event booklet, it was found that the yachting event was initially conceived to be an annual tourist attraction for the Borneo region, promoting the waters of Borneo and its inland tourist attractions to sailors/yachters from around the world. The event also sought to encourage local people to get interested in taking up sailing as a recreational or competitive sporting activity. All the interview participants in this case study expressed their opinion that the event had successfully created some awareness of the local marinas and tourist attractions among regional and international yachting enthusiasts. However, local people’s interest in sailing remained low, as sailing was not a local ‘culture’ and moreover was perceived to be a ‘rich people’s hobby’ [SE5-stakeholder3].

#### 4.6.2 SE5 – Stakeholder identification

Based on the interviews and documentary evidence, 12 groups of stakeholders were identified, as shown in Table 4.13. The fact that SE5 was a highly technical, niche sporting event, involving a restricted number of people, resulted in a significant overlap among the stakeholder groups. It was also difficult to compartmentalise the stakeholders and event managers. An obvious example would be the marina owner from Destination A, who was found to be playing multiple and critical roles in the event. This marina owner was a director of a corporate conglomerate with global business interests in timber, plantations and property development. He was a race participant and a sponsor, as well as performing a managerial role in chairing the local working committee. Such a ‘one-man show’ scenario was not found in other case studies. So, for the purposes of this case, this particular stakeholder was labelled in this study as the ‘main contributor’ to the event.

All evidence revealed that the state governments had played a critical role in organising this yachting event, so it could be concluded that it was a ‘government event’. Thus, in this case study, the three interview participants from the public sector were regarded as the event managers, while the other six participants from the private sector were considered to be the event stakeholders. The government stakeholders in this case could largely be classified into three groups, as listed in the first three rows of Table 4.13. below.

**Table 4.13: SE5 –Stakeholders**

	Stakeholder	Details
1	State Tourism Ministry & Sports Ministry	These two ministries in Destination A were the leading organisations which initiated and funded the event. A local minister was appointed to chair the main organising committee.
2	Co-organisers	Tourism authorities of Destinations B and C which shared the cost of the event and organised onshore activities at their respective destinations.



3	Government departments and agencies	All the state and federal government departments and agencies provided administrative, manpower, logistical support to the event. E.g. Malaysia Maritime Enforcement Agency; Marine, Customs, Immigration, Fire & Rescue, Meteorological Department; city council and district office.
4	Main contributor	A corporate director from Destination A, who owned a marina, hotel and yachts, and headed the local working committee.
5	Marina & hotel operators	The three marinas and hotels which provided the event venue, extended hospitality to the race officials and participants, partially sponsored the event.
6	Sailing associations or clubs	Local and regional organisations which promoted yachting interests; some acted as sanctioning bodies. These organisations provided race officials, judges, measurers and technical volunteers to the race.
7	Media	Media could be categorised into, (1) traditional media such as newspapers, yachting magazines; (2) social media such as yachting blogs, websites and Facebook.
8	Race participants	Yachters who participated in the race and were expected to spread positive word-of-mouth on the event and destinations. The majority of them were couples who were cruisers and not competitive racers.
9	Boating service providers	Boating-related companies which provided services to marinas and boating clientele, supplied boat and marine equipment and spare parts.
10	Other suppliers	Suppliers of event T-shirts, trophies and printing services.
11	Donors/advertisers	Those businesses which contributed around RM250–RM500 to do space advertising in the annual event booklet. The money collected was mainly used to cover the cost of printing the event booklet.
12	Local communities	Residents who have some interest in marine leisure or sporting activities, and businesses at the destinations, e.g. tourism businesses, food and retail outlets etc.

### 4.6.3 SE5 – Stakeholder attributes and salience

When asked to define ‘stakeholder’ at the interviews, a member of the secretariat team answered with a broad definition: ‘I guess those who have interests in sailing and those who want to take part in sailing or indirectly, in organising the event.’ [SE5-stakeholder2]. Another secretary said, ‘I think all the ground people...the marinas...they get business, pay their taxes, then the government has the money.’ [SE5-manager2]. Of the nine interview participants, six unanimously ranked the state tourism ministry, government departments and agencies, and the three marinas and hotel owners, as the most important stakeholders in the event.

#### 4.6.3.1 *Power*

From interviews and documentary evidence, it was found that two prominent local individuals from Destination A had been continuously playing critical roles in this event. They were found to be the central stakeholders, and also the ones who assembled the different parties to stage

the event. One of them was a minister with political power and the other was a corporate director with large resources at his disposal. Their salience will be discussed further in the following subsections.

### Resource dependence

There was no entry fee for this yachting race. Therefore, the event was not a revenue-generating event but a cost centre. It was principally funded by the state governments and partially sponsored by private-sector supporters such as the marinas and hotels. The main contributor [SE5-stakeholder1] spoke on the public-private partnership that had formed to organise the event:

Over the years, the tourism ministry had financially supported the event [RM20,000–50,000], and the tourism board did the publicity, marketing, media familiarisation trips and all that... while other groups of people from the private sector, like the hotel which came up with free rooms for all these yachters for one night... free berthing from the marina, free water and electricity when they berth their boats there during the event, so it's also the effort of the private sector as well as the government sector. [SE5-stakeholder1]

From interviews, it was found that over the years, government's funding of the event had not been consistent and the amount was decreasing. A technical volunteer [SE5-stakeholder3] commented on the initial efforts and ideas of the tourism ministry when the event was first conceptualised:

A ridiculous amount of RM1,000,000 was spent on the first event...the tourism board even bought a yacht at a ridiculous amount of money just so that [the state] has a boat in the race...but they [government] won't be funding it for the rest of the event's history. The idea was that local participations should come in, sponsor and raise funds and all that.

The ministry's idea and expectation that more private-sector participants would come forward to support the event did not materialise, because this yachting event was not a 'spectator sport event, so there is no attraction to the local people and sponsors.' [SE5-stakeholder3]. In more recent years, it seems that the burden of finding money to fund the annual event had become the responsibility of the corporate director/main contributor chairing the local working committee. The main contributor [SE5-stakeholder1] spoke of his experience, 'If no money forthcoming, then how? That's why I ended up buying [a yacht that belongs to the tourism board], so they could utilise the money to finance that year's event.'

Over the course of 10 years, this main contributor became more involved and the event consequently became increasingly dependent on him. Initially, he was just an ordinary member

in the local working committee, a race participant, and a sponsor of free accommodation and berthing facilities. After three years, this main contributor was appointed to be the chairperson of the local working committee. His employees were mobilised to help in the event organisation, holding key positions such as the secretary and head of the technical team in the working committee. It was interesting to find that the event website was managed by one of his staff located in his Singapore office. It can possibly be inferred that this private individual's continual contribution was largely due to political pressure and for the purpose of pursuing business goodwill. For his corporation to obtain government contracts and incentives, maintaining a cordial relationship with government would be necessary. Besides its economic power, government also had formal, political and coercive power over corporations and businesses in the state. On the other hand, it also cannot be denied that the marina was perceived to be the only beneficiary of the event.

The tourism authorities of Destinations B and C which co-organised the event, also mobilised their respective marinas and hotels to provide hospitality and ground-handling. Therefore, the cost of organising the event was shared by the three destinations, reducing the financial burden of Destination A's local working committee. The minister was the person who commuted between the three destinations and who co-ordinated all the relevant government departments and agencies needed to conduct the yachting race. A technical volunteer [SE5-stakeholder3] said, 'If [the minister] steps down, the event will die.' The minister's political and network power will be discussed further in the next subsection.

### Network structure

Being a director of a large conglomerate, which owns a marina and yachts, and a participant in other regional races, the main contributor had a wide network in the corporate sector and among sailing clubs and enthusiasts. Through his network the event could recruit all the necessary manpower, such as race officials and technical teams. On the other hand, the minister had network power in the political arena. It was evident in this case study that the government's involvement in a highly technical event was essential and the involvement of a minister better facilitated the inter-state and inter-agency coordination. The local working chair [SE5-stakeholder1] explained:

It is important to have somebody who carries the [title] to go and deal with the government departments. We need to mobilise the government departments such as fire & rescue, immigration, hospitals and the marine team. All these government people, they don't listen to private sector. Somebody from the government sector has to take the lead to get them to come and contribute their part... With [a minister] there, is easier to assemble them together and get them to support the event.

The event used mass media sporadically. The publicity for the event was largely dispersed through the race participants' networks, and sailing associations and enthusiasts. On a visit to the marina at Destination A, it was noticed that yachters who participated in this event were mostly foreign retired couples, on a leisurely voyage around the Malaysian coast and the globe, with stopovers and tours at places of interest, as opposed to serious racers. They learnt about the event through word-of-mouth from other international cruisers. An event manager [SE5-manager1] added:

We have some repeat participants and they also help us to promote the event...because they really enjoy the event as it is not only a competition event, it is also a fun event...we are promoting more towards tourism so they become our ambassadors and of course all these yachters, they always communicate with each other through radio communication...some of the participants also upload things to the social media.

The race officials and participants mostly had *ad hoc* ties with other stakeholders during the event. Other stakeholders such as the boating service providers, advertisers, and service suppliers, were involved only as and when necessary. The event network structure is shown in Figure 4.5. The government stakeholders, marinas, media and the main contributor had more regular links with others, thus were more central and had network power.

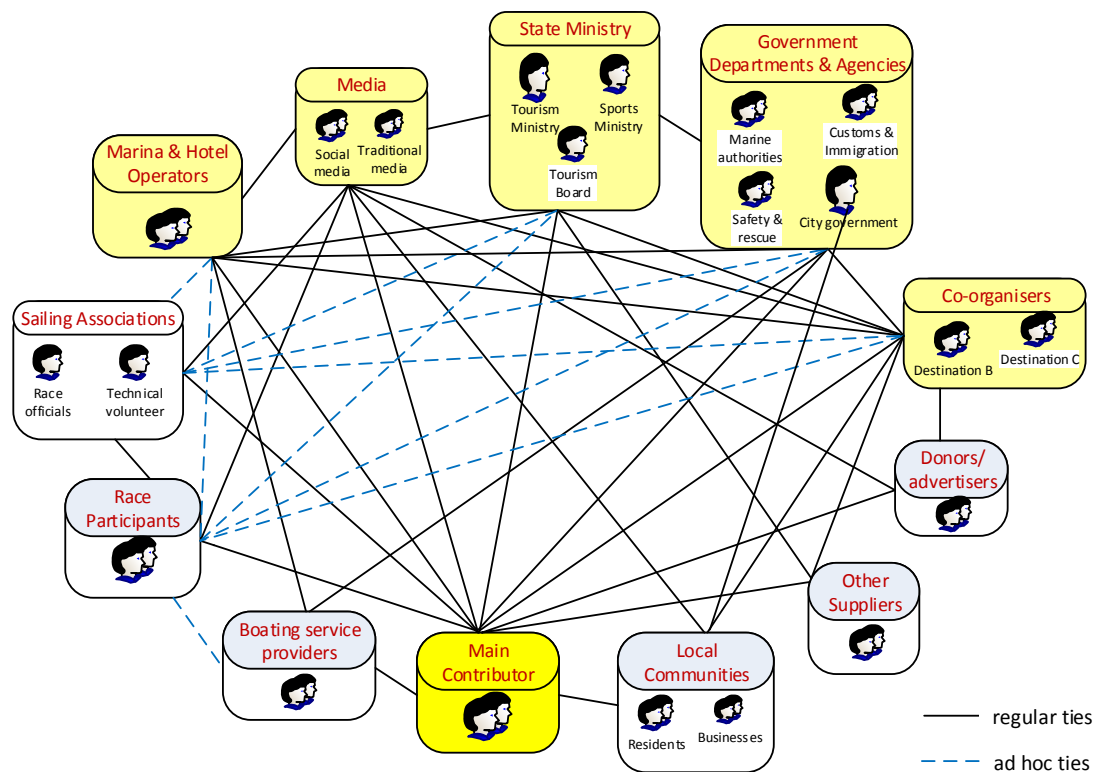


Figure 4.5: SE5 – Stakeholder Network Structure

#### 4.6.3.2 *Legitimacy*

Stakeholders contributing various resources, including technical skills and sailing knowledge, had pragmatic legitimacy. The event managers acknowledged that, given current requirements for a yachting race, the existence of marinas and the support of the sailing associations that supplied race officials were a prerequisite for the event. Similarly, the normative legitimacy of the relevant public authorities and race participants was unquestioned, since they were indispensable to the event:

All the government agencies that come in to help have a role to play, for example in safety and security. They need technical knowledge and skills in this area...then we have to get international jury, because we have to follow the international racing rules...then we need to hire the principal race officers who are qualified...I would say they [race officers] are paid volunteers...we paid for their air passages and some allowances. [SE5-manager1]

In its conceptualisation of this yachting event, the state government hoped that ‘young local sailors could be trained and involved in boat racing’ [SE5-stakeholder3]. At the same time, the event was expected to ‘promote a new industry...yacht and sail repair...create boat-related businesses.’ [SE5-manager1] Unfortunately, the plan to catalyse the creation of a yachting industry and the training of sailing enthusiasts was unsuccessful, because of insufficient funding from the state government and the poor response from the local community:

The Sailing Association did train about 15 to 20 groups of young sailors...but after they finished school, started working or went overseas to study, they don’t have the time and luxury for this any more...This comes down to the fact that sailing is not in our culture... To develop young sailors, it all boils down to who is going to fund this? If you don’t have a proper organisation or a proper group of people to fight for this funding, nobody is going to come knocking on your door and give you this money. Internal politics kills the whole association. [SE5-stakeholder3]

From a different perspective, because yachting activities were not a shared interest or norm among the local community, and because SE5 was a non-spectator sports event, it was prevented from becoming a legitimised institution in the local community. Moreover, the event was perceived to be ‘not bringing economic benefits for anyone’ except the marinas. [SE5-stakeholder3]. The lack of such economic and sociocultural legitimacy in the host community could affect the stability and viability of the event.

### 4.6.3.3 *Urgency*

According to an event secretary [SE5-stakeholder2], all relevant parties involved in the organisation of SE5 ‘know what they are supposed to do already’, so everyone was in ‘auto-pilot’ mode to do what was expected of them, as the event approached. For example, in 2013, the local working committee at Destination A met only once to organise the event. It seems that all stakeholders had no urgency, except for the sailing associations, the minister and the main contributor. The minister and main contributor, who led the local working committee, would be greatly concerned if there were no funding forthcoming from the government for the next event. Also, the event had to first ensure the availability of race officials from sailing associations, and only then could the event date be confirmed:

First one is the Sailing Association, whether the official is available or not on that date. That’s our first concern. Once they say they are available on that date, then we will contact all these departments, tell them this is the date...get ready all the logistics and things that we need. [SE5-stakeholder2]

### 4.6.3.4 *Proximity*

Stakeholders such as the local community and city government, who were geographically proximate to the event, were found to be either ‘not knowing the event’ or ‘slowly cut away from it.’ [SE5-stakeholder3]. Only the main contributor who owned the marina, was subject to political power which could persuade him to support and cooperate with the state government in organising the event. Other stakeholders such as the race participants, sailing associations and media were not proximate.

Table 4.14 below summarises stakeholder attributes and salience in this sports event. The main contributor and state tourism ministry, represented by the minister, were found to be the primary stakeholders. Without these two stakeholders there might not have been an event. The top-ranked stakeholders, such as the co-organisers, government agencies and the marinas, were the definitive stakeholders. The local community and boating service providers were latent stakeholders as they either did not know about or had limited interest in the event.

**Table 4.14: Summary of Stakeholder Attributes and Salience in SE5**

Attributes Stakeholder	Power			Legitimacy		Urgency	Proximity	Salience *
	Resource	Network	Level	Episodic	Continual			
State Tourism Ministry & Sports Ministry	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
Co-organisers	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary

<b>Government departments and agencies</b>	critical	central	High	√		√	Definitive
<b>Main contributor</b>	critical	central	High	√	√	√	Primary
<b>Marina &amp; hotel operators</b>	critical	central	High	√		√	Definitive
<b>Sailing associations or clubs</b>	critical	central	High	√	√		Definitive
<b>Media</b>	replaceable	central	Medium	√			Expectant
<b>Race participants</b>	replaceable	central	Medium	√			Expectant
<b>Boating service providers</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√		√	Expectant
<b>Other suppliers</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√		√	Expectant
<b>Donors/advertisers</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√		√	Expectant
<b>Local communities</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low			√	Latent

\*Notes: refer to subsection 2.4.5.1, salience framework of Haigh and Griffiths (2009). 4 attributes = primary stakeholder; 3 attributes = definitive stakeholder; 2 attributes = expectant stakeholder; 1 attribute = latent stakeholder

#### 4.6.4 SE5 – Stakeholder interests

This yachting race event was introduced to the Destination A host by its state government, aiming to boost yachting tourism and nurture local sailing talent. Regrettably, the event seems to have been unable to generate wide interest and support from the host community at large. It was not a community-based event, but an elite event involving only a small group of people. Even 10 years after the inauguration of the event, there was no discernible rise in local community interest in marine sports and boating activities, as the pursuit was perceived to be either not affordable or unattractive. The minister [SE5-manager1] commented: ‘Unfortunately this is not a mass tourism event and a lot of people have no knowledge about yachting, so they are not interested and they always think that this event is only for the rich.’

Consequently, ‘there was no economic benefit for the local entrepreneurs to sponsor an event like this as it was only beneficial to marinas’ and to the race participants [SE5-stakeholder3]. On a visit to the marina, researchers talked to four race participants, and found that they have the same interest in the event. A couple who participated in the 2013 race explained:

Through word-of-mouth we came to know the event... joining the race gives us a reason to visit Borneo, experience the culture and see the places...the organisation has put in a tourism night with cultural performances, dancing... If we come here on our own, there would be nothing...so if we join this rally, we are able to see a bit more of what the place has to offer... they’ve been good, looked after us well..., free berthing, provided accommodation, dinner. [SE5-stakeholder6]

Yachters who participated in the event were found to have environmental interests. They were concerned about the marinas in terms of their clean water and safety. A race participant [SE5-stakeholder6] explained this issue:

We are very environmentally friendly or eco-friendly, I was a travel agent before...we have solar panels and a wind generator on board...we like to educate other people to keep their rubbish and not simply throw them into the water...we like to visit destinations which have clean water.

Marina owners such as the main contributor from Destination A, were perceived to have been co-opted and coerced to take on the responsibility of organising the event, in order to promote the marina and maintain good relations with government. The marina development at Destination A appeared to be a ‘white-elephant’ tourism project which had been built as a response to government incentives. However, it was under-developed and under-utilised:

The marina has been there for so many years but it is not a proper full-fledged marina. It is just a marina where you can park your boat. There is no clubhouse, no members, nothing...nobody knows about it...people come to your marina expecting the basic facilities, but they don’t have...They have been talking about building for the past five years. To tell you the truth, they built a marina that is money-losing. [SE5-stakeholder3]

Undeniably, the organisation of the event had created some awareness of the marinas and waters of Borneo, and had encouraged regular visits from yachters. Perhaps there had also been some benefit to the business interests of the main contributor’s corporate conglomerate, such as obtaining government projects and other economic benefits, which would explain why he had been consistently supportive of the yachting event, quite apart from his personal interest in sailing.

On the other hand, the marina operator at Destination C [SE5-stakeholder] stated that it was, ‘for goodwill with the [tourism board] and boaters’ that the marina management had agreed to host the event in the past. However, due to its ‘limited international value’, the marina management was contemplating ‘negotiating for new terms...don’t want to carry the load of hosting and providing free services.’ [SE5-stakeholder5] Failing to meet or maintain stakeholders’ economic interests may jeopardise the event’s future. Table 4.15 below summarises stakeholders’ interests in SE5.



**Table 4.15: SE5 – Stakeholders and Interests**

Stakeholder	Interests				
	Economic	Social	Cultural	Environmental	Political
<b>State Tourism Ministry &amp; Sports Ministry</b>	Destination promotion & encourage repeat visits	Sailing skills development			Public service
<b>Co-organisers</b>	Destination promotion & encourage repeat visits	Sailing skills development			Political network
<b>Government departments and agencies</b>	Partly job requirements	Partly volunteer			
<b>Main contributor</b>	Marina promotion & corporation business interests	Partly social contribution & sailing skills development			Corporate & government relations
<b>Marina &amp; hotel operators</b>	Business gains & marina promotion	Partly social contribution			Corporate & government relations
<b>Sailing associations or clubs</b>	Network opportunity & personal interest	Organisation publicity			Race regulation & standards
<b>Media</b>	Media content				
<b>Race participants</b>	Prizes & trophies, free hospitality	Places of interest & meeting others	Local culture experience	Safe & clean waters, eco-friendly marinas	
<b>Boating service providers</b>	Business opportunity				
<b>Other suppliers</b>	Business opportunity				
<b>Donors/advertisers</b>	Advertising				
<b>Local community</b>		Limited interest			

#### 4.6.5 SE5 – Stakeholder influence strategies

In this case study, it was found that salient stakeholders from government bodies, such as the tourism board and city government, had slowly withdrawn from their management and administrative roles in the event, leaving the organisational responsibility to the private sector. The tourism board, for example, only gave partial support to the event’s marketing program.

From the managerial documents, it was noticed that in 2003–2004, the marketing budget from the tourism board amounted to more than RM100,000 (about US\$24,000). But the budget had been greatly reduced over the years, thus limiting the event's promotional efforts.

The city government just 'assisted in coordination with other government departments and agencies.' [SE5-manager3]. Uncertainty about state government funding had placed a financial burden on the local working committee. Any change in the ministers or higher-ranking government officers might cause a change in relationships, affecting the event organisation. At the interviews, three private-sector stakeholders expressed their resentment over government's withdrawal of its input, and felt that the public-private collaboration had become unequal. The main contributor from the private sector gloomily expressed the situation thus:

Sometimes their enthusiasm doesn't sustain too long...it takes people with a higher rank to talk to them if we are to pursue it...the event is evolving all the time...we are not sure next year we have the event or not, especially now that I want to withdraw myself from leading the committee. I don't know if the money is forthcoming or not...I don't know how to carry on. [SE5-stakeholder1]

Positive word-of-mouth from the race participants has created some awareness of the event and its destinations among leisure cruisers. But without serious racer participation, the race can achieve only a limited profile. Most of these cruisers were 'budget-conscious, here to enjoy free hospitality, stay on their boat, therefore they bring limited economic value to the local economy.' [SE5-stakeholder5]

Lack of economic interest and benefits had demotivated the stakeholders from continuing in the event organisation. Government and the private sector expected each other to take a more active role in organising this event. Without a 'confirmed source of funding from [the government], plus volunteer interest in organising this event', the event might not survive. [SE5-stakeholder2]. Local residents and businesses which had no interest or limited interest in the event did not act to promote their interests. The findings generated insights into how an elite event which was not embedded in the local community might fail in its planned role of fostering mass participation and promoting socioeconomic development.

#### **4.6.6 SE5 – Case summary**

This case finding can be summarised into the following five points:

- a) Politicians took the lead, gathered public and private organisations together to organise the event for destination promotion and community development. The primacy of government in producing the event was evident in this case study.
- b) Stakeholders with the required infrastructure, skills and knowledge, and social networks, were salient in this highly technical and niche yachting event.
- c) A large corporation with large resources remained supportive of the ‘government event’ primarily for the sake of the corporation’s business interests in general.
- d) Stakeholders’ roles in events were temporary and changeable from year to year. They could assume managerial roles plus multiple stakeholder roles.
- e) This was a non-community-based and non-spectator sports event which had low economic and social value, and could not attract sponsors or gain the local community’s support. Consequently, local stakeholder groups had limited interest in it, and did not act to actively promote their interests or exert any influence on the event.

## **4.7 Case Study 6 – Sport Event 6 (SE6)**

### **4.7.1 SE6 – Overview**

***Event Nature:*** SE6 was an annual marathon race held in a capital city in East Malaysia, Borneo, since 2008. Like other marathons, it had three categories of race – full marathon (42 km), half-marathon (21 km) and novice (10 km). Because of the hot and humid tropical weather, the full marathon flagged off at 3 am, followed by the half-marathon at 5 am, then the novice event at 6 am. The race was more of a ‘leisure or community’ run, than a ‘professional’ marathon. [SE6-manager3]. The top prize monies offered to winners were about one third, or less, of the prizes offered by other regional marathons. In 2014, the registration fees ranged from RM50–200 (about US\$12–48) depending on the type of race, the participant category, and registration time. The race course was certified by the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS).

***Event Organiser:*** The marathon was first initiated by a running enthusiast in 2008, and organised through a private company. However, after the sudden demise of the event’s founder in 2011, a few of his close friends, who were mostly doctors as well as running enthusiasts, registered a running club (a NPO) and took up the task of organising the next marathon to commemorate their friend the event founder. They pooled their personal funds, formed an organising committee and mobilised resources through networking, to successfully organise the 2012 marathon. Following this success, other stakeholders offered support, resulting in the group of friends deciding to continue the legacy of the marathon and make it a tradition.

In 2014, the event-organising committee had 11 members, who were all volunteers, except for the event secretary, who was employed by the running club on a part-time/casual basis. The event was operated on a non-profit basis. The voluntary organising members came from different fields such as medicine, academe, government service, and business. Initially, they were all amateurs in terms of organising marathons. After three years of experience, the committee became competent and was ‘approached to help organise other runs.’ [SE6-manager1]. This event is the only event discussed in this thesis that was not owned by government, rather organised by a voluntary group, in this case the running club. The 11 members on the organising committee were considered the event managers in this case study; four of them participated in the research interviews, namely the event chairperson, secretary, treasurer and logistic director.

**Event Venue & Size:** The city roads were used as the marathon race course. From the event’s website it was found that the inaugural race had a mere 529 runners. After seven years, in 2014, it was estimated that the marathon had attracted about 7,000 runners, 15% of these being foreign runners coming from 40 different countries. Compared to other regional marathons, this race was considered small-scale. The organisers said they did not plan to grow the event further but ‘prefer to keep it as a quality event rather than a quantity kind of event.’ [SE6-manager4].

**Event Objectives:** The running club was formed essentially to continue the marathon legacy initiated by its founder, and to promote running as a healthy activity and as part of the sporting culture in the region. Every year, depending on its financial standing, the event made a cash donation to NGOs or NPOs.

#### 4.7.2 SE6 – Stakeholder identification

From interviews and all other documentary evidence, it was observed that stakeholders of SE6 could be categorised as below into 11 groups of people or organisations.

**Table 4.16: SE6 –Stakeholders**

	Stakeholder	Details
1	Governments	Government-stakeholders can be categorised into two different groups: (1) City government and public authorities such as Police and Health department; (2) State Tourism Board and Youth & Sports Ministry.

2	Foreign participants	Foreign runners who registered, paid fees and ran the marathon. They consumed tourist services and facilities at the destination.
3	Local participants	Local residents who registered, paid fees and ran the marathon.
4	Sponsors	Businesses which sponsored in cash or in kind. They were given a free booth at the event to promote their products/businesses. In 2014, 27 sponsors were listed on the event's website.
5	Service suppliers	Those businesses which received payment for their services to the event. E.g. timing system, mobile toilets, sound system and arch suppliers. Some suppliers might partly sponsor by offering their products, thus being classified as 'sponsors' by the organiser, e.g. T-shirts and drinks suppliers.
6	Donation beneficiaries	In 2014, seven NGOs or NPOs were the beneficiaries of the event, receiving a RM7,000 cash donation each.
7	Volunteers	Student volunteers and volunteers from NGOs, uniformed bodies, civil servants, partner hotels.
8	Media	Media can be categorised into, (1) a local newspaper as media partner giving free editorial coverage; (2) social media such as Facebook, websites and blogs.
9	Tourism businesses	Hotels, restaurants, tour operators, taxi operators, transport companies and places of interest that benefited from the influx of foreign participants.
10	Local communities	Local residents and businesses which might be affected by side-effects of the marathon, such as road closure and traffic congestion.
11	Certifying body	AIMS is a member-based organisation of more than 380 of the world's leading distance races, from over 100 countries and territories, which aims to foster and promote distance running throughout the world. AIMS measured and certified the race course.

### 4.7.3 SE6 – Stakeholder attributes and salience

Similar to other cases, when asked to identify and rank their stakeholders, all four event managers ranked government, sponsors, race participants and volunteers as their most important stakeholders, because these stakeholders contributed finance and other critical resources required in organising the marathon. The difference in this case was that tourism was not the organising committee's main interest, thus tourism businesses in general were not salient stakeholders in the eyes of the managers, except for the partner hotels that were directly involved and that also sponsored the event.

#### 4.7.3.1 *Power*

At the interviews, event managers perceived that the event organising committee was a key stakeholder that made independent decisions and had 'full control' over the event organisation. The organising chair [SE6-manager1] explained that the event was a not-for-profit event with the committee made up of 'amateur people from different professions, who were willing to

volunteer.’ Because they were from different sectors, each organising committee member could tap into their personal and professional networks, to acquire resources needed in organising the event. For example, the event could easily connect to the tourism board’s marketing network as the person in charge of the events communication and marketing on its organising committee was a staff member of the tourism board. Similarly, doctors could get first aid and medical team support from the health ministry; university academics could supply student volunteers. Nonetheless, other stakeholders such as sponsors, government, volunteers and race participants did appear to have power to influence the event organisation, which will be explained in the following sections.

### Resource dependence

When asked the question, ‘who do you think the event depends on for survival?’, without hesitation three managers answered ‘sponsors’. To the managers, ‘sponsors’ included government, because government was their main cash sponsor. It was found that, in 2014, 27 sponsors were listed on the event website. Most of these sponsors contributed in kind. In a 2013 post-event report, it was recorded that cash sponsorships were received from the tourism board (RM60,000); Youth and Sport Ministry (RM20,000); a chain hotel (RM10,000); a nutrition supplements company (RM9,500); a restaurant (RM5000), and a sports equipment company (RM1500), amounting to a total of RM106,000 (about US\$26,000) cash sponsorship. The event treasurer [SE6-manager2] estimated that it cost ‘almost RM500,000 (about US\$122,000) to organise the whole event’ and only ‘slightly more than half’ of the cost was covered by race participants’ registration fees. Meeting the remaining balance of the event expenses depended on sponsorships. The event did not have an overall title sponsor.

To secure grants or sponsorships from the tourism board, the organising committee had to submit a post-event report to the board every year, highlighting the number of foreign race participants and the economic benefit potentially generated for the destination. This implied that foreign race participants collectively were salient to the event organiser and their concerns needed to be addressed. The event depended on the foreign participants and the revenue they brought in, for its ability to obtain cash sponsorship from the tourism board.

The chairperson [SE6-manager1] emphasised that to conduct the event, the organising committee ‘needs to maintain good relationships with the police, city government, tourism ministry, and youth and sport ministry’. Another manager further explained how the event depended on these government stakeholders:

They helped with road closure, provided barricades and cones, light up the streets, clean up after event...free use of stadium...let us hang up event banners for free...get all the newspapers to publish road closure advertisement for free...invite and sponsor school students to participate in the marathon.' [SE6-manager4]

All four managers commented that the organisation of the marathon was highly dependent on volunteers. From the event's Facebook page, it was noticed that more than 500 volunteers helped at the event. Volunteers were needed in various operational areas such as race-pack distribution, first aid and medical support, logistics support, drink stations, race results and prize-giving, race-track marshals and cheer-leaders. Stakeholders such as sponsors and donation beneficiaries were found to be supplying volunteers to the event. For example, a chain hotel which sponsored in cash had also sent a team of 40 employees to volunteer in setting up and manning the water stations along the race course. A donation beneficiary also sent 30 volunteers to work at the event. These volunteers provided free labour and worked together to implement the event.

Event managers in this case study spoke of the risk of resource dependence on sponsors and volunteers. A logistic manager [SE6-manager4] outlined the issues:

I have a lot of contractor friends...borrowed road furniture [from them] here and there. But sometimes getting friends and volunteers doing it for free is a bit difficult, because some of them do it half-heartedly...last minute they can tell you that they cannot come. So, slowly we [organising committee] accumulated a bit of money, we start buying our road furniture...It becomes our own property so we don't have to go and beg people to borrow.

From the interviews and social media, it was found that as the event revenue grew, the organising committee had gradually exercised more direct control of resources and outsourced more work to service suppliers, instead of asking favours from friends. The organising committee had become less dependent on its informal networks, more organised and professional. Consequently, this caused a change in stakeholder relationships and power. The chairperson [SE6-manager1] explained the committee's relationship with T-shirt suppliers:

We are more experienced now. So we are going to come up with our T-shirt design by maybe end of July. We ask [the suppliers] to quote and we get a lawyer letter for them to sign. So that if [they] don't produce or provide [the T-shirt] by this day, [they] are going to get sued. All these kind of things we have to learn. [SE6-manager1]

### Network structure

As mentioned in the above subsection, the organising committee of SE6 had successfully mobilised resources from their community to plan and implement an international running

event. This was possible due to the establishment of inter-personal, inter-business and inter-organisational networks within the community. Firstly, a start-up team (a group of friends) sourced the right persons across different sectors as volunteers to work on the organising committee. Then, these committee members capitalised on their networks, recruiting private and public resources to implement the event. The organising committee had relationships with all the stakeholders in this event. Other than the organising committee, the stakeholders perceived to have network power were the media and government, and race participants.

It was noticeable that this event primarily used social media such as Facebook, Twitter and websites, to communicate with race participants, volunteers and the community at large. Race participants actively shared event information on online social networks. The event secretary [SE6-manager3] highlighted the race participants' online network interaction and power:

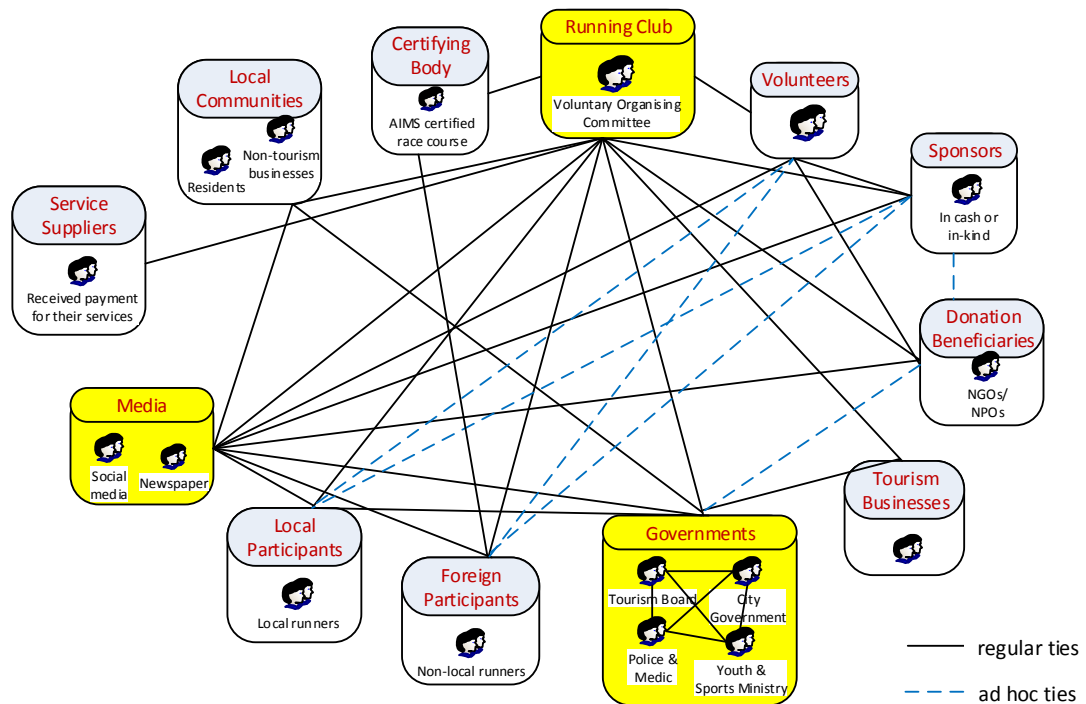
Some participants were keyboard warriors and tend to be quite loud on Facebook...some word-of-mouth from regional running club members...we actually have a lot of repeated runners coming every year and bringing in their friends and new runners...so we have to take their comments seriously...participants' fee is our main source of revenue. [SE6-manager3]

The event relied on the tourism board to do most of its publicity and promotion overseas. Through the city government and tourism board's connection with the media, the event enjoyed free media coverage and service from a local newspaper and radio station. These media came in as 'partners' to the event and provided substantial local publicity:

If we are going to spend our own money to advertise, it will cost us more than RM10,000. The [city government] can use their authority to get all the newspapers to publish it for free...We have a weekly article with our event's logo there on the sports column....and a 40 days countdown chart...press releases for event launching... [and the media] inform the local community of the road closures. [SE6-manager3]

Figure 4.6 shows the event network structure of SE6. The organising committee, media and government had more regular links with other stakeholders, thus had network power. Other stakeholders such as the sponsors and beneficiaries were salient, but required less interaction with other stakeholders in the network. Volunteers and some sponsors had *ad hoc* interaction with runners on the marathon day.





**Figure 4.6: SE6 – Stakeholder Network Structure**

#### 4.7.3.2 Legitimacy

In this case study, the legitimacy of the organising committee had been in question because the marathon was originally organised through a private company; the organising committee was concerned over the community’s perception that they were organising the event to pocket the money. To build their legitimacy, they registered a new running club (NPO) and extended the committee membership to include running enthusiasts from different backgrounds such as university academics, government servants, and businessmen. This extended committee provided useful connections and a larger network in the local community, facilitating legitimacy-building and the mobilisation of resources.

Take for example, the race director [SE6-manager1], who was a medical doctor but not a marathon runner said, ‘I was appointed to chair the committee because I have to do the relationship bit’. Through his connections with high officials of the city government, the resources from local government, police, the youth and sport ministry, and from the media were mobilised to support the event. The involvement of government and its agencies, and certification of the race course by AIMS, gave structural legitimacy to the committee and thus to the event. The adoption of NGOs as event donation beneficiaries and the event’s positive outcomes and impacts on local society strengthened the social and moral legitimacy of the committee and the event itself. A manager [SE6-manager4] commented:

Over the last few years, we start to see the number of people taking up running from the local community becoming more and more...last time, you go to those jogging tracks and parks around the city, not many people are running. Now, it's full and jam with people running, so we tend to generate a lot of this kind of interest in running.

From the stakeholders' perspective, association with the event was perceived as desirable. For example, a donation beneficiary [SE6-stakeholder2] stated, 'they [organiser] announced our name over the speaker system...put our name in their materials...very good publicity for us and also [the event], ties in with what we do as well.' Stakeholders who had 'freely' contributed resources as well as getting directly involved in the implementation of the event had pragmatic legitimacy in the eyes of the event managers. Stakeholders such as volunteers were highly praised for contributing their time to the event. The normative and regulative legitimacy of government stakeholders in the event seemed to be inevitable and permanent. Conversely, the moral legitimacy of the tourism businesses and service suppliers was largely ignored by the organiser. During the interviews, the four event managers rarely mentioned these stakeholders. Nonetheless, these stakeholders had directly benefited from the marathon.

#### **4.7.3.3**            *Urgency*

It seemed that stakeholders in this case study did not proactively seek out opportunities to participate in the event but waited to respond to a call from the event organiser. For instance, a volunteer from a beneficiary organisation [SE6-stakeholder2] said, 'normally about two months before the event, the organiser will call and ask, are we in for this year's event?' Sponsors also rarely approached the organiser, but waited for a sponsorship proposal from the organiser, which was usually sent out five to six months before the next event.

The urgency of organising the event was more applicable to the organiser than to the stakeholders, except for the foreign race participants and government. From an international participant's blog, it was noticed that some regional runners tended to take advantage of airfare promotions offered by budget airlines, and reserved their tickets earlier. The event had always been held on the first Sunday of May. The event secretariat [SE6-manager] said, 'the organising committee starts working by August for the next event'; then it would launch the event and open it for registration. In a 2013 event report, it was reported that the organising committee had to reject many registrations due to the event becoming over-subscribed by 644 participants. Therefore, to secure their place, foreign participants registered and booked their flights earlier. All others were stakeholders perceived not to possess any urgency.

#### 4.7.3.4 Proximity

The event had successfully attracted local and regional runners. It was reported that in 2013, of the total 5,644 race participants, 65% were locals and 26% from other parts of Malaysia and neighbouring countries such as Brunei, Singapore and the Philippines. Thus the domestic and regional markets were the important target markets for the event. Stakeholders who were not directly involved in, but were geographically proximate to the event, could affect or be affected by the event. For example, local residents and businesses were affected by the inconvenience caused by road closures and the resulting traffic congestion. Tourism businesses such as hotels, restaurants and taxi drivers benefited from the arrival of foreign participants and visitors to the marathon.

In summary, Table 4.17 shows that no stakeholder group was a primary stakeholder in this private sporting event, except for the organising committee, government and the sponsors. All stakeholders who contributed resources and were directly involved in the event implementation were definitive and highly salient. Stakeholders who benefited from the event were expectant stakeholders. The service suppliers who received payment for their services were latent.

**Table 4.17: Summary of Stakeholder Attributes and Salience in SE6**

Attributes Stakeholder	Power			Legitimacy		Urgency	Proximity	Salience *
	Resource	Network	Level	Episodic	Continual			
<b>Governments</b>	critical	central	High		√	√	√	Primary
<b>Foreign participants</b>	critical	central	High	√		√		Definitive
<b>Local participants</b>	critical	central	High	√			√	Definitive
<b>Sponsors</b>	critical	marginal	Medium	√		√	√	Primary
<b>Service suppliers</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low	√				Latent
<b>Donation beneficiaries</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low		√		√	Expectant
<b>Volunteers</b>	critical	marginal	Medium	√			√	Definitive
<b>Media</b>	critical	central	High		√			Expectant
<b>Tourism businesses</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low		√		√	Expectant
<b>Local communities</b>	replaceable	marginal	Low		√		√	Expectant
<b>Certifying body</b>	critical	central	High		√			Expectant

\*Notes: refer to subsection 2.4.5.1, salience framework of Haigh and Griffiths (2009). 4 attributes = primary stakeholder; 3 attributes = definitive stakeholder; 2 attributes = expectant stakeholder; 1 attribute = latent stakeholder

#### 4.7.4 SE6 – Stakeholder interests

All stakeholders were found to have both economic and social interests in SE6, except for business-oriented stakeholders such as service suppliers, tourism businesses and some sponsors, which were found to have economic interests only. Foreign participants and their families who travelled to the destination certainly had an interest in experiencing local culture. Some political and environmental interests were also found in this case. Stakeholders contributing resources to the event mostly had expectations that the resource exchanges would be mutually or collectively beneficial.

From the tourism board's reply letter to a sponsorship request came the clear statement that an allocation of RM60K (about US\$14,000) cash sponsorship for the event had been made because it 'has international branding value', 'promotes sports tourism', and because it brought international visitors to the city. Similarly, the city government which supported the event stood to benefit from at least 'one million Ringgit (about US\$240,000) tourist expenditure' and the fact that the event 'puts the city in the international limelight.' [SE6-manager1] In addition, this city government found synergy with government's efforts in campaigning for a healthy lifestyle in the local community. Nevertheless, the event organising committee was under the most pressure, being tasked to achieve the targeted number of foreign participants in order to ensure that the tourism board's cash sponsorships continued in future.

Government, media and businesses that sponsored the event may have done so with the aim of enhancing their public relations. Two five-star chain hotels which had sponsored cash and sent staff volunteers since the inauguration of the event, viewed their involvement as part of their CSR program and as an 'opportunity to increase the hotel occupancy through participants staying at the hotels.' [SE6-stakeholder3]. However, the two hotels decided to stop contributing cash after 2014, as their efforts had failed to realise a return on their marketing investment. A hotel manager [SE6-stakeholder3] explained:

Most of the international participants stay in budget hotels, not in five-star hotels... [we have] no more plans to contribute cash...because our CSR focus has changed to caring for people and environment...I have a lot of other community events that I need to cater for...but we still look after the manning of the water stations along the way.

A beneficiary organisation [SE6-stakeholder2], dedicated to telephone-counselling designed to help people with personal problems, was working with a local university and sent about 30-50 student volunteers to the event annually. The organisation was found to have various motivational stakes in being associated with the event:

We [beneficiary] treat this [event] as an opportunity to raise funds to cover our operations and to generate publicity for our organisation...the event promotes healthy lifestyle, it ties in with what we do...because people can overcome emotional stress through exercises...that's the synergy from this event. It's a day out for us to forget about calls and have fun...It provides opportunities to interact with people and maybe from there we get two or three student volunteers to help in our other projects. [SE6-stakeholder2]

The tourism and medical students volunteered at the event to gain personal experience and socialise; the volunteering also fitted into their extra-curricular activity profile, which could bring them academic merit points. Volunteers expressed some concerns over the race course environment and security. A volunteer [SE6-stakeholder2] commented: 'A lot of our student volunteers are girls...for the full marathon we have to start manning since midnight...being in the dark, there are a lot of security and toilet issues.'

As far as race participants were concerned, race course safety, clear sign markers, sufficient water stations, accuracy of race results, and service quality at the finishing point were vital. Participants had a variety of personal goals, such as to finish the run, to set a personal record, to win prizes, or merely to participate in the 'spirit of participation', and to accompany friends. A race participant [SE6-stakeholder4] stated, 'Personal record was far from my mind. All I wanted was to see the city on foot, finish within the cut-off time, and just enjoy this run, so I even brought my camera, which I never did in any race.'

From the data gathered, it appeared that the local community in general did not show great interest in the event. A manager [SE6-manager4] said, 'people here don't even care, so we don't really have crowds throughout the whole route to cheer the runners.' This could be because the marathon was flagged off as early as 3 am. Nonetheless, the event largely functioned as a social arena for active stakeholders as well as a sports and competition arena for marathon runners. Table 4.18 below summarises stakeholders' interests in SE6.

**Table 4.18: SE6 – Stakeholders and Interests**

Stakeholder	Interests				
	Economic	Social	Cultural	Environmental	Political
<b>Governments</b>	Destination promotion & tourist visits	Promote healthy lifestyle through running			Public service
<b>Foreign participants</b>	Prizes & trophies	Friendships & running experience	Experience of local culture	Race course safety & scenery	

<b>Local participants</b>	Prizes & trophies	Friendships & running experience	Race course safety
<b>Sponsors</b>	Business gain & product promotion	Partly social contribution & status	Corporate relations
<b>Service suppliers</b>	Business opportunity		
<b>Donation beneficiaries</b>	Fund-raising for organisations	Organisation's publicity & networking	
<b>Volunteers</b>	Experience & academic merits; work requirement	Friendships & fun	Race course safety & security
<b>Media</b>	Media content	Partly social contribution & status	Corporate relations
<b>Tourism businesses</b>	Business opportunity		
<b>Local communities</b>	Business opportunity & spin-off benefits	Inconvenience caused by road closures & congestion	
<b>Certifying body</b>	Membership fee	Promote running	Race course certification

#### 4.7.5 SE6 – Stakeholder influence strategies

The realisation of this sports event was highly dependent on the voluntary organising committee members, sponsors and non-paid volunteers. The organiser-stakeholder interactions can be largely characterised as cooperative and consensual, particularly from the standpoint of government, private sponsors, beneficiaries, volunteers, local media, and local runners. Most of these stakeholders acted or cooperated by way of ‘doing friends a favour’, and such favours were found to be short-term [SE6-manager1]. In the long-term, individuals or organisations tended to act in the interests of their business or organisation, thus affecting the event.

From the start, two five-star chain hotels were salient partners of the event. A hotel manager [SE6-stakeholder3] explained that the hotels’ involvement in the event was mainly due to the close relationships between the event founder and the hotel general manager at that time. In addition to the hotels’ cash sponsorships, employees of the hotels volunteered to work at the

event. Such volunteer work counted as part of an employee's work KPI. The hotels had also been instrumental in two charities becoming beneficiaries of the event:

We [organiser] changed to two beneficiaries which are also CSR projects of [the hotels] ... so we have to actually continue supporting these two as long as [the hotels] are on-board with us...we want to make our partners happy. [SE6-manager3]

However, the two hotels ceased their cash sponsorship after the 2014 event. The withdrawal of these long-term cash sponsors potentially increased the vulnerability of the event and caused a change in the stakeholders' and beneficiaries' status in the event. When asked about the future survival of the event, a manager [SE6-manager3] said, 'If we had title sponsorship, it would be great!' The *ad hoc* sponsorships coming from local businesses could not provide consistent funding for the event. The organising committee seemed to be working on securing their financing from public sources and seeking a title sponsorship, as well as maintaining low costs to survive.

Instead of being just a passive and non-participative recipient of the event's benefits, a charity organisation got actively involved in the event's implementation. To show its gratitude and to ensure it remained a donation beneficiary of the event, this charity mobilised around 50 volunteers to help at the event every year. A representative from the charity [SE6-stakeholder2] elaborated:

They [organisers] are short of staff during the registration, so our people help in the race-pack distribution...we are the biggest contributor in terms of volunteers. We tell our volunteers that the important thing is safety for the runners, we are there to serve the runners...when they come across the finish line, we give them high five, congratulations, say 'great job', all positive words...so we don't go in with the attitude that we just do what we are required to do and finish the job, then everybody happy. That's the relationship that we are in.

The government stakeholders in this case did not appear to interfere or exert any influence in the event organisation. Nonetheless, government's contribution to the event was reciprocated: for example, the organising committee had made an NGO, which conducts drug prevention programmes in the state, its donation beneficiary every year. Also, 'the event date is fixed on a Sunday in May, tied together with a [state-wide] festival' [SE6-manager2]. This was done to maximise the number of visitors to the state, and induce visitor expenditure during the festival period.

#### **4.7.6 SE6 –Case summary**

This case's findings can be summarised into the following six points:

- a) Through its network and legitimacy-building, the organising committee could mobilise resources needed to organise the event.
- b) Governments and agencies inevitably were salient stakeholders in this privately-owned sports event, due to their normative and regulative power, and their legitimacy.
- c) Stakeholders in this case study had no urgency, and mostly waited to respond to a call from the event organising committee, except for government and some foreign participants.
- d) Stakeholders who were not directly involved in, but which were geographically proximate to the event could affect or be affected by the event, and thus become salient.
- e) Sponsors which became involved in the event because of combined business interests and personal relationships, may eventually act in the interest of their business.
- f) Sponsorships and volunteers were vital to this sports event. Key cash sponsors could be instrumental in charities becoming event beneficiaries. On the other hand, beneficiary organisations were expected to reciprocate by supplying volunteers or runners.

### **4.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented six case findings. In each case, the event stakeholders' salience, interests and influence strategies were examined and reported. There were two musical events (ME1 and ME2), two community-based events (CE4 and CE5), and two sports events (SE5 and SE6). Out of the six events, three (ME1, ME2 and SE5) were found to be initiated and owned by the state government, under its tourism ministry. These three events primarily aimed to encourage tourist visits and promote destinations. On the other hand, the two free-entry outdoor community-based events (CE4 and CE5) were organised by their respective town governments, with the aim of promoting the town and social integration, and acting as a catalyst for tourism activities. The last case (SE6) was a privately-owned marathon race which had generated tourist visits to the destination. Hence it was supported by the tourism authority and the city government. The next chapter will present the cross-analysis of these six cases.



# CHAPTER 5

## CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter 4 reported within-case analysis of six events. This chapter presents the cross-case analysis that strives to identify similarities or differences across the six cases, and use these data to answer the research questions. The within-case analysis in the previous chapter has been integrated with the cross-case findings here. The cross-case analysis is structured according to the three research questions established in Chapter 1 and is presented in three separate sections, across the cases, namely, event stakeholder salience (section 5.3); event stakeholder interests (section 5.4); and event stakeholder influence strategies (section 5.5). In the following section 5.2, a cross-comparison of the six event overviews will be presented first. Where relevant, tables are used to provide a visual display of cross-case results and facilitate comparisons. This is then followed by a discussion of similarities and differences across the cases.

### 5.2 Cross-comparison of Event Overviews and Stakeholder Definition

In this section, the six events' nature, ownership, year of establishment and aims are compared. This is to provide both background and context to the stakeholder-event relationships in the ensuing sections. Table 5.1 shows a summary of all six cases.

**Table 5.1: Cross-comparison of Event Overviews**

Cases	Event nature	Event ownership	Year started	Event aims
<b>ME1</b>	annual ticketed musical festival in a resort	public sector - state tourism board	2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage tourist visits</li> <li>• promote the destination.</li> </ul>
<b>ME2</b>	annual ticketed musical festival in a cultural village	public sector - state tourism board	1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage tourist visits</li> <li>• promote the destination</li> <li>• showcase indigenous music.</li> </ul>
<b>CE3</b>	free-entry outdoor community-based cultural festival	public sector - municipal council	2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote the town and social integration</li> <li>• act as a catalyst for cultural conservation and business activities.</li> </ul>

<b>CE4</b>	free-entry outdoor community-based kite-flying event	public sector - statutory development authority	2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote the town and social integration</li> <li>• act as a catalyst for promotion of kite flying and tourism activities.</li> </ul>
<b>SE5</b>	yacht race event	public sector - state governments	2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage tourist visits</li> <li>• promote the destination.</li> </ul>
<b>SE6</b>	marathon race event	voluntary sector - running club	2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue the marathon legacy initiated by its founder</li> <li>• promote running activity.</li> </ul>

All six events were defined as tourism products as they were all listed on the state tourism events calendar and promoted on the tourism board’s website to encourage tourist arrivals. However, across the six cases, three events (ME1, ME2, SE5) were found to be more international tourist-focused. These three events were primarily promoted to international tourists, with the organisers carrying out only limited local promotional efforts. The state government through its Ministry of Tourism financed and backed three of the events. The other two community-based events, CE3 and CE4, were organised by their respective town government, aiming primarily to promote the town, but had also included items targeted to tourism interests. These were the flagship events in their respective towns. However, the town governments have to depend on the state tourism board for any international promotion of their events. These two town governments had not been very successful in getting marketing support from the state tourism board. The low number of international visitors to these two community events reflected the events’ merely secondary role as tourist attractions. The outcomes of these two events were found to be primarily civic entertainment. On the other hand, the sixth case (SE6) was a marathon race, owned and organised by a non-profit running club. Due to its tourist-generating capacity, this event was supported by the tourism authority and city government. The next section will compare cross-case data and answer Research Question 1.

### 5.3 Event Stakeholder Salience across the Cases

#### **Research Question 1: How do managers identify and prioritise salient stakeholders of tourism events in Borneo?**

In this section, event stakeholder salience in all six cases is compared. The stakeholder salience classification of each case presented in Chapter 4 is compared, and a summary is exhibited in Table 5.2 below. From the table, it can be seen that some stakeholders were represented in all

the cases, while some stakeholders were event-specific or unique to each case. Stakeholders unique to each case included the beneficiaries (SE6), the main contributor (SE5), the kite-flyer club (CE4), and the craft council and craft businesses (ME2). The beneficiaries and craft businesses were 'expectant' stakeholders, but the contributor and kite-flyer club were 'primary' stakeholders.

The groups of stakeholders which were identified as common to all six cases were the governments, sponsors, media, service suppliers and local communities (residents or businesses). The table clearly indicates that government stakeholders were consistently identified and classified as the most salient and as 'primary' stakeholders in all the cases. Likewise, the sponsors were mainly 'definitive' stakeholders. However, the media, service suppliers and local communities were largely 'expectant' or 'latent' stakeholders. An irregular case was spotted, that is the case of CE3. Most of the stakeholders in this case were perceived to be 'primary' stakeholders. This event has a community-based organisational structure, where representatives from various community groups have been co-opted into the organising committee. Thus, most of the CE3 stakeholder groups were represented on the committee and perceived to be salient.

The perceived salience of tourism businesses was found to be different across cases. They were primary and definitive stakeholders in ME1 and ME2, but expectant stakeholders in CE3 and SE6. This could largely be due to the fact that ME1 and ME2 were organised by the tourism board to induce tourist visitation and benefit the local tourism industry. Thus, the tourism businesses were perceived to have greater salience in this case. Volunteers were definitive stakeholders in three events (ME1, ME2, SE6) because these three events were highly dependent on volunteers while the other events were not.

Overall, the salience classification results and the patterns across cases could largely be discussed in terms of and linked to four themes: (1) government dependency and primacy, (2) resource-based power, (3) pragmatically-driven legitimacy, (4) event life-cycle urgency. Each of these themes will be discussed separately in the following subsections, giving a better understanding of the perceived stakeholder salience results.

**Table 5.2: Cross-case Stakeholder Salience**

Stakeholder Salience	Cases					
	ME1	ME2	CE3	CE4	SE5	SE6
<b>Primary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism ministry</li> <li>- City government</li> <li>- Public authorities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Venue provider</li> <li>• Sponsors</li> <li>• Tourism businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism ministry</li> <li>- City government</li> <li>- Public authorities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Venue providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal council</li> <li>• Ethnic associations</li> <li>• Co-organiser</li> <li>• Performers</li> <li>• Local media</li> <li>• Service suppliers</li> <li>• Sponsors &amp; donors</li> <li>• Local communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development authority</li> <li>- State ministries</li> <li>- Government bodies &amp; public authorities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Kite-flyer club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State tourism &amp; sports ministries</li> <li>• Main contributor</li> <li>• Co-organisers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voluntary organising committee</li> <li>• Governments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism &amp; sports ministries</li> <li>- City government &amp; public authorities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sponsors</li> </ul>
<b>Definitive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education institutions</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Performers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism businesses</li> <li>• Education institutions</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Sponsors</li> <li>• Foreign performers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vendors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local community groups</li> <li>• Foreign participants</li> <li>• Sponsors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government departments &amp; agencies</li> <li>• Marina &amp; hotel operators</li> <li>• Sailing associations or clubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreign participants</li> <li>• Local participants</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> </ul>
<b>Expectant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Service suppliers</li> <li>• Vendors</li> <li>• Audiences</li> <li>• Local communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnic organisations</li> <li>• Local performers</li> <li>• Craft council</li> <li>• Craft businesses</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Service suppliers</li> <li>• Vendors</li> <li>• Local communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism businesses</li> <li>• Audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performers</li> <li>• Vendors</li> <li>• Service suppliers</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Audiences</li> <li>• Local communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Race participants</li> <li>• Other suppliers</li> <li>• Donors/ advertisers</li> <li>• Boating service providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donation beneficiaries</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Tourism businesses</li> <li>• Local communities</li> <li>• Certifying body</li> </ul>
<b>Latent</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visitors</li> <li>- Residents</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism authorities</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service suppliers</li> </ul>

### 5.3.1 Government dependency and primacy

The cross-case analysis found that tourism events were highly dependent on the state governments, specifically the Tourism Ministry and the Tourism Board (they are called ‘tourism authorities’ hereafter). In this study, two events (ME1, ME2) were initiated, owned and organised by the tourism board, and one event (SE5) was initiated by the state tourism ministry. Two events (CE3, CE4) were initiated and organised by the town governments, and the privately-organised marathon event (SE6) was also found to be dependent on the tourism board and the city government. The high power and salience of governments in events was observed across all the cases. At the interviews, all managers spoke extensively on the tourism authorities’ and government agencies’ roles, and the presence of these entities was manifest in many event-related documents, such as the event programme booklets and press releases.

Besides political power, the other three main reasons for government's salience and power in tourism events are event leadership, provision of event funding, and structural and procedural legitimacy. The following subsections will discuss these three sub-themes in sequence. The government stakeholders were generally categorised into three groups in all cases – state tourism authorities, city/town government, and public authorities (e.g. police, health, immigration, customs, fire & rescue). Each of the groups was salient for different reasons, which will be explained in the following sections.

#### **5.3.1.1            *Event leadership***

First, the state tourism authorities and town governments were the most highly salient stakeholders in the events because of their leading and governing roles in the tourism development of the state or area/district respectively. This was so particularly in the case of the tourism authorities, whose jurisdictional duty and responsibility it is to develop and promote the state's tourism sector. ME2, which has been organised by the tourism board since 1998, is the longest enduring tourism event in Malaysia. Other event organisers in the state perceived the tourism board event team as having vast experience in event organisation. Other than organising their own three events (ME1, ME2, SE5), it was noticed that the tourism board was represented on the organising committees of the other three events (CE3, CE4, SE6) as well. The tourism board representatives acted in an advisory and liaison role, communicating between the events' committees and the tourism board. Through that connection, the event organising committee expected that the tourism board could assist the events in terms of funding and international promotion. Unfortunately, some events such as case CE3, had not been very successful in getting the support they needed from the state tourism authorities, because of a local political party's agenda which had become associated with the event. This factor had limited the event's growth potential, and its ability to attract international tourist arrivals.

#### **5.3.1.2            *Source of event funding***

Second, the state tourism authorities were found to hold economic power because funding/grants for events in the state are channelled through the Tourism Ministry. The criticality of government funding was mentioned repeatedly by all managers across cases. The ministry is responsible for regulating, allocating and monitoring the use of event grants. Most of the events in the state have to incorporate tourism considerations in order to obtain the grants. But for some events, such as the case of SE6, the organising committee was found to

be ‘not too concerned about [tourism]’. This was because the managers perceived that the event was ‘naturally attracting a lot of runners out of the state to come and do the run.’ [SE6-manager4]. Thus, the event could expect to obtain cash sponsorship from the tourism board for its tourism impact on the state. All interviewed event managers said that funding was the most important factor in sustaining their event production. Government grants were found to be the most sought-after or primary source of event funding across all six cases.

### **5.3.1.3            *Structural and procedural legitimacy***

Third, the presence or involvement in events of the government agencies and public authorities was desirable or necessary due to these agencies’ structural and procedural legitimacy, and these legitimacies were inevitable and permanent in nature. Structural and procedural legitimacy locates stakeholders’ techniques and actions within a socially and morally favoured position. This has a lot to do with such agencies’ social identity or designation, which in turn reflects their traditional authority. All six events were dependent on public authorities such as police, health, immigration, customs, marine, and fire and rescue departments, essentially for technical compliance or implementation support. With their respective attributes of structural legitimacy and institutional power, these organisations have the formal authority and coercive power to perform specific types of work and action, and thus impact on the events.

Similarly, the city/town governments have a vested right over the area/district under their jurisdiction. Any events that need to use public space for the event venue or for promotional material displays require the local government’s approvals, permits or licences. Other than CE3 and CE4, which were organised by the local government, all the other four events had received logistical support and fee waivers from their respective local governments. Through their connections with the local government, all four event organisers were granted the privilege of displaying their promotional banners around the town and also free use of the venue, as well as obtaining the necessary services from the public authorities and local media (SE6). Consequently, a good relationship with the local government clearly helps reduce the event’s cost.

In summary, the government stakeholders were different from all other stakeholders as they had a specific statutory role and authority vested in them. Tourism development in Malaysia is perceived as a significant public service provided by the government. So, the government’s involvement in tourism events was unavoidable and government’s legitimacy was perceived to be permanent in nature.

The Tourism Ministry who is in essence the umbrella body houses the Tourism Board and Convention Bureau...helps to chart the direction, confirming and approving our strategic plan, working hand-in-hand with us in marketing and communication...[ME1-manager2]

Moreover, the mainstream media in Malaysia are mostly government-linked enterprises with a connection to varying levels within the government, so the presence of a minister/politician at an event ensures closer media relations and better media coverage for that event. The government's power in events presents across multiple dimensions, such as the financial, structural, regulatory, network and political dimensions of power. It was evident across the cases that events were highly dependent on the varying levels of government. This made government the most salient and powerful stakeholder in tourism events.

### **5.3.2 Resource-based power**

The next theme to be analysed in addressing stakeholder salience in tourism events is resource power. Event organisations depend on stakeholders for resources, thus giving those stakeholders power over the events. Event managers across the cases perceived all stakeholders who possessed and contributed various types of resources needed by the events to be important. Cross-case analysis revealed that variations in resources affected inter- and intra-stakeholder power. Stakeholders' resource attributes have a direct relationship with stakeholder power, and with what makes them salient. When an event was highly dependent on a stakeholder for large, critical, non-substitutable or event-specific resources, the event managers then perceived that stakeholder to be more powerful.

The event managers in ME1 and ME2 explicitly equated power with money. Hence stakeholder groups such as sponsors, audiences, vendors, and race participants, who had contributed funds and revenues to the events, should have had real or potential power. However, across cases, large corporate sponsors were found to be more powerful than other contributors of revenue, as their sponsored cash amounts were quite substantial (ME1, ME2, CE3, SE6). These four events depended on corporate sponsorships and it was not easy to find alternative large sources of funding in the state/city. Likewise, the large timber-based corporations which were 'unique' to CE3 and SE5 were found to be highly powerful and salient, because these events were primarily dependent on the corporations' large and varied repertoire of critical resources, and wide networks. These large corporations were the 'co-organiser' or 'main contributor', and had overlapping roles in the respective events.

On the other hand, the perceived power of audiences and vendors across cases was relatively low, although entry ticket sales and stall rentals were an essential source of income to events (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4). Perhaps this was because these stakeholders were generally diffuse in nature. Individually, their revenue contributions to the event were insignificant, they were easily replaced and their relationships with the events tended to be episodic. The same applied to the volunteers who saved the events substantial labour costs. Audiences, vendors and volunteers, while highly important and valued, did not appear to be a particularly powerful group of stakeholders across cases. Only those individuals who had committed their valued resources every year managed to increase their power (ME1, ME2). It was because of their commitment to the events that managers tended to recognise and listen to their suggestions, or in the case of volunteers, to give them greater responsibilities. In the case of SE6, the race participants were perceived to wield considerable power because the event was dependent on its foreign participants and the revenue they brought, as the levers for obtaining cash sponsorship from the tourism board and also for their promotion of the event to other potential race participants.

Event venue providers were found to be more powerful than other stakeholders across cases. The beach resort (ME1), cultural village (ME2) and the marinas (SE5) provided ideal, non-replaceable, critical physical resources required by the events. Without these venues, there might not be an event, as the organisers were unable to find suitable alternative venues for their events. Such a high dependency on venue providers apparently gave the providers greater bargaining power and resource advantage in the resource exchange relationship.

It was noticed that most stakeholders did not occupy a central position in the event network, except for key players such as the event organisers, governments, venue providers, co-organisers, main contributors and the media. Most of the other stakeholders' interactions with one another were more operationally based and *ad hoc* in nature, occurring at the event. Such a transitory relationship did not appear to elicit power or managerial salience. On the other hand, any networks that could help in promoting the events gained the attention of the managers. Managers perceived foreign stakeholders such as the foreign media, race participants (SE5, SE6), kite flyers (CE4), and performers (ME1, ME2, CE3) to be salient, because they could help in promoting the events abroad through their individual networks in their home countries. Event managers expected these foreign stakeholders to provide word-of-mouth and media publicity abroad that could generate future tourist arrivals. However, the advance of online social media has shifted some of this social network power to the event organisers, reducing the events' dependence on these foreign stakeholders and traditional media for event publicity.



In summary, the stakeholders who supplied valued resources to the event and, as such, could act as catalysts or hindrances that might either facilitate or impede the successful implementation of events, were the ones who had power. However, such resource power will decrease if it is held by an individual and if it is relatively easy for the organisers to find alternative suppliers. On the other hand, organisational stakeholders who had contributed large and critical resources were found to be more powerful. Stakeholders with non-substitutable or a variety of resources needed by the events were the most powerful, and leveraged the events to their advantage. Across cases, it was noticed that stakeholders who were the intended beneficiaries of the events or received payments from the events were generally lower in power than those who provided financial or other valued resources.

### **5.3.3 Pragmatically-driven legitimacy**

In defining event stakeholders, event managers across cases have consistently and broadly associated the definition with themes such as: have an interest in; benefit from; involved in planning and organising; or affecting the event's success. Collectively, in each case managers had identified 11–12 groups of people that they perceived as event stakeholders. Only case ME2 had as many as 16 groups of stakeholders defined. However, it was noticed that different forms of legitimacy warranted different levels of managerial attention. Event stakeholders could have pragmatic, moral and/or cognitive legitimacy (Suchman 1995). Pragmatic legitimacy is centred on 'exchange' legitimacy, and based on the focal organisation's self-interest. Moral legitimacy reflects a favourable normative evaluation of the organisation and its activities regardless of whether a given activity is perceived to benefit the evaluator. According to Suchman (1995), the third type of legitimacy – cognitive – is based on 'comprehensibility' and 'taken-for-grantedness'. In this study, the government and media were clearly the entities perceived to have the cognitive legitimacy, because it is unthinkable not to have these entities involved in the events. Besides these, the majority of the other stakeholders were perceived to possess pragmatic legitimacy because of their resource exchange or transactional relationships with the events. It was found that pragmatic legitimacy attracted more managerial attention than moral legitimacy, a finding that will be explained in the following section.

The state tourism board and tourism ministry were the organisers and financiers for the three tourist-focused events (ME1, ME2, SE5) aiming to promote the destination and encourage tourist visits. In these three events, it was common to find that managers attributed legitimacy firstly to all stakeholders who were operating businesses in the tourism industry, such as the

hotels, restaurants, tour operators, transport providers, taxi operators, and souvenir and craft vendors. Managers perceived that people in the tourism industry had an interest in the events and stood to benefit from them. The tourism authorities are the institutions responsible for tourism development and promotion. That is, they look after the wellbeing of the tourism industry, and tourism businesses have a moral claim on their activities, in this case on the events organised by the tourism board. A manager from the board [ME1-manager3] answered the question, ‘who has a stake in the event?’ as follows.

Other than the Tourism Board, the relevant parties are the hotels, the food and everything as you know the hospitality industries... They all supposedly to get something from it by right, because for us when we plan and organise this event, it’s just to bring in the numbers and whatever number of tourists that come in, the city itself is gaining from it, I believe so.

However, across all cases, the tourism businesses’ and audiences’ moral claim was found to be given low priority in event implementation. For example in ME1, potential audiences were not able to find event information such as how and where to get early-bird tickets. In a similar scenario in ME2, a tour operator’s request for timely availability of event information and tickets seemingly did not get the event managers’ attention, nor produce any action.

Ticket price can go up and down...the shuttle timetable come out like one week before the event which we as the service provider we have to make use of the timing to make into our package. We can’t, because we don’t know what time and the pickup points. We were told to read the newspapers for the shuttle timetable. You see all these factors. You can’t make a good package. [ME2-stakeholder4]

This clearly suggested that the tourism stakeholders were given low priority and were less salient in the eyes of the event organisers. Or perhaps it was because the tourism industry largely consists of SMEs which are diffused and competitive in nature. If any tourism business were to withdraw its resources, they could be replaced by others. The tourism businesses do not have to be directly involved or at the event to benefit from it, and most of them were found to be maintaining only a passive and loose relationship with the tourism authorities or the events. Likewise, the local community and other businesses were largely diffused and had no direct relationships with the events. Diffused stakeholders were perceived not to have the power to influence the events and it was found that event managers therefore neglected the moral legitimacy of such stakeholders. On the other hand, tourism businesses that had direct involvement, through providing ideal venues (ME1, ME2), cash sponsorships (SE5, SE6), or acting as a service supplier to the events (ME1, ME2), were found to attract more managerial attention. Thus, moral legitimacy needs to combine with resource power to result in enhanced stakeholder salience.

Stakeholders such as the audiences who enjoyed experiences offered by the events, or, vendors, suppliers and performers who profited from the events, were perceived by managers to have legitimacy. They could both affect and be affected by the events. But, some managers did not regard them as stakeholders. A manager in ME2 explicitly did not grant stakeholder status to audiences, foreign performers and sponsors, because these stakeholders were not themselves concerned with the accomplishment of the event goals and objectives. To this particular manager, legitimate stakeholders in essence have to share the event goals. Another manager in ME2 has commented that people such as performers, who were involved episodically in the event, were not event stakeholders. Another manager also perceived people who were remunerated for services rendered, such as suppliers (ME1, ME2, CE4, SE6) and foreign performers (ME1, ME2, CE4), as not having a stake in the event:

If I were to say stakeholders, it's mainly sponsors, our government and agencies... like our suppliers, because we are the customers so what we want, they have to provide according to the scope of work that is given. Must be tied up with the scope of work that we want. [ME2-manager2].

From Table 5.2, it can be seen that across cases, stakeholder groups such as sponsors, volunteers, participants, and media, which contributed resources directly affecting the event's success, were perceived as relatively more salient than those who were affected by the events or receiving monetary benefit from them. In the previous section, the direct relationship between resource attributes and stakeholder power and salience was discussed. Stakeholders who enjoy the event output and give less input to the event generally have low power and a lower degree of legitimacy, and thus are less important to the managers. In short, a legitimate stakeholder who is affected by the event is relatively less salient than a stakeholder who could affect the event, exhibiting the moral versus strategic stakeholder dichotomy.

Event organisations operate with a temporary project network, so the possession of stakeholder legitimacy is mostly transitory. In these cases, the exception to this was the Government, which was perceived to possess permanent legitimacy, and also the stakeholders who repeatedly got involved in the annual events, such as the venue providers and volunteers at two events (ME1, ME2), ethnic organisations (CE3) and the kite-flyer club (CE4). Most resource exchange relationships lasted only for one event or were subject to yearly renewal or change. This might include the vendors, audiences, suppliers, performers or sponsors. It could be due to these short-lived transactional relationships that some managers could not recognise some stakeholders' 'stake'. Or possibly, the managers perceived that episodic legitimacy has no real power to influence the event organisation. In Chapter 4, within-case analysis revealed

that some stakeholders themselves were also not cognisant of their own stake in events, and did not actively seek out the events. However, managers accorded more salience to stakeholders such as government, venue providers, ethnic organisations (CE3) and the kite-flyer club (CE4), than to those who were involved episodically, because the former were the ‘consistent’ stakeholders [ME2-manager] and therefore had continual legitimacy.

Continual legitimacy arises from a long-term relationship with stakeholders who are repeatedly involved, as in these annual events. Consistent and communicative interactions increase the legitimacy of the associated stakeholders. In cases CE3, CE4 and SE5 the researcher saw that for each event, the same stakeholders were co-opted onto the relevant organising committee every year. Once included in the committee, stakeholders were able to raise their concerns and influence the decisions and actions of the organising committee. Such inclusiveness and structural legitimacy delivered continual legitimacy and increased these stakeholders’ power and saliency. In cases ME1 and ME2, the MOU signed between the tourism board and the higher education institutions gave the student volunteers continual legitimacy. Individual volunteers who returned annually to contribute their services were also seen to possess some power, which shaped their saliency in events (ME1, ME2, SE6). So, continual direct involvement strategically enhances stakeholder legitimacy in events.

It was also observed that individual managers’ roles and responsibilities in the event organisation structure also affected how managers identified stakeholders and accorded salience to them. Managers were more likely to identify stakeholders with whom they had direct working relationships:

To me, from the operational side I still think that volunteer is the one. Because I worked with them I know how important they are for the festival. After the volunteer would be the government agencies and the rest come after that lah...if you ask my other colleagues...they may say sponsors or others. [ME1-manager4]

The race director in SE6 who was in charge of government relations identified the police, city government, and the tourism and sports ministries as the event’s key stakeholders. On the other hand, an event treasurer listed sponsors, local governments and agencies, and race participants as the most important stakeholders, because they were the main sources of funding and revenue for the marathon event. Another marketing manager described the visitors/audiences as the most important because ‘without them, there will be no event’ [ME2-manager5]. This finding shows how important it is to interview multiple managers for each event, to avoid getting a limited picture of the key stakeholders.

In summary, this study found that event managers had a slightly narrower view on stakeholders than other event studies have found. Managers tended to pay attention mainly to those stakeholders necessary to an event's organisation. The pragmatic legitimacy that event managers perceived stakeholders to have was short-lived, and at risk of being overlooked or ignored. However, event managers perceived individuals or organisations who were continually and directly involved in the event every year as possessing continual pragmatic legitimacy. Such a commitment and long-lasting relationship could strengthen stakeholder salience in events. On the other hand, moral legitimacy alone might not improve stakeholder salience, but when connected to resource power it increased managerial attention. Likewise, a legitimate stakeholder who was affected by the event was relatively less salient than a stakeholder who could affect the event. The analysis also revealed that event managers were more likely to identify and accord salience to stakeholders with whom they had direct working relationships.

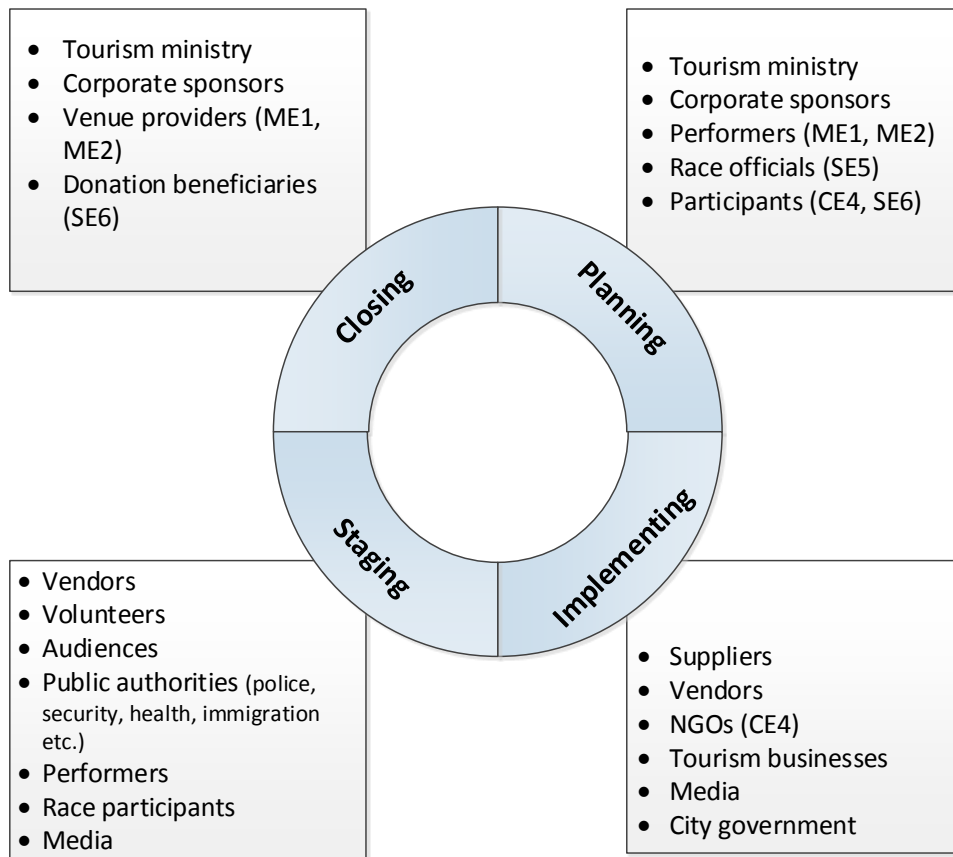
#### **5.3.4 Event life-cycle urgency**

The most important thing for any event manager is to bring together the disparate groups needed in time to organise an event. In all six cases, the event managers mostly saw 'urgency' as the urgency of organising and implementing the event, rather than the urgency of stakeholders' claims. As mentioned in the above section, some stakeholders were not cognisant of their own stake in events. Unlike the usual procedure in a business organisation, in event organisation it is the managers who normally seek out the stakeholders. Event stakeholders were mostly found to be waiting for the call from the event organisers. Stakeholder prioritisation was found to be varying across the stages of an event life-cycle, depending on the event's organisational needs. The following section will explain the findings.

All the six cases in this study are recurring annual events, characterised by gradual evolution through the stages of planning, implementing, staging, and closing, as shown in Figure 5.1. Stakeholders such as the tourism ministry, corporate sponsors, performers, participants, and race officials, who could potentially satisfy or affect an event's critical organisational needs, design and program, were likely to be more important at the early planning stage: for example, when communicating with the tourism ministry and corporate sponsors (ME1, ME2, SE6) to determine an event's forthcoming funding and budgeting. The performers/musicians (ME1, ME2) needed to be sourced as early as possible, given the information about them was needed for event publicity purposes and to encourage ticket sales. Availability of race officials from the sailing associations (SE5) and kite-flyer participants (CE4) needed to be confirmed first, before the event date could be fixed.

Procurement and implementation was the second phase where all the plans were applied, such as calling for tender, confirming vendor and suppliers, and carrying out the promotional schedule. At this stage, stakeholders who received priority included service suppliers, vendors, media, tourism businesses and the city government. Government events (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4, SE5) require that any tender for service suppliers has to be dealt with at least three months in advance, adhering to government procurement policy. Whereas in the case of SE6, it was found that T-shirt suppliers from West Malaysia or Singapore were sourced as early as eight–nine months ahead of the next marathon. The event press kit was sent to local media and interested bloggers more than three months ahead of the event date.

It was found that stakeholders' geographical location and their past event organising experience had an effect on when in the implementation process they received managerial attention. For practical concerns, event managers normally interacted first with international stakeholders, then local stakeholders, in the event procurement process. Perhaps managers perceived those local stakeholders who were physically close as presenting less risk and therefore felt there was no urgent need to act. On the other hand, stakeholders who were distantly located commanded earlier managerial attention and action, potentially due to logistical complexity and challenges, and to ensure the stakeholder's commitment to the event.



**Figure 5.1: Stakeholder Prioritisation across Event Life Cycle**

In addition, it was also found that local stakeholders such as venue providers and some volunteers or suppliers, who had engaged themselves in the event on an annual basis, had continual legitimacy. These stakeholders usually received greater managerial attention. However, this was not necessarily the case in event implementation. Take for example the venue providers (ME1, ME2) and marinas (SE5) who had been involved in the event year to year. These stakeholders were experienced, and knew their functions and tasks well, thus did not need urgent managerial attention or interaction. Similarly in SE5, mentioned under subsection 4.6.3.3 – i.e. all relevant local stakeholders such as technical volunteers and marine enforcement agencies knew what was expected of them as the event approached. There was no urgent need for interaction. In 2013, the local working committee for SE5 met only once to organise the event. From a managerial standpoint these local stakeholders who had consistently been involved in the event were perceived as highly salient, since their loyalty stabilised the event network. But, because of their experience, they required less attention from the managers, and managers tended to leave them on ‘auto-pilot’ mode (ME1, SE5).

Stakeholders such as the vendors, volunteers, audiences, public authorities (police, security, health, immigration), race participants, performers and media, who were required for event

operational needs, were at their most salient at the final stages of preparation, and during the event. As these stakeholders and managers moved into 'operations mode', regular interaction and communication was required for the smooth running of events. It was a time of high activity and interaction. In cases ME1 and ME2, it was common for managers to conduct vendors' and volunteers' briefings one to two days before the events. Similarly, the race participants and officials attended skippers' briefings (SE5), or turned up to collect race information packs (SE6), and the performers (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4) had rehearsal sessions at agreed times before the events. Local press conferences with the performers (ME1, ME2) were organised. All operational stakeholders and managers had to get into their 'costumes' for the staging of the events.

The event's closing stage included the on-site shutdown and the management closure procedures. The stakeholders who received attention at this time would be the venue providers, tourism ministry, corporate sponsors and donation beneficiaries (SE6). It was found that at the end of each ME1 and ME2, the next event dates would be announced, so that all parties concerned, such as the venue providers, could set aside their venue and time, and plan for the next festival. Post-event, the tourism ministry and corporate sponsors were more likely to receive an event report (ME1, ME2, SE6) than other stakeholders, as these key stakeholders' input was critical and urgent to the next event cycle. In SE6, seven charities were accepted as donation beneficiaries, so cash donations had to be made and witnessed by some sponsors and local media. This brought the event to an official close and kicked off preparation for the next event.

In summary, the attribution of urgency to the organising of this event was more applicable to managerial needs than to stakeholder needs. Event managers had their event preparation and procurement timelines to follow and needed to deal with different stakeholders across the stages of the event life cycle, depending on the relative criticality of the organisational and operational needs. Stakeholders' geographical location and their past event-organising experience had an impact on when they received managerial attention, and how much, in the implementation process.

### **5.3.5 Summary of Research Question 1**

Research Question 1 asked, how do event managers identify and prioritise salient stakeholders? Data analysis revealed that event stakeholder salience varied significantly according to resource-based power, the type of legitimacy claimed, and event implementation priority. What was common across cases was that governments consistently received the most



managerial priority. The analysis showed that a stakeholder's resource commitment was a necessary condition for the perception of that stakeholder's power. This resource power alone could contribute to stakeholder salience in a tourism event context. Malaysia being a country with high levels of power-distance (The Star Online 2014), people tend to *kowtow* to the governments and large corporations, since these institutions have large resources and are thus very powerful. There is an expectation that tourism development must be driven by government, and further resourced with inputs from large corporations. Event stakeholders were found to be waiting for calls from the organisers. Such passive behaviour implied that stakeholders were not cognisant of their own stake in events. Transitory and moral legitimacy among event stakeholders could easily be ignored, and was not sufficient to improve stakeholder salience. Urgency of stakeholder claims rarely exists in a tourism event context because it is above all the urgency of organising the event that matters to the event managers. Stakeholder prioritisation was found to vary across the stages of the event life cycle.

## **5.4 Event Stakeholder Interests across the Cases**

**Research Question 2: What are the stakeholders' interests in the tourism events, and how do those interests diverge from or converge towards the interests of event organisers?**

For this research question, the divergence or convergence of stakeholders' interests in events was examined across the economic, social, cultural, environmental and political dimensions, as well as at the individual versus organisational levels. Table 5.3 shows the integrated stakeholder interests across all six cases. Clearly, stakeholders participate in an event for a variety of interests and goals. Stakeholders could have multiple dimensions of interests in an event. Some stakeholders might have a single dimension of interest, was most often either an economic or social interest. From Table 5.3 below, it can be noted that an economic interest was a significant motivation behind many of the stakeholders' involvement in events. Next would be the social interest, as the events usually offered attendees a range of social experiences and social exposure. A smaller number of stakeholders had cultural and environmental interests. Some stakeholders' contributions to the events were politically motivated. Stakeholders' interests could be aligned with or opposed to the event's interest. The following subsections will discuss the cross-case findings on the divergence and convergence of interests between stakeholders and events.

**Table 5.3: Cross-case Stakeholder Interests**

Stakeholder groups	Economic	Social	Cultural	Environmental	Political
<b>Governments</b>	Destination marketing & spin-off benefits (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4, SE5, SE6)	-Destination development (ME1, ME2)  -Event-related knowledge & skills development (ME1, ME2, SE5, SE6)  -Social integration (CE3, CE4)	Conservation & promotion of culture & tradition (ME2, CE3, CE4)	-Event environmental stewardship (ME1, ME2, CE3)  -Conducive wind conditions (CE4, SE5)	-City/town image & public service (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4, SE5, SE6)  -Constituency support (CE3)
<b>Co-organiser</b>	Rental revenue (CE3)	Corporate social responsibility (CE3)		Event waste management (CE3)	Corporate relations (CE3)
<b>Venue provider or marina</b>	-Venue rental, food & drink sales (ME1, ME2, SE5)  -Venue publicity (ME1, ME2, SE5)	-Destination development (ME1, SE5)  -Staff knowledge & skills development (ME2)	Conservation & promotion of culture & tradition (ME2)	Event waste management (ME1, ME2)	Government relations (ME1, SE5)
<b>Sponsors/donors</b>	-Product sales (ME1, ME2, SE6)  -Product testing & promotion (ME2, SE6)  -Advertising (CE3, SE5, SE6)	Corporate social responsibility (ME1, CE3, CE4, SE6)			-Corporate relations (ME1, ME2, CE4)  -Business relations (CE3, SE6)
<b>Tourism businesses</b>	Business gain & product promotion (ME1, ME2, CE3, SE6)				
<b>Volunteer</b>	Work requirement (CE4, SE6)	Friendships, fun & edutainment (ME1, ME2, CE4, SE6)		Safe & clean environment (SE6)	
<b>Media</b>	Media content & credentials (ME1, ME2, CE3, SE5, SE6)	Enjoy music (ME1, ME2)		Rainforest issues (ME2)	Corporate relations (CE3, SE6)

<b>Service suppliers</b>	Business gain (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4, SE5, SE6)	Partly social contribution (CE3)			
<b>Vendors</b>	Product promotion & sales (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4)	Enjoy music (ME1, ME2)			
<b>Audiences</b>	Value for money & event quality (ME1, ME2)	Fun, entertainment & socialising (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4)	Experience of local culture (ME2)	Interest in eco-products (ME2)	
<b>Local communities</b> <b>-residents</b> <b>-businesses</b>	-Spin-off benefits (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4, SE6)  -Business opportunity (ME2, CE3, SE5, SE6)	-Fun, food, leisure, entertainment & socialising (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4)  -Road closure & congestion (SE6)			
<b>Education Institutions</b>		Student learning & exposure (ME1, ME2)	Conservation & promotion of culture & tradition (ME2)	Pre-event tree planting collaboration (ME1, ME2)	Corporate relations (ME1, ME2)
<b>NGOs or NPOs</b> <b>-ethnic organisations</b> <b>-kite flyer club</b> <b>-sailing clubs</b> <b>-certifying body</b> <b>-donation beneficiaries</b>	-Fund raising opportunity (CE3, CE4, SE6)  -Performing opportunity (ME2, CE3, CE4)  -Membership (SE5, SE6)	-Knowledge & skills development (ME2)  -Organisation publicity, identity & image (CE3, CE4, SE5, SE6)  -Networking (CE4, SE5, SE6)	Conservation & promotion of culture & tradition (ME2, CE3, CE4)	Conducive wind conditions (CE4, SE5)	-Demonstrate support to government (CE3, CE4)  -Event regulation & standards (CE3, CE4, SE5, SE6)
<b>Performers</b>	-International fame & remuneration (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4)  -Fund raising opportunity (CE3)	-Musical exposure & inspiration (ME1, ME2)  -Development of performing arts (CE3)	Showcase of cultural music & dance (ME2, CE3)		

<b>Participants</b>	-Free hospitality (CE4, SE5)  -Prizes & trophies (SE5, SE6)	Friendships & networking (CE4, SE5, SE6)	Experience local culture (CE4, SE5, SE6)	-Conducive wind conditions (CE4, SE5)  -Safe & clean environment (SE5, SE6)	
<b>Craft council &amp; businesses</b>	Enterprising opportunity (ME2)	Promotion of quality crafts & skills development (ME2)	Conservation & promotion of lost arts (ME2)	Promotion of eco-crafts (ME2)	

#### 5.4.1 Convergence of interests

A clear area of convergence in the event-stakeholders' interests is an ongoing socioeconomic interest. At the heart of each tourism event lies the organisers' and stakeholders' desire for positive socioeconomic outcomes, be they short or long-term impacts. Across cases, governments had produced or funded events for three main objectives – destination marketing and tourist arrivals; economic development and spin-off benefits; and social, cultural or sports development. Government-organised events were not just for government's own direct economic benefit but for all other stakeholders' benefit, at the destination or society level. Successful events which resulted in positive impacts gave the governments a 'feel good factor' and thus garnered support from local residents [ME1-manager2]. In the case of SE6, relative to the organiser, local stakeholders received greater social and economic benefits. The event synergised local government's efforts to campaign for healthy lifestyles in the local community. Local businesses benefited from foreign race participant and tourist arrivals. Event beneficiaries, such as local charitable bodies and NGOs, received cash donations from the organiser.

Stakeholders supplying the events with resources usually expected their economic interests to be served. For example, small business operators who participated as vendors (ME1), suppliers (CE3) or in-kind sponsors (ME2, SE6), expected some immediate revenue gain from product sales at the event, or increased patronage at their usual business premises. Similarly, performers participating in the events expected a performance fee (ME1, ME2, CE4). Civil servants volunteered in order to score personal work merit (CE4, SE6). Social media writers or bloggers got involved to value-add their blogs and attract traffic to their sites (ME1). Corporate sponsors, venue providers and not-for-profit organisations used the events as a marketing channel to promote their organisations, raise funds, establish relationships, and/or explore new business opportunities.

Some stakeholders may have perceived that their economic interest was complementary to their social interest. For example, an artwork supplier [CE3-stakeholder3] who had associated with CE3 for nine years commented, 'Of course economic benefit is part of it. But being born and bred here, I feel I have the obligation to contribute partially in promoting the town.' Key organisational stakeholders such as the corporate sponsors (ME1, CE4), ethnic NGOs (CE3), and the venue providers (ME1, ME2, SE5), which sought government's support for their businesses or organisations, liked to view their involvement in tourism events as a 'win-win' partnership with government in order to bring about wider social and economic benefits to the city/town as a whole. Often this organisational type of stakeholder perceived its contribution to events as part of its CSR commitment (ME1, CE3, CE4). For example, an energy company in ME1 that contributed cash sponsorship every year saw its own contribution as 'making the city a more exciting place to work and live.' [ME1-stakeholder7].

Other than revealing economic and social interests, key organisational stakeholders such as the corporate sponsors, co-organiser (CE3) and main contributor (SE5) demonstrated that their resource exchange relationships with the events were also largely politically motivated. An association with a government-organised event was perceived as being a pro-government act and subsequently leveraged for building relationships with government (ME1, CE4, SE5) or winning constituency support (CE3). From a strategic partnership perspective, the interests of the public and private sectors converged when they collaborated to organise events for collective benefit.

#### **5.4.2 Divergence of interests**

Divergence of interests and goals among the event organisers and stakeholders was noticed in cases ME2, CE3, CE4 and SE5. It was common to find that economic interests tended to supersede the other types of interest, such as sociocultural (ME2, CE3) and environmental (CE3, CE4) interests. In the previous Chapter 4, subsection 4.3.4, it was highlighted that the ME2's initial intention to promote indigenous music and conservation had been overshadowed by its commercial and entertainment interests. A music festival held within a rainforest environment has become a significant tourist attraction. The organiser capitalised on the festival to increase tourism and event revenue, but neglected the opportunities and interests of the stakeholders, whose goal was to champion Borneo music and culture. This group of stakeholders included the ethnic organisations, indigenous musicians and cultural performers, the cultural village/venue provider, together with some event managers. These stakeholders had expressed concern over the festival's departure from its original pathway. Local performers wanted more performance opportunities but the organiser seemed to think that their

performances were not up to international standards, hence they engaged foreign performers in the hope of attracting larger audiences. A field visit to the music festival found that stakeholders such as volunteers, vendors, suppliers, sponsors, and audiences largely did not share the original cultural objectives and interests of the event. They perceived the festival as being more of a fun-filled, big ‘jungle party’, with great music, and offering socialising or business opportunities.

A similar situation was found in CE3, where the festival was organised by the municipal council to showcase Borneo’s diverse ethnic cultural heritage and to promote cultural understanding and social integration among the various communities. As previously discussed in subsection 4.4.4, the festival’s sociocultural objectives and interests were limited to the event organising committee level and the cultural program producers. The event’s sociocultural objectives were only randomly communicated to the local community through the event press releases. Thus, some local residents might not have recognised the event’s objectives. To many local residents, the cultural festival was just ‘a fun-filled enjoyable annual event for everybody’ and a ‘time to taste special food not normally available in the marketplace’ [CE3-manager3]. The audiences tended to patronise their own ethnic pavilions. This lack of social integration among the different cultural groups at the event was mainly attributable to religious food requirements and language differences. From another point of view, the involvement of local politicians and their interests in the event had caused the state tourism authority to express doubts about the event’s tourism value and to be somewhat reserved in its support for the festival. A manager from the tourism board [ME2-manager3] commented, ‘When it is a tourism event the elements of politics, self-interests, domination by one party or favouring one cultural group should be taken off...’ There exists a divergence between the tourism authority’s interest and the event organiser’s expectations.

From the environmental perspective, there is a gap between the governments’/event organisers’ expectations and the stakeholders’ behaviour and perceptions. Interviewed stakeholders across the cases generally stated that they would support the event organisers’ green event program, such as tree planting, waste recycling and no-plastic programmes. However, in practice, most of the vendors at the events (ME1, ME2, CE3, CE4) were found using polystyrene containers, despite the organisers’ advocacy for environmental protection measures at events. According to the event managers, the issue boils down to the question of who is going to absorb the additional cost for the more desirable biodegradable containers. Other managers viewed the issue as a case of ‘the older generation was not able to understand the need for greening of the festival.’ [ME2-manager3]. Some of the stakeholders perceived the tree planting programme initiated by the event organiser (ME1, ME2) as ‘a public relations

strategy of the festival...good photo opportunity for the press...only done to enhance the festival's image.' [ME2-stakeholder5]. Clearly, views on environmental interests in the events differed substantially between the event organisers and stakeholders.

Another divergence of interest between organisers and stakeholders was found in case SE5. The state government initiated a yachting event to a host destination. However, the local community at large did not share the same interest in yachting or marine sports activities: such pursuits were perceived to be either unaffordable or unattractive. Local businesses, except for the marina, saw no economic value in associating with the event, because it was an elite and non-spectator event. Lack of convergence of interests between the organiser and local stakeholders may jeopardise the event's future.

### **5.4.3 Summary of Research Question 2**

Stakeholders participated in an event for a variety of interests and goals. Frequently, economic and social interests were a significant motivation behind many of the stakeholders' involvement in the event. Resource contributions from the large organisational stakeholders tended to be politically motivated. Cultural and environmental interests were overlooked or neglected, either by the managers or the stakeholders, causing a divergence in interests or goals. A divergence from event-stakeholders' interests had the potential to make some powerful stakeholders take action to influence the events, such as a withdrawal of cash sponsorship in SE6 or restricted state-funding in CE3, which might pose a threat to the events' viability. Managing a diverse range of stakeholder interests in events and producing a win-win outcome represents a constant challenge to event managers.

## **5.5 Event Stakeholder Influence Strategies across the Cases**

**Research Question 3: What are the different influence strategies used by stakeholders to achieve their interests in events, and how do these strategies affect the events?**

The previous section has discussed and acknowledged the heterogeneity of stakeholders' interests in events. In this section, different influence strategies used by stakeholders to achieve their interests in events are examined, providing an understanding of how stakeholders have influenced the events. In the context of event-stakeholder resource relationships, stakeholders could perform 'usage' or 'withholding' strategies, through either a 'direct' or 'indirect' pathway (Frooman 1999). It was found that event managers and stakeholders had conflicting views of their resource-interdependence relationships. Interviewed stakeholders in all cases

perceived that they were not overly dependent on the event, because of its short duration. They were found to be mostly waiting for and reacting to the calls from the organisers. Each event was perceived to be highly resource-dependent on its key stakeholders; this can be characterised as an asymmetrical resource relationship. But event managers were mostly inclined to describe their relationships as symbiotic (ME1, ME2) or mutually beneficial (CE3, SE6). It seems that the word 'dependent' has a negative connotation, hence interviewed participants tended to avoid it.

In this study, the resource-dependence found between events and stakeholders can be largely categorised into two patterns. There are the 'event-dependent stakeholders' and the 'event non-dependent stakeholders'. Perhaps because of some stakeholders' transitory legitimacy in events, participants across the cases were often found to be non-explicit on their influence strategy, or else they denied using any formal strategy to achieve their interests. Nonetheless, across cases, stakeholders consciously or unconsciously demonstrated a repertoire of strategies and actions to advance their interests in events. This can be identified from non-explicit interview data, observations, and secondary data. The following sections will discuss the behaviour of stakeholders based on the two patterns of resource-dependence between stakeholders and events.

### **5.5.1 Influence strategies: Event-dependent stakeholders**

Stakeholders whose core business was tourism-related were perceived to be event-dependent stakeholders, as they could leverage the events for the business gain and benefit they could gain from the resulting tourism development at the destination. Tourism events were perceived to be organised for the benefit of the tourism stakeholders. Equally, events were dependent on tourism stakeholders to provide various services to visitors and audiences, as well as to the event organisers. The group of tourism stakeholders examined in the study included the event venue providers, tourism and craft businesses, and tourism authorities. Generally, these tourism stakeholders knew each other and looked forward to a continuous relationship with the events. Other stakeholders who had an interdependence relationship with events in the study included the city government (ME1, SE6), ethnic organisations (CE3), the kite-flyer club (CE4), and volunteers. Four different influence strategies were deployed by this category of event-dependent stakeholders: direct collaboration, indirect collaboration, trust building and 'free-riding'. These strategies were not mutually exclusive and could be used simultaneously by stakeholders.



### **5.5.1.1      *Direct collaboration***

The first strategy, direct collaboration, refers to a situation where stakeholders largely chose to continue offering their resources to the events annually, despite some differing interests. Shared tourism objectives or mutual benefit were the drivers prompting these stakeholders to commit their resources to the events. For example, in ME2, the cultural village, a government-linked tourism enterprise which has an interdependent relationship with the festival, failed in its attempt to get the event management to increase the rental it was paying the village. Yet the cultural village had to compromise and still upgraded its infrastructure and facilities to meet the growing needs of the festival. As the home venue of the festival, the cultural village needed to leverage the festival to market itself nationally and internationally.

Similarly, the beach resort in ME1 and the marinas in SE5 had collaborated and offered their facilities as partial sponsorship since the inauguration of the events, with a view to mutual benefit. In case SE5, the main contributor, the owner of a large corporation which also owned the marina, complied with the state government's request and took over the event leadership, sustaining the event production for the benefit of his other business interests. An example of his other business interests was the beach resort in ME1. This beach resort had leveraged its resource dependence on the event to increase its benefits. Through a long-term working relationship with the tourism board, the beach resort had become the gatekeeper in the vendor selection process and gradually increased its monopoly over food and beverage sales. The tourism board relinquished some degree of independence in this case, in order to ensure permanent support from the venue provider.

### **5.5.1.2      *Indirect collaboration***

The second strategy of indirect collaboration describes a situation where stakeholders supplied resources to events indirectly through a network of allied stakeholders. Individually, a stakeholder might not be significant. To increase their individual influence, it was necessary for stakeholders to collaborate with or mobilise other stakeholders in whatever action they chose to take. For example, the ethnic associations in CE3 and the kite flyer club in CE4 adopted an indirect collaboration strategy to satisfy their interests in the events. Through their wide networks they leveraged other stakeholders' resources to produce successful events. Local sponsors, volunteers, vendors and performers were all deployed through the ethnic associations, and members of this alliance were found to be conforming and cooperating for collective benefit. To shape its salience and image among associated stakeholders, the Chinese association in CE3 formalised and documented its event operations by printing a yearly

programme book and distributing it to those associates. Similarly, the kite-flyer club in CE4 was found to have used an indirect strategy. The club established links with foreign kite-flyer clubs and festivals and strategised to introduce committed foreign kite flyers and reduce the cost of engaging them. Such strategies strengthened the club's recognition internationally and locally, and also increased the event's dependence on the club's expanded social network when sourcing different kite flyers every year.

In case SE6, some NGOs which were the event's donation beneficiaries had been passively receiving cash without having any direct involvement in the event. They were mostly influenced by the cash sponsors and risked being dropped from the event should those sponsors withdraw. A charity organisation in this group has increased its salience and dependence by becoming actively involved in the event, thus avoiding removal. The charity now mobilises around 50 volunteers to help at the event each year, thereby enhancing its reciprocal legitimacy and ensuring that it will remain a participant in the event. The ally that this charity chose, the volunteers, was in a position of interdependence with the event.

### **5.5.1.3            *Trust building***

The third strategy is trust building. To remain in the events, some stakeholders have delivered a high standard of work, demonstrated commitment and earned the trust of the managers. Volunteers in cases ME1, ME2, CE4 and SE6 had interdependent relationships with the events. The event which they volunteered for was the largest international event in their respective city/town, offering international exposure and edutainment experience to these volunteers. Through work quality and dedication, some volunteers had gained the trust of the event managers and remained in the events. To forward their interests, they recruited and supervised their peers, built a strong team of volunteers and increased their influence on the events (ME1, ME2). Long-serving volunteers stabilised the volunteer cluster and enhanced event operations.

In ME1 and ME2, individual or freelance bloggers actively sought to associate with the events. They took advantage of their affiliation with the tourism board and its prestigious events to add to their credentials. Besides using their blogs, these bloggers also innovatively used various social networking services such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to promote the festival. A leader of the bloggers [ME1-stakeholder 9] commented, 'When the tourism board looked at the coverage that we did, they were quite impressed. So, the following year they gave us more media passes...we are seen as very aggressive bloggers.' Some of the bloggers engaged with the events almost every year.

#### **5.5.1.4 *Free-riding***

The 'free-rider' strategy was deployed by stakeholders that saw their direct involvement in events as either costly or else conferring only uncertain benefits. Hence these stakeholders chose to benefit only loosely from the event, remaining at their usual business premises. The pursuit of this 'free-rider' strategy was commonly found within the tourism industry. Tourism businesses were largely SMEs and they wanted to associate with events for business gain, especially in the case of ME1 and ME2, which were organised by the tourism board. However, this group of stakeholders viewed its normal businesses as not overly dependent on the festivals. When these stakeholders' direct involvement in the events no longer produced a positive financial gain or worthwhile relationships, they normally chose to withdraw and loosely benefit from the event at their usual business premises, just like non-tourism businesses in ME2. Some of these small tourism businesses did tap into links with the tourism association when pleading for better terms for their collaboration, such as a higher commission percentage, but they did not seem to have enough power to influence the tourism board.

#### **5.5.2 *Influence strategies: Event non-dependent stakeholders***

Event non-dependent stakeholders were those entities and individuals who seemed to have less or no direct business interests in the events and were able to walk away from the event with little or no impact to their businesses or lives. Stakeholders seen to be in this category included the public service authorities, corporate sponsors, audiences, participants, media, local residents and non-tourism businesses. From these stakeholders' point of view, there was marketplace competition for their critical resources and support. The event organisers had actively and favourably sought these stakeholders when organising and promoting their events. The case studies show that this category of stakeholders was largely cooperative and supportive of the events. However, there were some instances of withdrawal strategy detected in the relationships. The following subsections will discuss the cooperation and withdrawal strategy.

##### **5.5.2.1 *Cooperative and supportive***

Most stakeholders in the study were found to be cooperative and supportive of the event, even when they perceived themselves as less or not at all dependent on the event. Some stakeholders consistently supplied resources to sustain the event production, yet chose not to exert their influence to increase their benefits. For example, the large energy companies (ME1, CE4) or

timber and plantation-based companies (ME2, CE3, CE4), which contributed long-term cash sponsorships or other resources, chose not to exert their influence. These companies, whose business was politically sensitive because of its likely environmental impacts, saw their contributions as vital for maintaining embedded relationships with the government and community. Perhaps the explanation for this was that government owned five out of the six events in this study, and the coercive or political power of the government prevented the stakeholders from being aggressive or assertive in tourism events. It should be borne in mind that the data were collected from the two East Malaysian states in Borneo, regarded as a stronghold of the Malaysian ruling party coalition. Despite the perceived Malaysian election ‘tsunami’ in the years 2008 and 2013, when overall opposition votes increased, the ruling party coalition is still strongly anchored in these two East Malaysian states.

The public sector and government departments, in essence, were not dependent on the events, but equally were unable to withdraw voluntarily from tourism events. Considerations of ministerial power and intervention, together with the departments’ official duties and responsibilities, or the events’ technical requirements (SE5), demanded that these governmental stakeholders remain in the event network. Even though it appeared that in CE4, the regular transfer of government servants did pose a challenge to the event managers, at the institutional level these governmental stakeholders remained unchanged and contributed their expertise to the event. Across cases, it was evident that key institutional stakeholders from the government and corporate sectors generally remained in the event networks and stabilised them. Their financial and physical resource commitments brought about the stability and sustainability of the government events.

In the cases of ME1, CE3, CE4 and SE6, local audiences and participants primarily were very supportive of the events. Some had attended the events multiple times and had influenced their friends to join them (CE3, SE6). Similarly, foreign participants in CE4, SE5 and SE6 were found to have attended the event three or four times, and were also seen to relay positive word-of-mouth anecdotes to influence their peers to participate. Across cases, suppliers, vendors and performers generally readily conformed to the events’ rules and regulations in order to be at the events. They were found to have responded to the call for tenders every year (ME1, ME2, CE4).

The mass media may not have had specific interests in the events. They were normally invited by the organisers to cover the events. Some were found to be supportive, mainly because the events were international events organised by the tourism board/state government (ME1, ME2,

SE5), or because their coverage had been requested by the local government (SE6) or by their boss (CE3) – otherwise they had no interest (CE4).

### **5.5.2.2            *Withdrawal***

A withdrawal strategy is one where stakeholders withhold their resources or involvement from the event due to differing interests, or conflicts. Such an action might decrease the event's benefit or increase its cost. For example, as mentioned in subsection 4.4.5, in CE3 an advertising agency which was unable to reach a consensus in an advertising deal, withdrew its services and also influenced its clients or associates to stop their co-advertising, thus causing a decrease in publicity for the event. Likewise, the partisan politics manifested in CE3 caused the state tourism authorities to lose interest in the event, as a result of which they restricted their funding and withheld their involvement in the event. Consequently the festival was unable to tap into the tourism board's marketing resources and wider network to draw tourists from external markets. With a limited budget, the organiser could only carry out event marketing and publicity in the vicinity of the town.

As previously mentioned in subsection 4.7.4, the two five-star chain hotels in SE6, which had sponsored cash and sent staff volunteers since the inauguration of the event, viewed their involvement as part of their CSR program and as an 'opportunity to increase the hotel occupancy through participants staying at the hotels.' [SE6-stakeholder3]. However, the two hotels decided to stop contributing cash after 2014, as the event had failed to realise a return on their marketing investment, and their CSR focus had also changed. The withdrawal of these key cash sponsors increased the vulnerability of the event and affected the event network composition. The organising committee had to seek alternative sources of funding, besides ensuring low costs in order to survive.

### **5.5.3    *Summary of Research Question 3***

The case studies show that in resource-dependent relationships, event stakeholders were either dependent or non-dependent on events. Stakeholders such as the venue providers and tourism businesses which had an interdependence relationship with the event, wished to continue the association for mutual benefit, and leveraged the events for their business interests. The strategies of most of the institutional stakeholders such as the venue providers, corporate sponsors and NGOs tended to be collaborative in nature, and these stakeholders either directly or indirectly, through an allies-network of stakeholders, contributed resources to stage the events. The presence of committed and collaborative stakeholders has brought about event

success and sustained the events over a period of years. Through improved work quality and dedication, some individual stakeholders such as the volunteers and bloggers have earned managerial trust, and advanced their personal interests in the event. It was also common to find small tourism businesses that had chosen not to get directly involved, but still benefited from the event while remaining at their usual business premises.

Most stakeholders who were interviewed said that they liked being associated with the events, even when they perceived that they were not dependent on them. An analysis of the activities of stakeholders across the cases revealed that this category of stakeholders was largely cooperative and compliant. They were accommodative and supportive in their resource exchange relationships with the events. Institutional stakeholders such as the public sector and corporate sponsors generally remained passively in the event network, stabilised the network and reduced event organisation lead time. Only a small number of stakeholders chose to disassociate or withdraw their resources, due to different interests or conflicts.

## **5.6 Chapter Summary**

The cross-case analysis presented in this chapter has answered the three research questions in sequence. Governments were found to be the most salient stakeholders in tourism events given their political and economic power. Stakeholder prioritisation could be based on resource-power, varying across the event life-cycle, and subject to an individual manager's perceptions. Event organisers and stakeholders were found to have single or multiple interests in tourism events. A certain divergence of interests in various dimensions was found, except in socioeconomic interest. Most of the resource exchange relationships were based on the events' practical needs rather than strategic partnerships. Stakeholders were perceived to be not very influential, but collaborative, cooperative and supportive in their resource exchange relationships with the events. The next chapter will compare and discuss the findings with the literature and present the contribution of this study to existing research.

# CHAPTER 6

## DISCUSSION

### 6.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter 5 has presented the cross-case analysis of the six events and identified the patterns across cases. This chapter interprets the results from within-case analysis (Chapter 4) and cross-case analysis (Chapter 5) and compares them with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. To contextualise the findings and demonstrate the novel contributions that the study makes, the discussion refers to the existing literature (Eisenhardt 1989) as well as to the socioeconomic and political background of the research setting (Myers 2009; Silverman 2014). The discussion of the findings is organised according to the three research questions, and seeks to answer those questions. At the end of each research question, a summary of the study insights is offered, with conclusions to the questions. To simplify descriptive information into abstract concepts and patterns, matrices or diagrams have been used (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014) where relevant. The chapter ends with a summary of the contributions that the study makes to the literature.

### 6.2 Research Question 1: How do managers identify and prioritise salient stakeholders of tourism events in Borneo?

The primary purpose of the first research question was to understand how event managers identify and prioritise their event stakeholders, and distinguish who and what really counts in event-stakeholder relationships. The study was informed by Mitchell et al.'s (1997) TSIS, which argues that managers pay attention to stakeholders possessing the attributes of power, legitimacy and urgency. The more attributes a stakeholder has, the greater that stakeholder's salience. Later, Driscoll and Starik (2004) and Haigh and Griffiths (2009) added 'proximity' to Mitchell et al.'s (1997) set of stakeholder salience attributes. This thesis also builds on the resource dependence and network theories to examine stakeholder power and salience in events.

When asked to define event stakeholders during the interviews, some event managers in this study used concepts similar to those found in previous studies. For example, managers defined 'event stakeholder' as entities or individuals 'involved in organising or participating' (Prebensen 2010) and cited other criteria such as 'affecting the event's success' (Reid and Arcodia 2002); 'having an interest in the event' (De Schepper, Doms and Haezendonck 2014); or 'having a stake in it' (Presenza and Iocca 2012). However, some new definitions of

event stakeholders have emerged from this study, involving concepts such as ‘benefiting from the event’, ‘gaining from it’, ‘making it happen’, and ‘concerned with the accomplishment of the event goals’. These concepts stress a narrower view and an economic-led definition of event stakeholders. Broader stakeholder concepts such as ‘can influence or be impacted by’ (Getz 2013, 23), or ‘can affect or is affected by’ (Freeman 1984, 46) were not mentioned.

All the generic categories of event stakeholders identified from prior studies (e.g. Getz 2013; Presenza and Iocca 2012; Reid and Arcodia 2002) were present in this research. For example, the event owners, governments, sponsors, volunteers, media, suppliers, venue providers, performers, participants, audiences, the local community and businesses. However, some stakeholders were unique to each case, for example the co-organiser in case CE3 and the main contributor in SE5. The co-organiser was a subsidiary of a large timber-based conglomerate and the main contributor was a rich individual and director of a large timber-based corporation. These two private-sector stakeholders held multiple and overlapping roles, acting like quasi-organisers and contributing a variety of resources needed by the events in question. As previously discussed in Chapter 4, subsections 4.4.2 and 4.6.2, these two stakeholders had assumed almost all the seven different event stakeholder roles proposed by Getz, Andersson and Larson (2007), yet they did not fit into any single category of stakeholders. This finding is consistent with previous studies, which have reported that it is common to find multiple stakeholders holding multiple roles in events (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Karlsen and Nordström 2009; Reid 2011; Todd, Leask and Ensor 2017), and that stakeholder relationships tend to cluster around a few key players (Marzano and Scott 2009). But this observation of a single individual or company taking such a dominant stakeholder role has not been found in other empirical studies. Stakeholders who took on multiple roles and have multiple stakes were perceived by managers to be highly salient in event organisations. Event networks or stakeholder relationships were complex and dynamic, and changed over time (Larson 2009). Analysis of case studies also discovered that some stakeholders were not cognisant of their own stake in events and did not actively seek to influence the management of the event. With such complex and dynamic relationships prevailing, the salience of event stakeholders could be expected to be highly variable. The following subsections will discuss the variations found across the stakeholder attributes and their contribution to stakeholder salience.

### **6.2.1 Pragmatically-driven legitimacy**

In this study, it was found that event managers were more likely to identify as salient stakeholders those entities with which they had direct working relationships. This signifies the managers’ pragmatic approach to stakeholder identification and prioritisation. This finding



appears to corroborate with Parent and Deephouse (2007), who have stated that managerial characteristics such as role, position, and hierarchical level have a moderating effect on stakeholder identification and salience. Their study found that volunteers tended to be focused more on external stakeholders, while paid staff were more focused on internal stakeholders within the organising committee. Parent and Deephouse (2007) also argued that higher-level management is likely to identify a wider range of stakeholders than lower-level management.

This study has also discovered that stakeholder salience differs based on the different types of stakeholder legitimacy. Suchman (1995) conceptualised three broad types of legitimacy – pragmatic, moral and cognitive; within each type there were four subtypes of legitimacy (refer Chapter 2, Table 2.3). Pragmatic legitimacy is centred on resource exchange relationships, while moral legitimacy reflects ‘doing the right thing’ within a social system, and cognitive legitimacy refers to a taken-for-granted right to operate. In this study, cognitive legitimacy was subtle or unspoken among event managers. It was not a distinctive concept in managerial thinking.

The present study suggests that pragmatic legitimacy has a greater impact on stakeholder salience than moral legitimacy. Stakeholders who had resource exchange relationships with the event were perceived by managers to have pragmatic legitimacy. As event production is resource-intensive and also relies heavily on stakeholders for various resources (Anderson and Getz 2007; Xue and Mason 2011) stakeholders who contribute resources can directly affect the event’s success. Thus, across cases, among stakeholder groups such as sponsors, venue providers, volunteers, and participants, those which contributed resources were perceived to be more salient than those which received monetary benefit, such as the vendors or donation beneficiaries.

Event managers also perceived local tourism businesses as a group of stakeholders which benefited from the events, but had no direct impact on the events. This study found that tourism stakeholders’ interests in events were often overlooked. Hence, it is inferred that pragmatic legitimacy attracted more managerial attention than moral legitimacy in these events. However, if it was a case of a more committed tourism business, such as a resort which provided the event venue and contributed other resources to the event, then this tourism business received a lot more managerial attention than other non-participating tourism businesses. Evidently, moral legitimacy needs to combine with resource power to result in enhanced stakeholder salience. Thus, the study adds further empirical evidence to the pragmatic view of and strategic approach to stakeholder theory (Parmer et al. 2010). Parent and Deephouse (2007) made a call for researchers to investigate whether different types of

legitimacy had a greater impact on salience. This study confirms that different types of legitimacy do have a differing impact on stakeholder salience.

In cases CE3, CE4 and SE5, stakeholders who were co-opted into the event's organising committee had structural legitimacy (a subtype within Suchman's (1995) moral legitimacy), and this relationship created continual legitimacy for the stakeholders, increasing their power and saliency in the event over time. These stakeholders were able to raise their concerns and influence the decisions and actions of the organising committee. Similarly, in cases ME1 and ME2, the MOU signed between the tourism board and the higher education institutions presented continual legitimacy to the student volunteers. Individual student volunteers who returned annually to contribute their services were perceived to be consistent and loyal to the event, and thus were given greater responsibilities. The increased dependence on student volunteers shaped volunteers' power and saliency in the events. Hence, continual pragmatic legitimacy strategically enhances stakeholder salience in events. This supports Karlsen and Nordström (2009), who found that over time, event stakeholders' roles changed or they took on 'additional stakeholderships', facilitating the sustainability of the festival. Apart from investigating the type of legitimacy, the study also further develops Suchman's (1995) concept of the episodic and continual dimensions of legitimacy when examining stakeholder salience. No previous empirical study has been done to investigate the effects on stakeholder salience of a temporal dimension of legitimacy. In her case study, Larson (2002) has described how the relationships between 'actors' and festivals were either long-term, sporadic or short-term. This study has provided empirical evidence to show that stakeholders who have a long-term relationship/continual legitimacy are perceived to be more salient than those who have been involved only episodically. This is a new finding and a new contribution to the event stakeholder literature.

### **6.2.2 Resource-based power**

Event organisations depend on stakeholders for various resources, thus giving those stakeholders power over the events. A closer look at event-stakeholder resource exchange relationships shows that event managers in the study did not treat all resource-contributing stakeholders alike. Stakeholder resource differences affect their power relations (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) and salience (Mitchell et al. 1997) in the eyes of event managers. This thesis found that the more it could be said that an event was highly dependent on a stakeholder for large, critical, non-substitutable or event-specific resources, the more powerful and salient managers then perceived that stakeholder to be. Funding was considered by most managers to be a significant contributor to either real or potential power. Etzioni (1964) and Mitchell et al.

(1997) suggested that power is exercised based on the type of resources a stakeholder has: coercive power, based on physical resources of force or restraint; utilitarian power, based on material or financial resources; and normative power, based on symbolic resources. Parent and Deephouse (2007) posit that stakeholders with utilitarian power are more salient than those with normative power. This study supported their study, showing that managers perceived stakeholders which contributed material or financial resources to events to be more salient, across all case studies. Coercive power was not found in Parent and Deephouse's (2007) study. In contrast, this study proposes that government potentially has coercive power in the event context, a notion which will be discussed further in the later subsection.

This study found that events' dependence on government grants, corporate sponsors and venue providers was relatively high and the organisational stakeholders controlling such resources consequently were highly powerful and salient in the eyes of the managers. In contrast, Getz and Andersson's (2010) study found that the perceived dependence on corporate sponsors in their sampled countries (Sweden, Norway, Scotland and Australia) was uniformly low, while dependence on governments and venues was moderately high. The present study proposes that tourism development in developing countries is largely government's responsibility and thus it is a normative expectation that large corporates should involve themselves in and/or sponsor government tourism events. This finding contributes to the event literature concerning the importance of resource-based power in creating event stakeholder salience, particularly when it comes to major financial assistance and the provision of ideal venues for events.

Findings from this thesis have been published previously in a paper (Tiew, Holmes and de Bussy 2015), which discusses stakeholder power in tourism events. As reported in this paper, variations in resources can result in differential stakeholder power and salience. In this study, it was observed that when a resource was individually-owned, small, and easily replaced, managers then perceived the stakeholders holding that resource to be relatively low in power, easily ignored and less salient. For example, the perceived power of audiences and vendors in cases ME1, ME2, CE3 and CE4 was relatively low, although entry ticket sales and stall rentals were a source of income to the events. This result contrasts with a survey on major festivals in Sweden and Canada done by Andersson and Getz (2008). Their study revealed that festivals were highly dependent on the audiences and vendors, as ticket and rent revenues were the major revenue sources for the festivals. Thus their research found that these stakeholders were very important. In this thesis, the events were mostly government-owned. They were not-for-profit oriented or not market-oriented, and so less dependent on direct revenue from audiences and vendors. Thus the event managers regarded individual audiences and vendors as stakeholders of lesser importance. Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) posit that the degree of

dependence and power difference is determined by the substitutability and criticality of the relevant resource to the final outcomes of the event. This study proposes that event stakeholder salience is directly related to the type and amount of resources a stakeholder possesses.

In this study, individual stakeholders such as the audiences, vendors, race participants, performers and volunteers, who were involved only once or occasionally in events, were perceived to have no real power to influence the event organisation, as their individual resource contributions to the event were insignificant. Tiew, Holmes and de Bussy (2015) categorised these groups as 'diffused' stakeholders, and suggested that as a group their combined power could increase their salience. This thesis extends this argument, suggesting that if diffused stakeholders are willing to commit their valued resources every year or if their involvement directly links to another critical resource, then their perceived utilitarian power and salience might be enhanced. For example, much of the managerial attention given to the foreign race participants in SE6 was due to the fact that the event depended on the foreign participants and the revenue they stimulated, to obtain cash sponsorship from the tourism board. Rowley (1997) has argued that organisations do not respond to each stakeholder group individually but instead address the simultaneous demands of multiple stakeholder groups.

### **6.2.3 Network power**

In terms of network power, it was noticed that most event stakeholders were diffused and had a less central position in the event network. Only the organisers, media and key players such as governments, venue providers, and some tourism businesses had a central position. Most of the stakeholders' interactions with one another were operationally- and *ad hoc*-based, and took place at the events. The study supports Hede and Stokes (2009) in their finding that event managers perceived themselves to be at the centre of the event and as having dyadic relationships with other stakeholders. Other stakeholders had a very limited set of embedded relationships with one another, across the event network. Similarly, Izzo et al. (2012) highlighted that festivals' core networks consisted of a few stakeholders with stronger ties, whereas the extended network was made up of a larger number of stakeholders with weaker ties.

However, this study noted that any networks which could help with international promotion of the events automatically gained managerial attention. Managers perceived foreign stakeholders such as foreign media, musicians and performers, and race participants as salient for helping to promote the events abroad. Through their individual networks in their home countries, foreign stakeholders were expected to provide word-of-mouth promotion and

generate additional media mileage for the events. However, the advance of online social media has shifted some of this social network power to the event organisers, and thus has reduced the events' publicity dependence on these foreign stakeholders and traditional media. Hence, as part of this same study, Tiew, Holmes and de Bussy's (2015) case study concluded that network power was a supplementary source of power in events, being vested mainly in the event managers, media and a few key players, such as governments, venue providers and tourism businesses. Previous studies have also found that network position is a partial indicator of perceived stakeholder salience (Cooper et al. 2009), and that social networks act as a complement to resource ownership in conferring and exerting power (Rowley 1997).

#### **6.2.4 Government primacy**

As discussed in the previous chapter, subsection 5.3.1, event managers consistently perceived government stakeholders to be highly powerful and salient for three reasons: their event leadership, their funding, and their regulative roles. Government stakeholders were different from all other stakeholders because they had a specific statutory role and also had formal authority vested in them. They had the coercive power to punish those who did not abide by the regulations and their resource allocation decisions affected the event organisation, thus dominating managers' attention. Most of the large corporations that contributed cash sponsorships or other critical resources to events in this research had done so primarily towards building or maintaining good government relations, rather than as a marketing investment, contrary to reports in prior studies (Anderson and Getz 2007; Prebensen 2010). In other words, corporate sponsorships were not targeted to help the event but rather to help the government. This is a novel finding in this study, reflecting the sociopolitical environment in Malaysia. Moreover, the mainstream media in Malaysia are mostly government-linked enterprises, hence the presence of a minister/politician at events was deemed essential to secure media coverage. Thus, government's power in events was multi-dimensional and prominent, encompassing all the three dimensions of Etzioni's (1964) power concepts – normative, utilitarian, and coercive. The results imply that the more types of power held by a stakeholder, the more salient the stakeholder.

This thesis has categorised government stakeholders into three groups – state tourism ministry, city/town government, and public authorities (e.g. police, health, immigration, customs, fire & rescue). It stresses the primacy of the state government/tourism ministry, while confirming the definitive stakeholder status of the town government in tourism events. Out of the six case studies, three events were initiated and owned by the state tourism ministry and its agencies. The other two events were owned by their respective town governments. All six events were

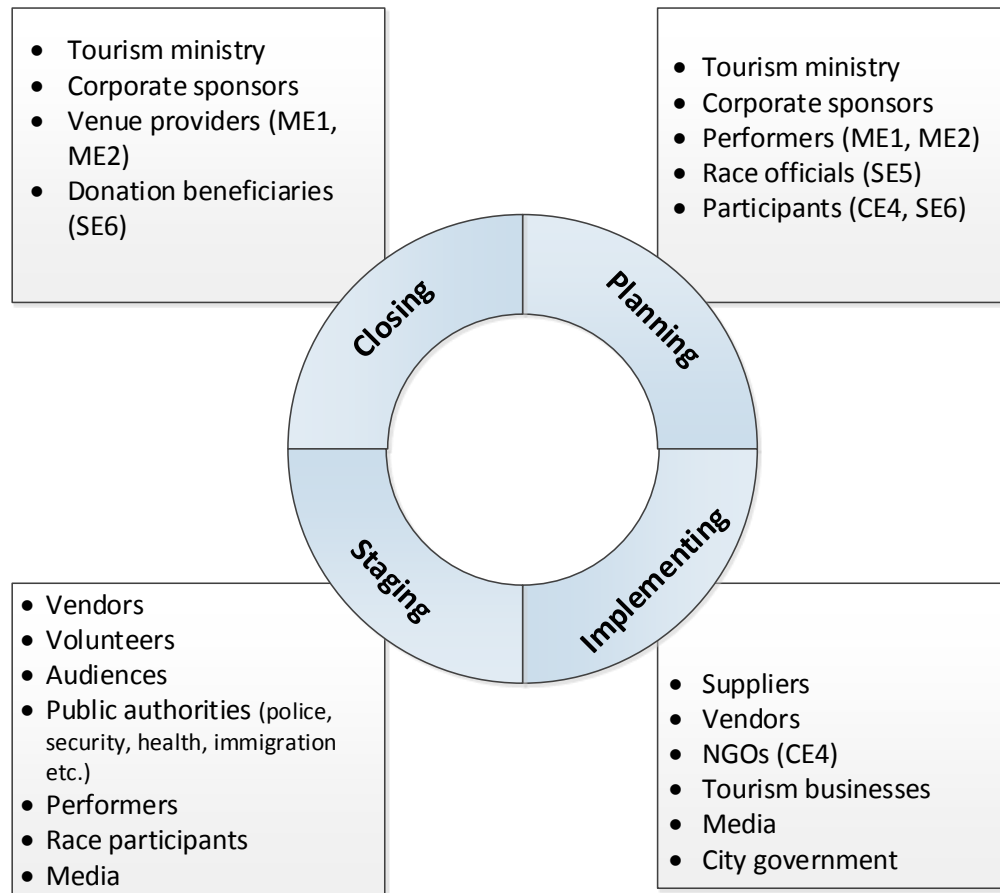
found to be dependent on the state tourism ministry for funding, event promotion and other assistance. Occasionally, these events also obtained some funding from the federal tourism ministry. The involvement of government in the not-for-profit event (SE6) was perceived to provide instant sociopolitical legitimacy to the event. In Malaysia, the event sector has been identified as a key driver for the growth of tourism in the country (PEMANDU 2010). The jurisdictional duty and responsibility for tourism development and promotion was found to be largely dependent on each state's government, as well as on the federal government, while the local municipality had the task of implementing programs locally (Jensen and Kara 2011). Therefore, it was not surprising that government stakeholders were highly salient in the events. In contrast, most empirical studies have established the important roles of city governments and their agencies in events, in terms of giving grants and regulatory approval (Andersson and Getz 2008; Getz and Andersson 2010; Presenza and Iocca 2012), and leading event bid projects (Hautbois, Parent and Seguin 2012; Xue and Mason 2011). Andersson and Getz (2008) found that funding from the central or provincial government was insignificant, but public money from local municipalities was important. These prior event studies were largely conducted in the western context; this study extends the research to a developing country setting.

### **6.2.5 Event life-cycle urgency**

In this thesis, it was discovered that event managers mostly saw urgency as referring to the urgency of organising and running the event, rather than the urgency of stakeholders' claims. No prior research has shown a similar approach to the urgency concept. What was important to the event managers in this study was to get all the various resources needed in time to organise an event, and it was normally the managers who sought out the stakeholders. Identification of salient stakeholders does not necessarily result in stakeholder prioritisation (Boesso and Kumar 2009; Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011). It appeared that in the event context, managers prioritised stakeholders according to the event life-cycle, as opposed to responding firstly to stakeholders' urgent claims, as had been found in prior studies (Agle, Mitchell and Sonnenfeld 1999; Neville, Bell and Whitwell 2011; Xue and Mason 2011). There is no prior research on stakeholder prioritisation according to events' life cycle, so this finding is a major contribution that this thesis has made to the event literature.

In Chapter 5, section 5.3.4 discussed stakeholder prioritisation across the four stages of a recurring event life-cycle – the planning, implementing, staging and closing stages (Allen et al. 2011). At each stage, different stakeholders were getting relatively more managerial attention than others. In other words, event stakeholders had time-based salience. For the first

time, this research identifies how stakeholder prioritisation differs over an event's life-cycle, influenced by event implementation and managerial priorities. Figure 6.1 below illustrates event stakeholder prioritisation as it evolves through the planning, implementing, staging and closing stages.



**Figure 6.1: Stakeholder Prioritisation across an Event Life Cycle**

In descriptive stakeholder theory, Jawahar and McLaughlin (2001) have linked organisational life-cycle theory to stakeholder management strategies. They argued that the needs of an organisation change over time and the relative importance of stakeholders will also change as the organisation evolves through the start-up, growth, maturity and decline stages. This study establishes that event stakeholder prioritisation is an annual cyclical process instead of a linear process, evolving through the planning, implementing, staging and closing stages, and is a repetitive process every year. It offers event literature a new understanding of event stakeholder salience in recurring events and a conceptual framework of stakeholder prioritisation by event managers across the four stages of the event life-cycle. This study adds the temporal dimension to the event stakeholder prioritisation concept, contrasting with the previous studies introducing primary and secondary (Reid and Arcodia 2002), core and

peripheral (Su, Mitchell and Sirgy 2007), and core and extended (Izzo et al. 2012) stakeholder concepts.

In addition, this study found that stakeholders' geographical location and their past event organising experience had an effect on when they received managerial attention in the event implementation process. To ensure their commitment to the event, distant stakeholders, located far away, usually required earlier managerial attention and action than those who were geographically 'proximate' or close. This finding is contrary to Driscoll and Starik's (2004) argument that the more proximate stakeholders were more salient to managers. However, the concept of proximity is important in that it identifies a key factor in making a stakeholder group more salient to event managers. Also, it was noted in this study that stakeholders who had been involved in the event every year had gained experience and knew their functions and tasks well, hence such stakeholders did not urgently need managerial attention, thus reducing their immediate salience.

#### **6.2.6 Summary**

The three attributes of power, legitimacy and urgency used to examine stakeholder salience have been supported in business organisation studies (Agle, Mitchell and Sonnenfeld 1999; Boesso and Kumar 2009; Gago and Antolin 2004). However, based on the above discussions, it is clear that when the three stakeholder salience attributes were extended into an event setting, finer distinctions in stakeholder attributes and other new insights were found. Different types of power and legitimacy have differing impacts on stakeholder salience. Event managers in this study were focused mainly on how and when to run the event. What was important to these managers was to obtain financial support, resources and facilities from various parties, in time to organise the events. Hence stakeholders whose resource-exchange relationships with the event had earned them the attribute of pragmatic legitimacy were important to the event. However, it seems that highly dependable event stakeholders with various large and critical resources were perceived to be more powerful, and that resource power alone could create stakeholder salience. The government stakeholders were perceived to be highly salient, with multi-dimensional power. The study inferred that event managers assigned higher salience to stakeholders who possessed power, as opposed to those who possessed legitimacy. This finding corroborates with Parent and Deephouse (2007), revealing that power is a better predictor of managerial salience than are legitimacy and urgency.

Malaysia being a country with high levels of power-distance (The Star Online 2014), people tend to *kowtow* to the governments and large corporations, as these institutions have large



resources and are thus very powerful. There is an expectation that event tourism development must be driven by the state governments and their agencies, with inputs from large corporations. This is unlike what happens in developed western countries, where not-for-profit organisations and private event companies have been found to be equally important in either initiating or running events or festivals (Andersson and Getz 2008). The present study concurs with Kler (2016) in the finding that state governments and their agencies, and corporate sponsors, have played a very important role in the success of events and tourism in Borneo.

This study found that event-stakeholder relationships were normally initiated by the event organiser and were also short-term and highly substitutable. So, the urgency of stakeholder claims was an element rarely found to exist in this study. It was the urgency of organising and running the event that mattered to managers. This new research has contributed the concept of event life-cycle urgency to event literature: that is, stakeholder prioritisation in events organisation varies and evolves through the stages of planning, implementing, staging and closing. This new concept better represents the stakeholder urgency and salience inherent in the event organisation context.

### **6.3 Research Question 2: What are the stakeholders' interests in the tourism events, and how do those interests diverge from or converge towards the interests of event organisers?**

The concept of event stakeholder interests has not been widely or explicitly studied (Moital, Jackson and Le Couillard 2013). Only limited information on event stakeholders' interests can be found within event impact studies or the body of literature on tourism stakeholders. Larson and Wikström (2001) have argued that event network relationships can be understood from a consensus versus conflict perspective. Moital, Jackson and Le Couillard (2013) offer an understanding of stakeholders' future interests in a sporting event. Within the body of event literature, only one conceptual paper by Hede (2008) has explicitly explored event stakeholders' interests within the three-pronged TBL concept, but no empirical studies were identified. Apart from economic, social and environmental interests, this research adds to the event literature on stakeholder interests in the cultural and political domains, and more importantly, examines how these interests converge toward or diverge from the organisers' interests.

### **6.3.1 Economic interest**

The findings showed that the state tourism ministry, through its agency the tourism board, had produced three events and funded all six, to harness the events' potential to stimulate tourism growth in the state. The ministry took the lead and was directly involved in the event organisation, to promote destination marketing and development, generate tourist visits and economic spin-off, as well as facilitate the conservation and promotion of local culture and tradition. To government, events may not necessarily generate direct profit, but they stimulate economic returns via tourism growth. Events were organised at the destination for all stakeholders' economic benefit. This confirms prior findings (Barker, Page and Meyer 2001; Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Prebensen 2010) that governments are most interested in the direct economic value of events, in terms of increased visitation, destination publicity, tourist receipts, new business and job creation. The events' increased economic value is a benefit that can be shared by many stakeholder groups simultaneously.

Many SME stakeholders supplied the events with resources with the aim of enhancing their product promotion and also increasing sales and profits. These stakeholders included vendors, service suppliers, in-kind sponsors/donors, and tourism businesses. Performers aimed for a performance fee, sales of music and increased profile. NGOs got involved for an improved image and fund-raising opportunities. What was new in these cases was the finding that individual volunteers had some personal economic interests entailed in their involvement in the events. It was found that some civil servants or corporation employees volunteered for the sake of acquiring personal work merits, as volunteer work was one of their key performance indicators (KPIs) at work. The economic impacts of events were widely discussed within event literature (e.g. Baptista-Alves, Campón-Cerro and Ferreira-Martins 2010; Ezeuduji 2015; Gratton, Dobson and Shibli 2000; Chirieleison and Montrone 2013). Hence, in this study, it came as no surprise to learn that economic interest was a significant motivation behind both governments' and stakeholders' involvement in events.

### **6.3.2 Sociocultural interest**

The two town governments in cases CE3 and CE4 organised free-entry outdoor community-based events mainly to promote the town, social integration and connectedness, and cultural conservation (CE3). The state tourism board organised ME2 to showcase and conserve indigenous music. In the case of SE6, the marathon race was organised by a running club and supported by the government to promote a healthy lifestyle and running activities in the local community. Therefore, government was making strategic use of events to achieve its

sociocultural goals, besides its destination tourism and economic objectives. The events were also avenues for new skills and knowledge development (Holmes and Smith 2009), and for local arts, crafts, and sports development. This supports the findings of Small (2008), who previously found that a community festival helped the community to grow and develop by providing it with skills development and job opportunities.

Owing to religious food restrictions and language differences, in CE3 the event's rhetoric of social integration among the three major ethnic communities in reality remained unrealised, as the three ethnic communities were found to be largely patronising their own separate pavilions at the event. Similarly, Richards (2007) has reported that the fact that various stakeholder groups may appear to happily co-exist at events does not necessarily lead to real social integration. He further suggested that social policy-makers had a more optimistic view of integration effects than the intended target groups in events, signifying a divergence of stakeholders' views and organisers' social interests.

In this study, for the local communities, audiences, volunteers and participants, the events provided fun, entertainment, food, leisure, friendship, learning and socialising opportunities. These social interests in events appeared to be focused mostly on personal benefit. Similarly, social media writers or bloggers participated to value-add their blogs and attract traffic to their sites. The case studies corroborated previous empirical studies finding that events offered a range of social experiences and benefits to stakeholders, and that socialising was a common motivator for attending an event (Buch et al. 2011; Jackson 2008; Laing and Mair 2015; Yolal et al. 2016).

Only a limited number of tourism event studies have sought to understand event stakeholders' cultural interests, except in the context of cultural events or festivals. This study has presented empirical evidence that tourism events have been used to conserve, develop and promote local culture and heritage, such as traditional music, food, arts and crafts. Events provided a platform to showcase local cultural products and talents. These cultural interests and goals were primarily confined to cultural tourists, tourism authorities, the venue provider (a cultural village in ME2), ethnic organisations and musicians, the craft council and some education institutions. Cultural interest is not apparent among business-oriented stakeholders such as sponsors, tourism businesses, service suppliers, or venue providers, nor among volunteers and audiences.

The cases showed that as the events grew in popularity, tourism and economic values tended to supersede sociocultural and environmental interests. For example, to attract larger audiences

to the music festivals (ME1, ME2), more international musicians were selected to perform, and local musicians were sidelined. To produce music events for mass tourist consumption and also relevant to the younger generation, the event's initial objective of promoting and developing indigenous music was gradually neglected, causing some tension among the tourism and cultural stakeholders. There was a clash of goals and values between those adopting a tourism approach and those adopting a cultural approach to organising the events. The difficult task of satisfying complex and multi-dimensional stakeholders' interests confronts all event organisers (Getz and Page 2016). Previous event studies (Alonso and Bressan 2013; Clarke and Jepson 2011; Crespi-Vallbona and Richards 2007; Lau and Li 2015) have also reported differences in sociocultural values among event stakeholders. The strength and deep involvement of cultural associations could effectively act as a counter-weight to commercial pressures and the impacts on cultural events caused by the growth of tourism and municipal entrepreneurialism (Crespi-Vallbona and Richards 2007).

### **6.3.3 Political interest**

This study found that governments, institutions and corporations were also making strategic use of events for political purposes. While state and town governments staged events for the economic and social benefit of local residents, they also did so indirectly to bolster their own constituency support. While large corporations and venue providers in the case studies perceived their annual cash sponsorships and resource contributions to the events as part of their CSR commitment in their region, they also saw these contributions as a way of showing their support for government. Most corporate sponsors did not seem to interfere with or exert their influence on event management, but rather maintained embedded relationships. However, such a resource exchange relationship with events can be perceived as largely politically motivated, and about enhanced corporate-government relationships. In contrast, much of the event literature (e.g. Andersson and Getz 2007; Getz and Page 2016; Hede 2008; Larson 2002) has reported that, in the western context, sponsors used events as marketing tools to promote and sell their products, and also for hospitality and business networking opportunities. This study suggests that in the East Malaysian context, some corporate sponsors may have perceived their economic interests in events as complementary to their social and political interests.

### **6.3.4 Environmental interest**

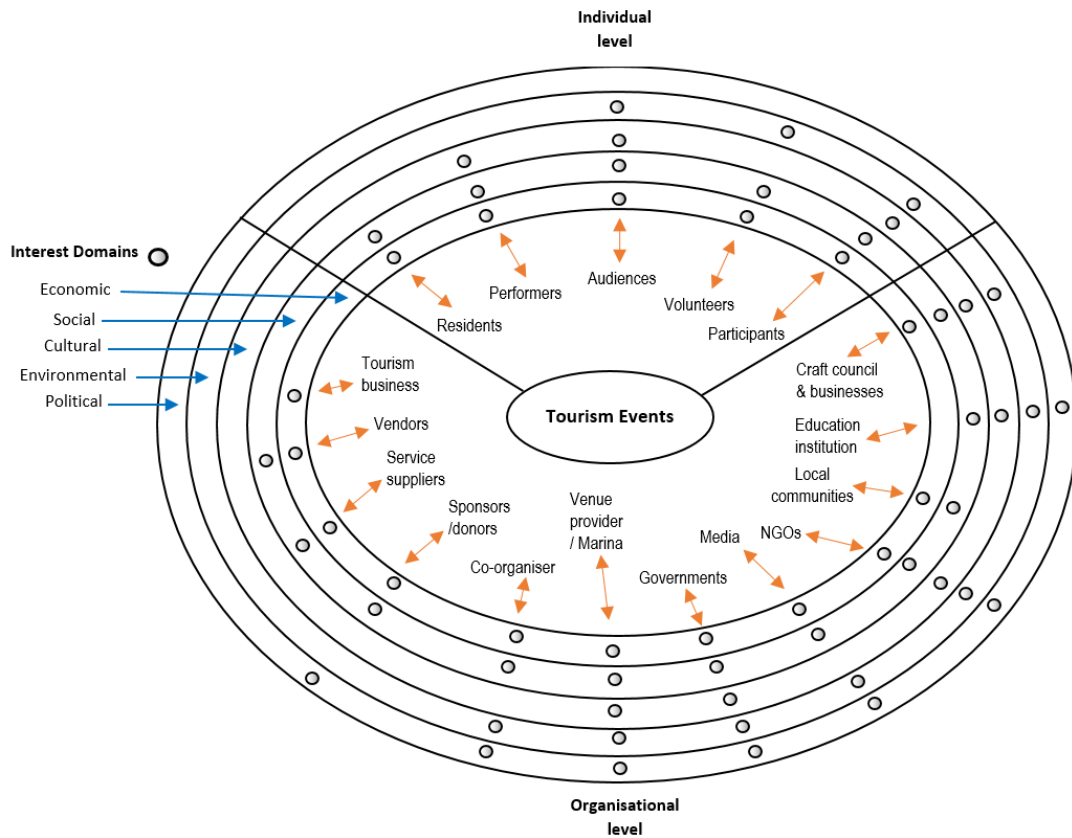
Hede (2008) conceptualised that fewer stakeholders appeared to be interested in the environmental aspects of events and the case studies in this thesis supported her position.

Across six cases, the stakeholders that showed concern for the environment were government, venue providers and marinas, education institutions (ME1, ME2), race participants and a small number of volunteers and audiences. Some foreign media which were invited to cover ME2 did show an interest in Borneo's rainforest issues. Perhaps this was because the music festival was staged within a rainforest setting and associated with a rainforest theme, hence it was most likely that foreign media would tend to relate the event to rainforest environmental issues.

In this study, it was found that when an event was dependent on the natural environmental conditions such as wind and water, the event participants (e.g. kite flyers, yacht racers) tended to have greater environmental awareness of and more concern about environmental issues. From the government perspective, government generally had an environmental policy, and as an event organiser, it therefore attempted to implement environmental protection measures in events. However, in practice there exists a gap between governments' expectations and event stakeholders' behaviour and perceptions. The organisers and venue providers were found to have no appropriately stringent environmental policy for the event. Some of them had adopted some waste management practices, such as prohibiting the use of polystyrene containers, and setting up an event waste-segregation system, but they failed to implement these ideas fully. Stakeholders such as food vendors, and also some event managers, generally perceived that adopting green practices such as the use of recyclable food packaging was too costly. Mair and Laing's (2012) study has also identified lack of finance, time and control over stakeholders' behaviour as some of the key barriers to festival greening. But to the contrary, a prior study conducted at Macau Food Festival by Wong, Wan and Qi (2014) suggested that a policy of engaging event attendees in green initiatives at the festival could benefit the event with sound financial contributions and competitive advantages. In addition, Mair and Laing (2013) have proposed that sustainable events could act to encourage sustainable behaviour.

### **6.3.5 Summary**

This study confirms the finding in prior event studies (Hede 2008; Larson 2002; Prebensen 2010) that stakeholders can have single or multiple interests in events. Some of these stakeholder interests were aligned with, while others differed from, the organisers' interests. The present study builds on Hede's (2008, 19) conceptual TBL stakeholder map presented in Chapter 2, Figure 2.8, and establishes a more complete and also empirical framework of stakeholder interests in events, across the economic, social, cultural, environmental and political dimensions. Adapted from Hede (2008, 19), Figure 6.2 below summarises event stakeholders' interests in this study across these five dimensions.



**Figure 6.2: Tourism Event Stakeholder Groups and Interests**

### **6.4 Research Question 3: What are the different influence strategies used by stakeholders to achieve their interests in events, and how do these strategies affect the events?**

As identified in the previous section, all stakeholder groups were concerned with economic (to varying degrees) and social interests. Some had interests falling into environmental, cultural or political categories. Salient stakeholders are able to influence event management to protect or enhance their interests (Frooman 1999; Rowley and Moldoveanu 2003) so it is important to understand how such stakeholders might exercise their influence in events. Frooman (1999) offered a model of stakeholder influence strategy based on resource relationships between the firm and its stakeholders (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). A literature review in the field of event studies found that only one empirical study (Heffernan and O'Brien 2010) had applied Frooman's (1999) framework, suggesting that the literature on event stakeholders' influence strategies is limited. This study builds on Frooman's (1999) stakeholder influence strategy framework, examining the strategic behaviour of event stakeholders.

Frooman (1999) conceptualised four resource relationships between firms and their stakeholders – high interdependence, low interdependence, stakeholder power, and firms’ power relationships. These four resource relationships proposed by Frooman were not visible in this study. In contrast, it was discovered that the resource-dependence relationships between events and stakeholders could largely be categorised into just two groups – event-dependent stakeholders, and event non-dependent stakeholders. Interviewed stakeholders in all cases perceived that they were not overly dependent on events because of the events’ short duration, and they mostly denied using any formal strategy to achieve their interests. Perhaps because they are operating in a high-context and high power-distance society like Malaysia, these particular stakeholders may tend to be subtler when applying their chosen influence strategy to their collaborations with politicians and governments in the organisation of events. The literature suggests that stakeholders’ influence strategies are highly context-specific (Freeman 1984), and resources, industry structure and the sociopolitical setting are among the key determinants (Post, Preston and Sachs 2002). The following sections will discuss the stakeholder strategies in this study based on the two identified patterns of resource-dependence relationship. Table 6.1 below displays the event stakeholders and their influence strategies as found in this research.

**Table 6.1: Event Stakeholders and Influence Strategies — based on resource relationships**

Resource relationships		
	<i>Event-dependent stakeholders</i>	<i>Event non-dependent stakeholders</i>
Stakeholder groups and influence strategies	<p><b>1. Direct Collaboration</b> (e.g. tourism &amp; craft businesses; venue providers; marinas; city governments)</p> <p><b>2. Indirect Collaboration</b> (e.g. ethnic organisations; kite flyer club)</p> <p><b>3. Trust Building</b> (e.g. volunteers; bloggers; venue providers; NGOs)</p> <p><b>4. Free-riding</b> (e.g. tourism businesses and other businesses)</p>	<p><b>1. Cooperation and Support</b> (e.g. corporate sponsors; public service authorities; media; suppliers; performers; vendors; participants; audiences; local residents &amp; businesses)</p> <p><b>2. Withdrawal</b> (e.g. sponsors; suppliers; vendors)</p>

#### 6.4.1 Influence strategies: Event-dependent stakeholders

As discussed in the previous Chapter 5, subsection 5.5.1, stakeholders such as the tourism and craft businesses, venue providers (in ME1 and ME2), marinas (in SE5), city governments,

ethnic organisations (CE3), and the kite-flyer club (CE4), were all perceived to have an interdependence relationship with the events. Event organisers were dependent on these organisational stakeholders to provide critical resources to their events, or various services to other stakeholders such as visitors and audiences. Stakeholders were dependent on events to advance their various business or organisational interests. This group of stakeholders generally chose to be collaborative in maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship with the event. Prior event studies (Alonso 2014; Capriello and Rotherham 2011; Duarte Alonso 2016; Long 2000; Yaghmour and Scott 2009; Ziakas and Costa 2010) have examined the collaborative effort of stakeholders and have promoted collaboration as the way to go in achieving event success. Similarly, tourism literature has claimed that collaboration among stakeholders is a key to ensuring a destination's development (Jamal and Getz 1995), competitiveness (Volgger and Pechlaner 2014), and success (Palmer and Bejou 1995; Sheehan, Ritchie and Hudson 2007).

In choosing their collaboration strategy, some stakeholders selected a direct path and others preferred an indirect one. Frooman's (1999) resource usage and withholding strategies framework noted that a stakeholder could take a direct or indirect pathway to exert influence on a firm. In this research, stakeholders' direct collaboration strategies were evident in their annual involvement, commitment and contribution of critical resources to individual events, despite some differing interests. For example, in ME2, the cultural village, a government-linked tourism enterprise which had an interdependent relationship with the music festival, failed in its attempt to increase its rental income. Yet, the cultural village had to compromise and upgrade its infrastructure and facilities to meet the growing needs of the festival. As the home venue of the festival, the cultural village needed to leverage the festival to market itself nationally and internationally.

Stakeholders' indirect collaboration strategies were applied when stakeholders supplied resources to events indirectly through an ally-network of stakeholders. Individually, a stakeholder might be insignificant. To increase its influence, it is necessary for a stakeholder to collaborate with or mobilise other stakeholders in joint action. This strategy is similar to Larson's (2002) proposed coalition-building strategy, where a stakeholder tries to strengthen its power position by finding powerful partners in the event. As previously discussed in Chapter 5, NGOs such as the ethnic associations in CE3 and the kite-flyer club in CE4 had deployed and leveraged other stakeholders' resources in their networks to produce successful events and satisfy their interests, as well as for the collective good. Frooman and Murrell (2005) proposed that stakeholder influence strategies were structurally and demographically determined. They suggested that stakeholder demographic variables appeared to be a determinant of the choice of strategy. Stakeholders which are small, with limited resources,



may need to choose an indirect strategy. This study adds fresh evidence to Frooman and Murrell (2005) and to the events literature overall, showing that in the collaboration process, stakeholders can strategise to take a direct or indirect path, depending on how well resourced the stakeholder is.

Simultaneously, it was noticed that, while embracing the direct or indirect collaboration strategy, some event stakeholders also used a trust building strategy to ensure their participation in the event long-term or to increase their benefits. Through delivering a high standard of work and demonstrating commitment, individual stakeholders such as volunteers and freelance bloggers earned the trust of the event managers and remained in the events. A long-term working relationship with the tourism board allowed the venue provider in ME1 to increase its monopoly in food and beverage sales. This finding appears to be consistent with Larson and Wikstrom's (2001) report that trust among stakeholders arises from their knowledge of each other's competencies and background, and that long-term relationships increase the level of trust. It corroborates with Larson's (2002) finding that stakeholders used a trust building strategy to strengthen their power position in a festival. It also confirms that stakeholders may use multiple strategies simultaneously (Hendry 2005).

#### **6.4.2 Influence strategies: Event non-dependent stakeholders**

Stakeholders who were not dependent on events were those entities or people who seemed to have less or no direct business interest in the events and so were able to walk away from the event with little or no impact to their businesses or lives. Table 6.1 above has listed examples of this group of stakeholders. The study finds that this group was largely cooperative and willing to support the event. Generally, this group readily complied with the organisers' requests and repeatedly responded to the call for tender or participation. For example, large corporate sponsors who were in a position of power had chosen not to exert their influence and continuously supplied resources to sustain the event production year after year. Perhaps it is due to the coercive or political power of government that these corporate sponsors have compromised and remained in the events. Nonetheless, their cooperation and compromise were positive in nature, as they brought benefits to the events and to other stakeholders.

Based on the above findings, this study does not support Frooman's (1999) stakeholder influence typology. Frooman proposed that stakeholders who are not dependent on the firm will withhold, or coerce by withdrawing their resources. Such withholding strategies are negative in nature and would result in a win-lose situation. Also, Frooman and Murrell (2005) suggested that the structure of a stakeholder-firm relationship may play a part in determining

how a stakeholder chooses to influence a firm. Specifically, if the stakeholder is not dependent on the firm, a coercive/withdrawal strategy is recommended; if the stakeholder is dependent on the firm, a compromise/usage strategy is recommended. This study did not support Frooman and Murrell's (2005) recommendations, but supported other empirical studies (Hendry 2005; Sharma and Henriques 2005; Tsai et al. 2005) which had found that stakeholders' choice of influence strategy based on the relationship setting was not always absolute or predictable. Many other situational factors in the relationships could influence stakeholders' choice of strategies. In this study, perhaps it was political pressure, or social norms and expectations, which prevented corporate sponsors and other salient stakeholders from using a negative strategy. On the other hand, it may have been because these salient stakeholders shared the event goals that they remained in the events.

Nevertheless, in this research, some stakeholder withdrawal strategies were detected. For example, the two hotels in SE6 decided to stop cash sponsorships after they failed to realise a return on their marketing investment and after their CSR focus changed. Some local businesses or vendors either developed a different agenda or felt that their direct involvement was no longer producing fruitful relationships. Eventually, these stakeholders chose to loosely benefit from the events, but stayed at their usual business premises to do so. Larson (2002) categorised these actors as 'free-riders', since they did not have a relationship with the event but acted outside the event and still profited from it. In fact, this approach can be understood as another strategy, employed by businesses preferring to be only loosely associated with but still benefiting from the event.

### **6.4.3 Summary**

Despite the evidence of withdrawal or free-riding strategies, overall in this study, event stakeholder influence strategies were largely positive in nature. Different stakeholders collaborated and cooperated with the organisers/governments in organising events, to bring about common good for the community as well as to enhance their own interests. Salient stakeholders such as the governments, venue providers, corporate sponsors, volunteers and NGOs continuously supplied the resources needed to sustain the event production. Karlsen and Nordström (2009, 141) proposed that the most successful festival management strategies are those of seeking cooperation, and operating in 'give and take' mode, thereby acting in ways that are mutually beneficial for all parties involved in a long-term commitment. The six events in this study were already long established. The youngest event (SE6) had been established for nine years and the oldest for 18 years (ME2). Stakeholders' collaboration, cooperation and support had facilitated the success and survival of the events. To a large

extent, this study supports prior studies finding that stakeholder relationships in events were universally positive and collaborative in nature (Yaghmour and Scott 2009) and that stakeholders in events networks appeared to have high levels of trust as well as positive attitudes toward collaboration (Ziakas and Costa 2010).

## **6.5 Chapter Summary**

Building upon prior knowledge, this research highlights the finding that event stakeholder salience is impermanent, but varied across an event's life-cycle, and shaped by different types of power and legitimacy. Due to the events' resource-dependence nature, stakeholders possessing resource power are perceived to have higher salience than those who possess legitimacy. Conclusions about event life-cycle urgency in this research provide new knowledge about how stakeholder prioritisation evolves through the stages of an event life-cycle. The study has also advanced the existing literature on event stakeholder interests in various domains, and their influence strategies. Event-stakeholder relationships are largely perceived to be positive in nature, as stakeholders appeared to be collaborative, cooperative and supportive. The next chapter will present the conclusions made by this study and emphasise the thesis' contribution to theory, knowledge and practice.

# CHAPTER 7

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Chapter Overview

The previous Chapter 6 has discussed this study's findings and compared them with the literature to demonstrate the novel contributions that the study has made. This final chapter presents the thesis' contributions and its conclusions. The chapter begins with a summary of the study, then highlights the theoretical and methodological contributions the study has made to the literature. Next, the implications for managerial practice and the limitations of the study will be explored, as well as recommendations made for future research. The summary in the last section concludes this thesis.

### 7.2 Summary of Study

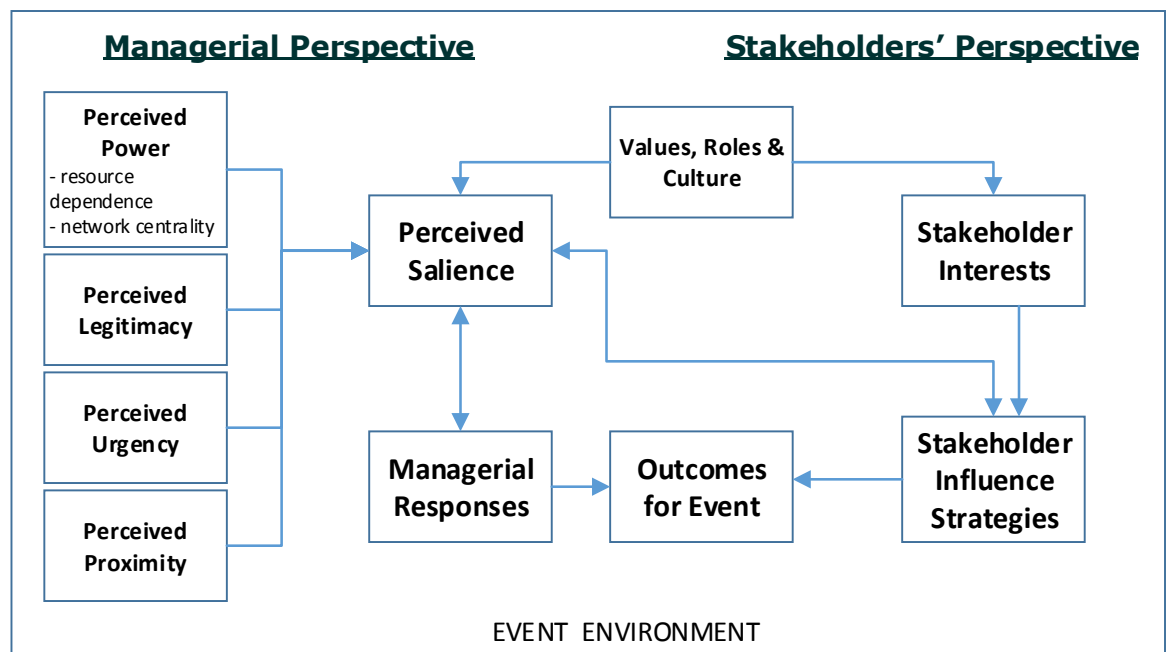
Since the 1990s, the increase in the number of countries embracing events as their tourism policy or strategy, and the increased interest in event studies (Kim, Boo and Kim 2013) have been parallel trends. An event can affect and be affected by the various entities at the destination. These various entities involved in the event, playing different roles and participating for different reasons, are the event stakeholders (Todd, Leask and Ensor 2017). Each of these stakeholders has different interests (or goals) in its resource exchange relationship with the event. With a diverse range of stakeholders involved, event organisers find it difficult to distinguish among and manage these stakeholders (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Hautbois, Parent and Séguin 2012). The thesis has reviewed the event and festival literature and has revealed the lack of theoretical and empirical research on event stakeholders, particularly in terms of the issues of identifying and prioritising event stakeholders, and understanding stakeholders' interests and influence strategies in the tourism event context. Although the stakeholder concept has been widely researched in organisational and firm studies, there is still a paucity of stakeholder research in the event context. Moreover, mainstream event studies have been conducted mostly in the western context (Getz 2010). Thus this study set out to conduct its research in an eastern context and in a developing country, Malaysia, to find out whether any differences in event-stakeholder relationships emerged from this setting. East Malaysia, Borneo, has a particular ethnic, linguistic and sociopolitical background, hence the region presented a unique and distinctive case for exploration. The first chapter laid the foundation for this study and presented an overview of the research background. The following three research questions were developed to guide the study and address the research gaps.

RQ1. How do managers identify and prioritise salient stakeholders of tourism events in Borneo?

RQ2. What are the stakeholders' interests in the tourism events, and how do those interests diverge from or converge towards the interests of event organisers?

RQ3. What are the different influence strategies used by stakeholders to achieve their interests in events, and how do these strategies affect the events?

The theory of stakeholder identification and salience (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997) together with Frooman's stakeholder influence typology (1999) formed the primary theoretical foundation of this study. Mitchell et al.'s (1997) theory explained who and what really counts based on the managerial perception of the three stakeholder attributes: (1) the stakeholder's *power* to influence the organisation, (2) the *legitimacy* of the stakeholder's relationship with the organisation, and (3) the *urgency* of the stakeholder's claim on the organisation. The concepts of resource dependence (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) and network centrality (Rowley 1997) were integrated to examine the stakeholder power attribute in this study. Driscoll and Starik's (2004) *proximity* attribute (refer subsection 2.4.5.1) was added to Mitchell et al.'s (1997) stakeholder salience framework, a concept which has not previously been applied to any event stakeholder studies. Figure 7.1 illustrates the conceptual framework for this thesis, which brings together key theories in stakeholder salience for the first time.



**Figure 7.1: Conceptual Framework for Stakeholder Salience and Influence in Event Tourism**

Due to the exploratory nature of the research questions and of the study itself, a qualitative-inductive case study approach was adopted, situated within an interpretivist paradigm. Six case studies were selected, comprising two musical events (ME1 and ME2), two community events (CE3 and CE4), and two sports events (SE5 and SE6). A total of 61 interviews were conducted with event managers and stakeholders. These primary interview data were triangulated with other secondary data from multiple sources, to enhance the quality of the case study.

Of the six cases, three events (ME1, ME2 and SE5) were found to be initiated and owned by the State Government, under its Tourism Ministry. These three events primarily aimed to encourage tourist arrivals and promote the relevant destinations. Meanwhile, the two community events (CE4 and CE5) were organised by their respective town governments, and aimed to promote the town and social integration, and to act as a catalyst for tourism and business activities. The last case (SE6) was selected to provide an alternative perspective, as it was a privately-owned marathon race which had generated tourist visits to the destination, hence it was supported by the tourism authorities and the city government. Chapter 4 has described each of the six individual case study findings, and Chapter 5 reports the cross-case analysis findings.

The case studies found that event stakeholder salience varied significantly according to different types of power and legitimacy, and also event implementation priorities. This study revealed that event managers were focused on their concerns of how and when to run the event. What was important to these managers was to obtain financial support, resources and facilities from various parties in time to organise the events. So stakeholders who had resource-exchange relationships with the event were perceived to be important to the event and to possess pragmatic legitimacy. However, it emerged that highly dependable event stakeholders with various large, non-substitutable and critical resources were perceived to be more powerful, and that resource power alone could create stakeholder salience. Hence resource power was perceived to be the most important factor in creating stakeholder salience. Event-stakeholder relationships were normally initiated by the event organiser, and were both short-term and highly substitutable. Episodic and moral legitimacy in the events could easily be ignored, and could not of themselves improve event stakeholder salience. Governments were found to be the most salient stakeholders across cases, given their political and economic power. It was also discovered that urgency of stakeholder claims is a concept that rarely exists in a tourism event context because it is the urgency of organising the event that matters most to event managers. Stakeholder prioritisation in event organisation was found to be varying and evolving through the stages of event planning, implementing, staging and closing.

Event organisers and stakeholders have single or multiple interests in tourism events. Some of these interests were aligned with, while others differed from, the organisers' interests. Economic and social interests were significant motivations behind governments' and stakeholders' involvement in events. Governments and corporations also strategically used events to achieve their sociocultural and political goals. Few stakeholders appeared to be interested in the environmental aspects of events. In some cases, tourism and economic value tended to supersede sociocultural and environmental interests, causing a divergence in interests or goals among stakeholders and resulting in stakeholders taking action to influence the events.

Across cases, event stakeholders were perceived to be passive and not very influential, with a tendency merely to respond to the organisers' calls. Some were not cognisant of their own stake in events. Based on event-stakeholder resource dependence relationships, event stakeholder influence strategies were found to be largely positive in nature. Different stakeholders collaborated and cooperated with the organisers/governments in organising events, to bring about a common good for the community as well as to enhance their own interests. Stakeholders' continual support had facilitated the success and survival of the tourism events. Nonetheless, some stakeholder withdrawal strategies were detected in the study. The following section will further illustrate the contribution this thesis makes to the body of stakeholder theory and to event literature in the areas of stakeholder salience, interests and influence strategies.

### **7.3 The Theoretical Contributions of the Thesis**

This thesis contributes to both the body of stakeholder identification and salience literature (Mitchell et al. 1997) and to the body of event stakeholder literature, in three primary ways. First, it provides new insights into the four stakeholder attributes and has resulted in the conceptualisation of a new '*event life-cycle urgency*' concept. Second, it establishes an empirical and more complete framework of stakeholder interests in tourism events across the economic, social, cultural, environmental and political dimensions, which no prior study has done. Third, it sheds new light regarding event stakeholder influence strategies, which were found to be largely positive in nature. Each of these contributions will be further elaborated in the following subsections.

### 7.3.1 Event stakeholder salience

The study provides new insights into the four stakeholder attributes, namely power, legitimacy, urgency and proximity, as to how they create perceived stakeholder salience. In terms of power, the study shows that event stakeholder salience is shaped by different types and amounts of power. Due to the event's resource-dependent nature, stakeholders with large, critical, non-substitutable or event-specific resources were perceived to be powerful, and it was noted that *resource power* alone could create stakeholder salience. An obvious example in this study was event venue providers. The beach resort (ME1), cultural village (ME2), and marina (SE5) venues had provided ideal, non-replaceable, and critical physical resources required by the events since the events' inception. Without these venues, there might not be an event, as the organisers were unable to find suitable alternative venues for their events. In addition, these venue providers had overlapping roles in their respective events, for example as sponsors, service suppliers, and food and beverage vendors. Such a high dependence on venue providers gave the providers high bargaining power and salience.

In resource-based power, the amount, size and type of resource-holding does matter in creating event stakeholder salience. Most managers consider funding to be a significant contributor to either real or potential power. In some cases (e.g. ME1 and ME2) the event managers explicitly equated power to money. This study found that the dependence on government grants and corporate sponsorship was high, thus these organisational stakeholders were highly powerful and salient in the eyes of the managers. In contrast, when a stakeholder's financial resource was individually-owned, small and easily replaced, then managers perceived such stakeholders to be relatively low in power, easily ignored and less salient. For example, the perceived power of audiences and vendors in cases ME1, ME2, CE3 and CE4, was relatively low, although entry ticket sales and stall rentals were a source of income to events. This finding is contrary to previous research done in the western context (Andersson and Getz 2008; Getz and Andersson 2010) where festivals were largely dependent on paying customers. In this thesis, the events were mostly government-owned. They were not-for-profit-oriented or not customer-oriented, and were less dependent on direct revenue from audiences and vendors. Thus, managers regarded individual audiences and vendors as stakeholders of lesser importance.

In this study, government stakeholders were consistently perceived by the event managers to be highly powerful and salient for three reasons: their event leadership, funding, and regulative roles. Tourism development in Malaysia is largely government's responsibility. Government regulates the industry and allocates resources. Government has the coercive power to punish



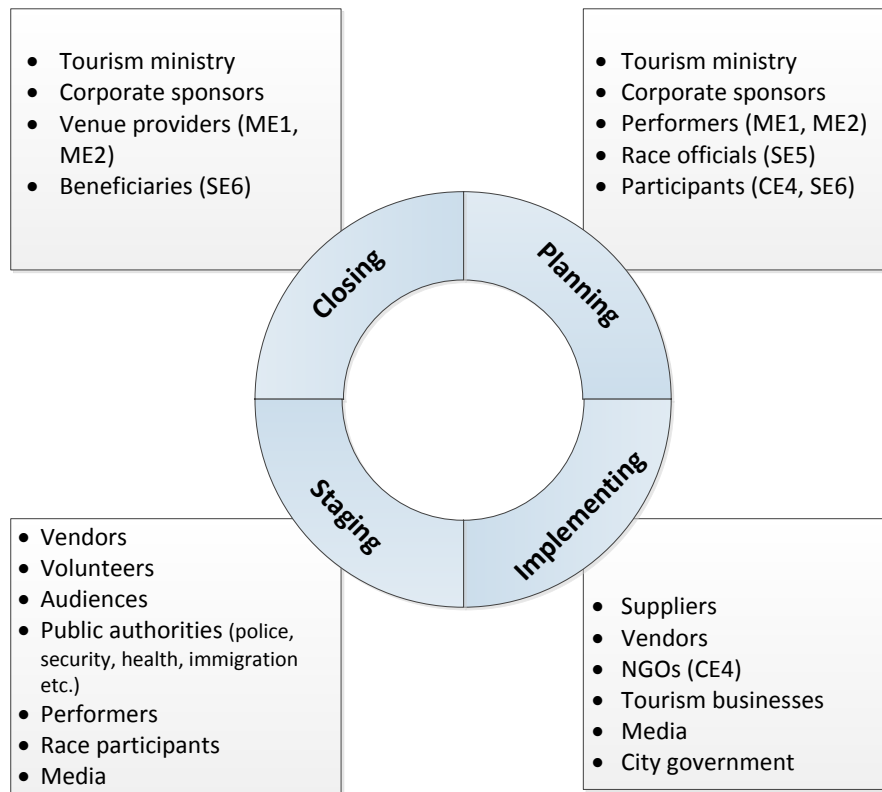
those who do not abide by the industry regulations. In other words, in this study, government's power in events was multi-dimensional and prominent, encompassing all the three dimensions of Etzioni's (1964) power concept – normative, utilitarian, and coercive – thus dominating managers' attention. This result implies that the more types of power a stakeholder has, the more salient it becomes. This thesis has contributed to the event literature (for example Andersson and Getz 2008; Parent and Deephouse 2007; Xue and Mason 2011) on the importance of resource-based power, particularly in terms of major financial assistance and the provision of ideal venues, in creating event stakeholder salience.

The study found that *network power* was considered a supplementary source of power that also facilitated marketing communications for events. Event managers perceived themselves to be at the centre of the event, operating dyadic relationships with other stakeholders. Event stakeholders had very limited sets of embedded relationships with one another across the event network. Most of the stakeholders' interactions with one another were operationally- and *ad hoc*-based and took place largely at the events. Thus, event stakeholders' network power was perceived to be low, except for the media and key players. The study revealed that any networks that could help in promoting the events internationally gained managerial attention. Managers perceived foreign stakeholders such as foreign media, musicians and performers, and race participants to be salient for their help in promoting the events abroad and adding media mileage to the events. Media familiarisation trips were organised to get international media coverage. However, it was found that advances in communications technology and the widespread use of social media had reduced the events' dependence on mass media, and event managers had thus gained more control over their communications with stakeholders, especially with potential visitors and audiences.

In terms of legitimacy, the evidence has showed that stakeholder salience is also shaped by different types of legitimacy (Suchman 1995). This study posits that *pragmatic legitimacy* has a greater impact on stakeholder salience than *moral legitimacy*, and *continual pragmatic legitimacy* strategically enhances stakeholder salience in events. Pragmatic legitimacy is centred on resource exchange relationships, while moral legitimacy reflects 'doing the right thing' within a social system. As event production is resource-intensive, stakeholders such as sponsors, venue providers, volunteers, and participants who contributed resources were perceived to be more salient than those who received monetary benefits, such as the local tourism businesses, vendors or donation beneficiaries. In other words, a legitimate stakeholder who was affected by the event was perceived as relatively less salient than a stakeholder who could affect the event, this observation thus exhibiting the moral versus strategic stakeholder dichotomy.

Apart from looking at the types of legitimacy, the study has also examined the effect of the *temporal dimension* (continual versus episodic) of *legitimacy* on stakeholder salience, which no previous empirical study has done. Evidently, stakeholders such as volunteers, vendors or service suppliers who had been directly involved in the event annually, had continual pragmatic legitimacy, and were perceived to be more salient than those who were involved episodically. Long-term relationships and a commitment to the event strengthened the stakeholder's perceived salience. This is a new finding and a new contribution to the event stakeholder literature. The study has added empirical evidence to the pragmatic view of and strategic approach to stakeholder theory (Parmer et al. 2010), and has further developed Suchman's (1995) concept of the episodic and continual dimensions of legitimacy.

This study has made a major and novel contribution to the urgency concept in event literature. The research discovered that event managers mostly viewed urgency as a dimension of organising and running the event, rather than as the urgency of stakeholders' claims, as has been proposed in stakeholder salience theory until now. It was usually the event managers who sought out the stakeholders to get all the various resources needed in time to organise an event. Event managers have their event preparation and procurement timelines to follow and need to deal with different stakeholders across the stages of the event life-cycle. Hence, this study has proposed and added a new concept of '*event life-cycle urgency*' to the event literature: that is, stakeholder prioritisation in event organisation varies and evolves through the stages of planning, implementing, staging and closing, as shown in Figure 7.2 below.



**Figure 7.2: Stakeholder Prioritisation across the Event Life Cycle**

This study found that event managers prioritised stakeholders according to the event life-cycle, as opposed to responding to stakeholders’ urgent claims, as has been found in prior studies. At each stage of this life cycle, different stakeholders received relatively more managerial attention than others. In the early planning phase, stakeholders such as the tourism ministry, corporate sponsors, performers, participants, and race officials, who could potentially satisfy or affect an event’s critical organisational needs, design and program, were likely to get more managerial attention. For example, managers at this stage would be communicating with the tourism ministry and corporate sponsors to determine an event’s forthcoming funding and budgeting. At the implementation stage, the event plan was applied, entailing actions such as calling for tenders, confirming vendors and suppliers, and carrying out the promotional schedule. In this second phase, stakeholders who received priority included service suppliers, vendors, media, tourism businesses and city governments.

Stakeholders such as the vendors, volunteers, audiences, public authorities, race participants, performers and media who were required for events’ operational needs, were at their most salient at the final stages of preparation and also during the actual staging of events. For example, managers had to conduct pre-event briefings for vendors, volunteers, race participants and media, and the performers needed final rehearsal sessions. Lastly, in the

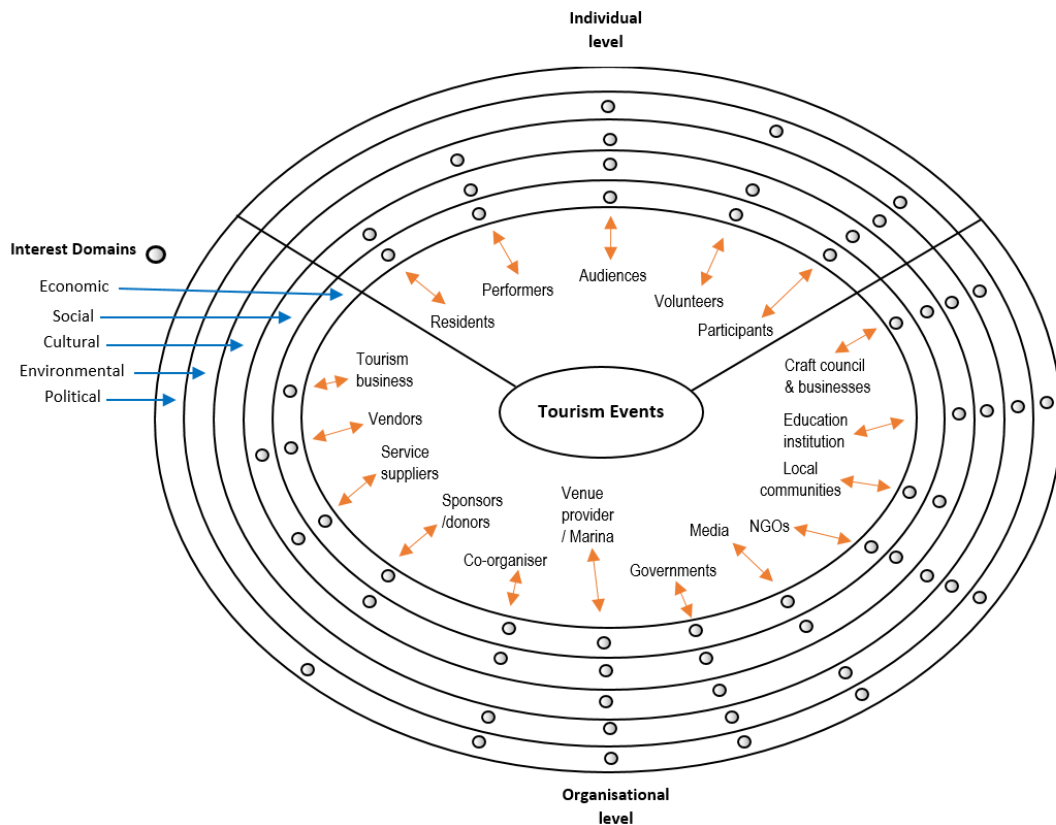
events' closing stages which consisted of on-site shutdown and management closure, stakeholders that received managerial attention included venue providers, the tourism ministry and corporate sponsors. These stakeholders were the most likely to receive a post-event report as their input was critical and urgent to the next event cycle.

This thesis offers event literature a new understanding of stakeholder salience in recurring events according to the event life-cycle, as influenced by event implementation and managerial priorities. In other words, event stakeholder salience is impermanent, and time-based. Instead of a linear process, event stakeholder prioritisation is an annual cyclical process in a recurring event. This temporal dimension of the stakeholder prioritisation concept better represents the stakeholder urgency and salience which are inherent in the event organisation context. There is no prior research on stakeholder prioritisation according to event life-cycle, so this is a major contribution that this thesis has made to the event literature.

In terms of the proximity attribute, the study found that stakeholders' geographical location had an impact on when they received managerial attention in the implementation process. Due to logistical complexity and challenges, and to ensure their commitment to the event, stakeholders who were distantly located usually required earlier managerial attention and action than those who were geographically proximate. This temporal advantage held by the less proximate stakeholders did seem to afford them greater salience with managers, even though only temporarily. This is contrary to Driscoll and Starik's (2004) argument that the more proximate stakeholders are more salient to managers. Proximity was found to be an important element in that it identified when event managers perceived a stakeholder group as being more salient to their event procurement process. The procurement process includes identifying event's needs, calling for tender and securing all the required supplies of people, equipment and facilities to stage the event.

### **7.3.2 Event stakeholder interests**

The next contribution that this thesis has made to the body of event literature is related to the understanding of event stakeholder interests, on which topic there has been limited research. The study establishes an empirical and a more complete framework of stakeholder interests in tourism events across the economic, social, cultural, environmental and political dimensions, which no prior study has done. This thesis extends Hede's (2008, 19) conceptual TBL stakeholder map by applying it to different types of events, and supports it for the first time with empirical data. Figure 7.3 below summarises event stakeholders' interests in this study, across the five dimensions.



**Figure 7.3: Tourism Event Stakeholder Groups and Interests**

This study confirms the finding in prior event studies (Getz, Andersson and Larson 2007; Karlsen and Nordström 2009; Todd, Leask and Ensor 2017; Yolal et al. 2016) that stakeholders could have a single or multiple dimensions of interests in events. Some of these interests were aligned with, while others differed from, the organisers' interests. Socioeconomic interest was a common motivator for stakeholders' involvement in events and an area of convergence in the event-stakeholder goals. In this study, governments were found to be strategically using events to achieve their tourism, economic, sociocultural and political goals. Governments took the lead and were directly involved in event organisation for the purposes of destination marketing and development, generating tourist visits and economic spin-off, and developing local skills and knowledge, as well as facilitating the conservation and promotion of local culture and tradition. To government, the events' immediate profit-making objectives or capabilities were secondary, whereas longer term tourism outcomes and local development were the leading purposes for the events. Events bring economic benefits to many stakeholder groups simultaneously and offer a range of social experiences and benefits to stakeholders.

Some divergence of interests and goals among the event organisers and stakeholders were found in the cultural and environmental dimensions, and fewer stakeholders had interests in

these two dimensions. The cases showed that as events grew in popularity, tourism and economic values tended to supersede cultural and environmental interests. For example, the organiser of a music festival (ME2) capitalised on the event to increase its tourism/economic impact, but neglected the opportunities and interests of the stakeholders who championed Borneo music and culture in that event, causing some tension between the tourism and cultural stakeholders. This represented a clash of goals and values between those with a tourism approach and those with a cultural approach to organising the event. Unsurprisingly, economic and political interests often surpass other dimensions of interest in tourism events. In most cases, resource exchange relationships between events and large corporations were perceived to be largely politically motivated and subsequently leveraged for building government relationships or winning constituency support. This study contributes evidence of the political nature of stakeholder relationships in events due to multi-dimensional stakeholders' interests (Clarke and Jepson 2011; Larson 2002), and shows that event stakeholders act to look after their own interests.

### **7.3.3 Event stakeholder influence strategies**

Finally, the thesis also sheds new light regarding event stakeholder influence strategies, based on event stakeholder resource dependence relationships. As previously discussed in Chapter 6, section 6.4, Frooman's (1999) proposed four resource relationships – high interdependence, low interdependence, stakeholder power and firm power relationships – were not all visible in this study. However, it was discovered that the resource dependence relationships between events and stakeholders could largely be divided into two categories – 'event-dependent stakeholders', and 'event non-dependent stakeholders'. In such asymmetrical relationships, Frooman (1999) conceptualised that a stakeholder will leverage this dependence or non-dependence by employing resource 'usage' or 'withholding' influence strategies respectively, to impose its will on the relationship. However, as highlighted in Table 7.1, and explained below, the two categories of event stakeholders' influence strategy in this study were found to be neither dyadic nor unidirectional decisions.

**Table 7.1: Event Stakeholders and Influence Strategies — based on resource relationships**

Resource relationships		
	<i>Event-dependent stakeholders</i>	<i>Event non-dependent stakeholders</i>
Stakeholder groups and influence strategies	<p><b>5. Direct Collaboration</b> (e.g. tourism &amp; craft businesses; venue providers; marinas; city governments)</p> <p><b>6. Indirect Collaboration</b> (e.g. ethnic organisations; kite flyer club)</p> <p><b>7. Trust Building</b> (e.g. volunteers; bloggers; venue providers; NGOs)</p> <p><b>8. Free-riding</b> (e.g. tourism businesses and other businesses)</p>	<p><b>1. Cooperation and Support</b> (e.g. corporate sponsors; public service authorities; media; suppliers; performers; vendors; participants; audiences; local residents &amp; businesses)</p> <p><b>2. Withdrawal</b> (e.g. sponsors; suppliers; vendors)</p>

The present study argues that event stakeholders’ influence strategies were largely positive in nature. Stakeholders were mostly collaborative, cooperative and supportive of the events, either directly or indirectly. Event-dependent stakeholders generally chose to be collaborative in maintaining a mutually-beneficial relationship with the event. In their collaboration strategy, stakeholders could strategise to take a direct or indirect path depending on how well resourced they were. Trust building (Larson 2002) was another strategy commonly used by some stakeholders to strengthen their position or increase their benefits from the event. Similarly, stakeholders such as the corporate sponsors, who were not dependent on the events, were found to be largely cooperative, and consistently supplied resources to sustain the event production year after year.

In a high-context and high power-distance society like Malaysia (The Star Online 2014), people *kow-tow* to governments. Hence event stakeholders working together with politicians and governments in organising events were found to be subtler when applying their chosen influence strategy. This study proposes that, in the Malaysian context, it is a normative expectation of the government that large corporations or government-linked companies will get involved with/sponsor the government’s tourism events. In other words, corporate sponsorships were not aimed at helping the event but rather at helping the government.

Therefore, most of the corporate sponsors chose not to exert their influence on the planning and management of the events, but focused instead on maintaining an embedded relationship with the government and community. This is a novel finding of the study, reflecting the sociopolitical environment in Malaysia, with implications for other countries with similar contexts.

Analysis of case studies also discovered that some stakeholders were not cognisant of their own stake in events, and did not actively seek to influence the management of the event. Long-term relationships had resulted in high levels of trust among the event managers and stakeholders. They collaborated or cooperated both for their own interests and for collective benefit at the destination. Nevertheless, the study detected negative or withdrawal strategies among some stakeholders, when stakeholders felt that their involvement was no longer worthwhile or when they were angry with the organisers. Instead of active involvement, these stakeholders chose to 'free-ride' (Larson 2002), loosely benefiting from the events while still remaining at their usual business premises. They seemed to be able to walk away from the event with little impact to their businesses, and meanwhile, the organisers had to look for alternative sources of resource supply.

A literature review found only one empirical study, in the sports context (Heffernan and O'Brien 2010), had applied Frooman's (1999) framework to understand stakeholders' strategic behaviour. This thesis complements earlier work by Heffernan and O'Brien (2010), positing that event stakeholders could use multiple strategies simultaneously and that their choice of influence strategy, based on resource relationships, was not always absolute or predictable. Stakeholders' influence strategies were highly context-specific and situational (Freeman 1984; Hendry 2005; Sharma and Henriques 2005). In this case study, it was political pressure, or social norms and expectations that prevented corporate sponsors or other salient stakeholders from using negative strategies and made them appear to be largely collaborative, cooperative and supportive of the organisers/governments in organising events for the common good. This thesis contributes to the knowledge of stakeholders' strategic behaviour in event contexts.

## **7.4 Managerial Implications**

The research findings of this thesis have significant or important implications for event organisers in Malaysia. They also provide insights for event practitioners in countries which have sociocultural environments similar to that in Malaysia. In this section, five managerial implications will be discussed. First, this research reveals an apparent lack of discernment



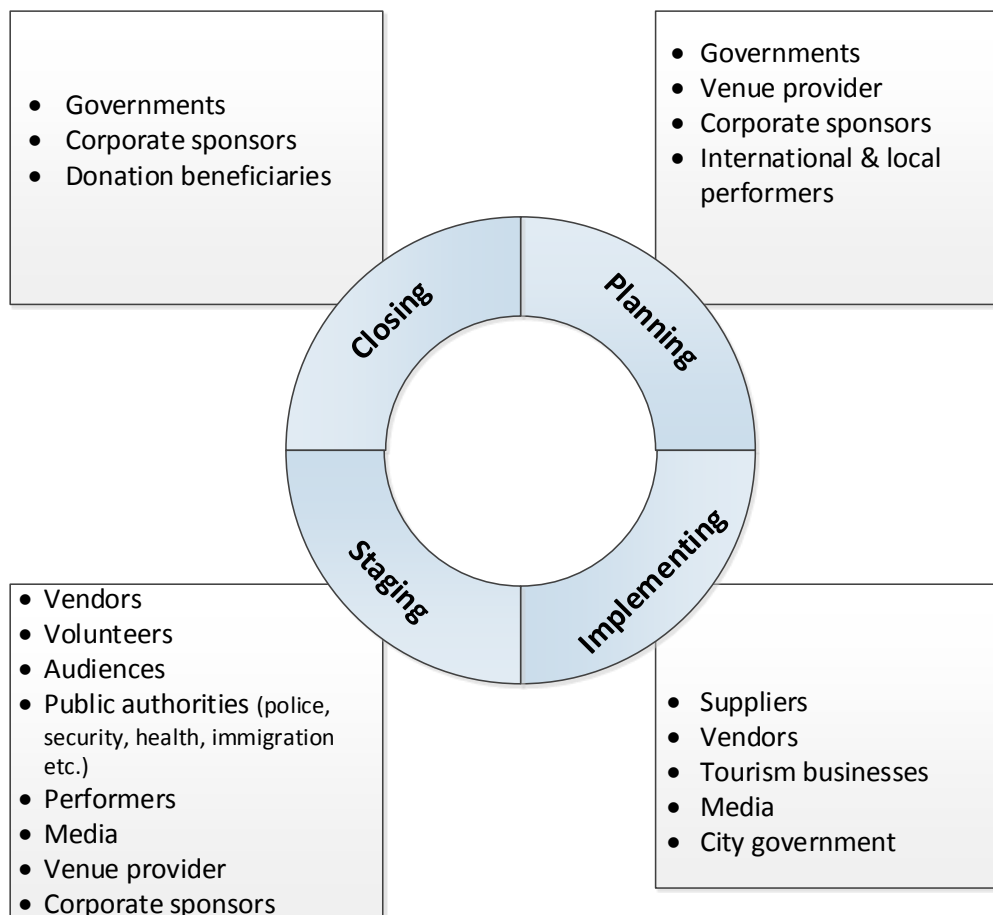
regarding stakeholder identification among some interviewed event managers (study participants). These event managers had a somewhat narrow view of the concept of 'stakeholder'. As previously mentioned in subsection 5.3.3, event managers tended to pay attention to those stakeholders that were necessary to event implementation or those with whom they had direct working relationships. Such practices potentially neglected or dismissed important local community stakeholders, and this might have far-reaching consequences on the event, as in the case of SE5. The study confirms that events are resource-dependent and a variety of stakeholders' contributions make the event possible. Hence it is important that event stakeholders should be holistically mapped and managed, and their desired contribution to the event regularly communicated and recognised, to enhance event sustainability.

Second, an event organisation consists of a large number of diffuse stakeholders who are perceived to have no real power to influence the event, as their individual resource contributions to the event are insignificant. However, as a group their combined power could increase their perceived salience. These diffuse stakeholders may exercise their power through passive resistance and withdrawal of support from the events, causing substantial consequences for those events (Alonso and Bressan 2013; Clarke and Jepson 2011). Some diffuse stakeholders might choose to commit their valued resources every year, thus eventually gaining managerial trust and enhancing their perceived salience. Other diffuse stakeholders might collaborate with an ally-network of stakeholders to increase their influence, and leverage other stakeholders' resources in their network to satisfy their interests in events. Therefore, diffuse stakeholders should not be forgotten or neglected, as stakeholder influence is neither static nor predictable.

Third, this research found that tourism events were highly dependent on governments, government-linked organisations, large corporate sponsors and venue providers. These powerful stakeholders remained in the event year after year and mostly played multiple roles in the event. Event-stakeholder relationships were tightly clustered around a few key strong players. Such a tradition of singularly dominant stakeholders might stabilise event networks, but it could also limit event innovation and creativity, and affect event sustainability (Larson and Wikstrom 2001; Reid 2011). Having a limited number of resource contributors is a definite risk, as it leaves the event vulnerable, should those salient stakeholders withdraw support. The involvement of diverse members of the tourism industry, and private-sector ownership of events, should be encouraged, to bring events to a new level. Moreover, over-dependence on public funding subjects the event to public scrutiny of event impacts and outcomes at the destination (Henderson et al. 2010). The event's tourism benefits and their equitable distribution must be demonstrated.

Fourth, the thesis findings suggest that event stakeholders have time-based salience and managers have to deal with different stakeholders at a given time. No event will have the same range of stakeholders as each event will have its own specific types of stakeholder to be dealt with at different times. Depending on their event's nature, organisational needs and policies, and the event environment, event managers are required to identify the relative importance of stakeholders at each stage of the event life-cycle, evolving through the planning, implementing, staging and closing stages. Getting the needed resources from different stakeholders in time for the staging of an event is a result of managerial success in prioritising different stakeholder relationships across the event life-cycle.

Figure 7.4 presents an example of how event managers prioritise stakeholders at different stages of a music festival. At the *planning stage*, a ticketed music festival organiser will need to find and confirm a suitable venue, communicate with the local government for permits or funding support, approach sponsors, and source performers. These salient stakeholders determine the feasibility and budgeting of the event, as well as providing the information needed for event publicity and to encourage ticket sales. Next, at the *implementation stage*, all procurement plans such as sourcing suppliers and vendors, and publicity and media relations plans, will need to be carried out. Regular interaction with these salient stakeholders will ensure a smooth procurement process and event promotion. Then, stakeholders such as the vendors, volunteers, audiences, public authorities, performers, venue providers and others who are required for the event's operational needs, will be at their most salient at the final *stage of preparation and staging*. It will be a time of high activity and interaction. After event *closure*, stakeholders who might still receive attention would be the government, sponsors or donation beneficiaries, if any, since these stakeholders would be interested in knowing the impacts and outcomes of the event, and their input might be critical to the next event cycle.



**Figure 7.4: Example of a Music Festival Stakeholder Prioritisation across the Event Life Cycle**

Lastly, the study has showed that event organisers and stakeholders were mainly interested in the economic and social benefits that events offered, often side-lining the event’s cultural and environmental interests. This was inconsistent with East Malaysia’s stated goal, to become a destination for culture, adventure and nature tourism. Greater efforts should be made by government and the tourism industry to look after and balance the interests of cultural stakeholders in events. Similarly, the organisation of events produced a variety of unwanted by-products, possibly modifying and affecting the quality of the natural environment. Event managers and stakeholders have a direct interest in looking after the environment where their event takes place, since their event’s success depends on the condition of the natural environment. Event organisers need to incorporate environmental sustainability into their event management framework (Mair and Laing 2013). Collaborating with concerned stakeholders and offering information and education to raise environmental awareness among less concerned stakeholders, is the key to putting sustainability into practice.

## 7.5 Thesis Limitations

This thesis has made substantial contributions to the study of event stakeholders. However, all research projects have limitations. Methodological limitations were examined and addressed in Chapter 3. At this point in the thesis, it is necessary to re-acknowledge the limitations of the study, before offering suggestions for future research in the next section. As discussed in Chapter 3, this case study research is limited to the data collected from one region of Malaysia, thus limiting the generalisability of the findings. However, the findings might be relevant to countries which share a similar sociocultural environment to that in Malaysia. Moreover, the use of multiple case studies will enhance case transferability and facilitate the horizontal accumulation of knowledge (Eisner 1991). The cross-case analysis involving six case studies could offer analytical generalisation (Eisenhardt 1989). The rich description of the sampling reported in Chapter 3 and the detailed description of each case context provided at the beginning of each case analysis in Chapter 4, allow readers to evaluate the author's sampling choices and to comprehend case context, thus making transferability judgements possible (Lincoln and Guba 1985).

The main data were collected in interviews, a format which could introduce bias into the results. Malaysia being a high-context society, there could be differences between what people say and what they actually mean or do. Retrospective bias is possible because study participants may have tried later to legitimise their responses or some may find it hard to recall their experiences. Nevertheless, a large number of interviews and the use of multiple sources of data in the research have helped to minimise bias and other imperfections of the case study method, improving the convergence of findings (Yin 2009). Moreover, a member checking process was used to ensure that participants' responses given at the interviews were accurately reflected in the interview transcripts (Lincoln and Guba 1985).

Another limitation is attributable to the cross-sectional study: this research provides only a single snapshot of the very dynamic and complex event-stakeholder relationships in events, and does not reflect any change over time. Not all groups of stakeholders were represented in the sample, as not all were available or agreed to be interviewed. Nonetheless, as reported in Chapter 3, the fact that various forms of data triangulation were deployed, that informal interview data were collected from people with different perspectives, and also the assembly of many relevant secondary data, have helped to ensure the quality of this study (Yin 2009).

## **7.6 Recommendations for Future Research**

Based on the limitations explained earlier, several suggestions can be made for future research. To improve the credibility and transferability of the research findings, it would be valuable to replicate this multiple case study in other Asian or developing countries that also embrace an event tourism strategy in their destination marketing. Further exploration of this study's conceptual model in Figure 7.1, in other contexts, would provide a more comprehensive comparison among different contexts or among countries. This would enhance the analytic generalisation of this research (Yin 2009) as well as the applicability of Mitchell et al.'s (1997) TSIS and Frooman's (1999) stakeholder influence typology, in the event context. Other opportunities for research would entail quantitative methods of data collection such as surveys, utilising the concepts and new insights generated in this research, such as resource-based power, pragmatic legitimacy, life-cycle urgency, and geographical proximity, to test their relevance in creating perceived stakeholder salience in the event context. Such research would provide statistical generalisability and external validity for the thesis' theoretical contributions.

In this study, it was observed that individual managers' roles and positions in the event organisation structure affected how they identified and accorded salience to stakeholders. Future studies could employ a quantitative research design to explore how managerial characteristics, such as years of experience or roles in the event, gender, leadership style or values, may play a role in the way managers identify and prioritise stakeholders, or moderate the relationship between stakeholder attributes and salience. In addition, any change in the event such as its vision, core values, leaders, programs, or a change in external environmental factors, will lead to a change in stakeholders, or redefined relationships. Longitudinal studies conducting tracking of stakeholder salience at multiple points in time would be useful to inform how stakeholder salience changes over time in events, or whether there are typical trajectories over time for different stakeholder types. For example, researchers could explore how the salience of key stakeholder groups such as government, venue providers, sponsors, volunteers, and participants, is likely to evolve from the event introduction stage to its growth and maturity stages (Butler 1980), as well as how are stakeholders differentially prioritised across the event life cycle.

Stakeholders range from highly salient to relatively less salient based on their resource exchange relationships with events, and how event managers select different strategies for effectively managing different salient stakeholders to retain their support. This could be a further topic for qualitative research involving the application of stakeholder theory in the tourism event context. A close examination of any specific strategies from the event

organisers' perspective could be of interest and might help build the theory of event stakeholder management strategy. As this thesis only examined the stakeholders' influence strategy from the stakeholders' perspective, future research could adopt quantitative research methods to explore influence strategy from both the managerial and stakeholders' perspective. Stakeholder influence strategies generated in this research such as the direct collaboration, indirect collaboration, cooperation and support, trust building, free-riding, or withdrawal modes, could be tested for relevance and importance among event organisers and stakeholders in the context of achieving their various interests in an event. Further empirical research into understanding event stakeholder salience, stakeholders' influence over resources, interactions between organisers and stakeholders, and consequences for the event, is necessary to advance event stakeholder theory and build event tourism literature.

## **7.7 Chapter Summary**

This thesis has used multiple case study research to address the three research questions set up in Chapter 1, that is, to identify stakeholder salience to event managers in East Malaysia, stakeholders' interests and the influence strategies they use to pursue these interests. The thesis contributes knowledge to both stakeholder theory and event tourism literature. Specifically, the value of this thesis is in the use of stakeholder identification and salience theory as a framework, as the theory to date has featured only limited empirical research in the event tourism context. The results of this study advance theory development on event stakeholder identification and salience, and provide a better understanding of stakeholder interests and their influence strategies in the event tourism context. The new knowledge about event life-cycle urgency contributed by this thesis implies that it is critical for event managers to identify the relative importance of stakeholders at each stage of the event life-cycle, as this could affect their event implementation process and the event's success. In conclusion, this study has advanced theory development in the field of event studies related to stakeholder identification, salience, interests and influence strategies.

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# APPENDIX A – CASE STUDY PROTOCOL

**Project Title:** *Stakeholder Salience and Strategy in Event Tourism*

**Study purpose:** *This case study project aims to identify and prioritise event stakeholders, and explore their interests and influence strategies in events.*

## **SECTION A:**

Event & Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Interview No. \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewee's designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation/Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Year(s) involved in event: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview date: \_\_\_\_\_ Interview location: \_\_\_\_\_ Start time: \_\_\_\_\_ End time: \_\_\_\_\_

- Explained participant information sheet
- Participant signed consent form
- Participant agreed to audio-record the interview

## **SECTION B: Event Manager Interview Guide**

*These are questions might be asked during the interview with event managers.*

### **A. Opening**

1. Can you tell me about your role in this event? What does that involve?
2. What are the purposes/objectives for staging this event?
3. Have the objectives changed over time? Why?
4. In your view, what stage of development has this event reached? (e.g. would it be in the introductory, growing, mature or in decline?) Why?

### **B. Stakeholder Identification, Prioritisation & Relationships**

5. Who are involved in charting/shaping the event's direction? Who owns the event?
6. If I use the term "stakeholder", what does it mean to you?
7. Who do you believe has an interest in the organization and planning of this event?
8. Among these event stakeholders, who do you think are the important stakeholders in this event?
9. How would you rank the stakeholders that you identified (i.e. from the most important to less important?) Why?
10. Would you describe the event organization network be a fairly loose network or would it be more tightly clustered around a few key relationships? Why?
11. What are some of the challenges you faced when dealing with different stakeholders? Example?
12. Any stakeholders whom the event is depend on for survival? Why? Who are replaceable?
13. Who do you think is more powerful in influencing the event organization? Why?
14. Which stakeholder requests will normally require your immediate attention? Why?
15. How do you establishing links/relationships/communications with these important stakeholders? How frequent meeting take place?
16. How is the community support for this event been? Low vs. high? Why do you think this is so?
17. Do you believe that natural environment is an important element within your event/festival? In what ways? The event has started to introduce some green initiatives. What do you think about these? Are they effective?

### **C. Stakeholder Interests & Influence**

18. In your opinion, what are the benefits/incentives that attract organisations/businesses/individuals to be involved in this event? Give some examples.
19. Do you think most of these expectations/desired results of the event have been met/achieved?
20. Do you think that local resources and skills are developed and utilised as the result of the organising this event? How?
21. Can you give example of situations where stakeholders influenced decisions of the organising committee to ensure that their desired outcomes were achieved? How did they achieve this?
22. Are there certain people that have a greater influence over the organisation of this event? Example? How?
23. In order to achieve the event goals, how do you dealt with conflicting interests of stakeholders? What strategies have been used?

### **D. Closing**

24. As a whole, between local community's inputs vs. government's (corporate) inputs, where would you position this event on this continuum?
25. What are the important factors for your event to be continued successful?
26. What else need to be done for better development of event tourism in East Malaysia?

## **SECTION C: Stakeholder Interview Guide**

*These are questions might be asked during the interview with event stakeholders.*

### **A. Opening**

1. How did you/your organisation learn about this event? Who initiated contact? How do you (organisation) get to participate in this event?
2. Can you tell me about your role in this event? What does that involve? Any formal contract/selection/financial transaction process involved between you and the event organising committee?
3. To your best knowledge, what are the purposes/objectives for staging this event? Do you think most of these objectives have been met/achieved? In what ways?

### **B. Stakeholder Goals/Interests & Influence Strategies**

4. Why did you/your organisation affiliate/involve with this event? What factors led to this decision?
5. How did you ensure that your (organisation) goals in the event were met? What strategies you used?
6. In your opinion, how important are your participation to the event?
7. To what extent was the involvement with the event important to you?
8. Has involvement in the event strengthened your organisation/personal values? How have you (organisation) benefited from participating in the event?
9. Any issues/problems developed over the course of the partnership with this event? What did you/your organisation do for this issue/problem?
10. Were there times when you thought that your (organisation) needs were pushed aside by the organising committee in favour of another individual/organisation? How did it happen?
11. Do you believe that natural environment is an important element of this festival? In what ways? The event has started to introduce some green initiatives. What do you think about these? Are they effective?
12. In your opinion, how is the community support for this event been? Low vs. high? Why do you think this is so?

**C. Stakeholder Network Relationships**

13. If I use the term “stakeholder”, what does it mean to you?
14. Do you know other stakeholders in the event? Give some examples.
15. Can you describe your (organisation) relationship with other stakeholders in the event?
16. Do you see the event organisation network be tightly clustered around a few key players? Why? Where do you see your organisation positioned within the network?
17. Are there certain people/organisations that have a greater influence over the event? Examples? Do you know these people/organisations?
18. How did you communicate with the organising committee of the event? How frequent the communication takes place? Do you have meetings with the organising committee? (Describe your relationship with the event organiser.)

**D. Closing**

19. Will you (organisation) continue to support/ involve in the event? Why?
20. In your opinion, what are the important factors for this event to be continued successful?
21. What else need to be done to improve the staging of this event?

## **APPENDIX B - PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION SHEET**

Project Title: *Stakeholder Salience and Strategy in Event Tourism*

Thank you for participating in this study. The contribution of your time is extremely valuable. Your participation in this study will involve an individual interview which will last approximately one hour, and grant the researcher the opportunity to review the non-confidential archive reports and documents from the event. In return for your time, a summary of the findings and conclusions of the study will be made available to you on completion of the thesis.

### ***Purpose and research Method***

For the past decade, the State Government has been promoting event tourism in Sarawak. Events involve a host of stakeholders and this research project aims to identify and prioritise key event stakeholders, and explore their goals and strategies through which they seek to achieve these goals. A qualitative case study methodology is being used which involves interviews with tourism event managers and other stakeholders.

### ***About the researcher***

Fidella Tiew is a lecturer at Curtin Sarawak in Marketing and Tourism and this project forms her PhD research, which she is studying for at Curtin University, Western Australia, under the supervision of Dr Kirsten Holmes ([K.Holmes@cbs.curtin.edu.au](mailto:K.Holmes@cbs.curtin.edu.au)), and Professor Nigel de Bussy ([Nigel.DeBussy@cbs.curtin.edu.au](mailto:Nigel.DeBussy@cbs.curtin.edu.au)).

### ***Ethical issues***

This study will follow the ethics guidelines of Curtin University. Participation in the project is completely voluntary and you will have the right to withdraw from the project at any time. To ensure correct interpretation of the discussion, the interview session will be voice recorded. A summary of the interview will be given to you to cross-check for any discrepancies in the responses. All responses will be treated confidentially and remain anonymous in any written thesis or papers. Specific steps will be taken to protect your anonymity. Each events and participants will be disguised, for example, Case A, Interviewee 1. Be assured that your information will be handled with respect and integrity at all times during this research.

For your information, this research project has been reviewed and approved by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval No. SOM2012036). If you have any ethical issues resulting from your participation in the project, please email the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (Secretary) at [hrec@curtin.edu.au](mailto:hrec@curtin.edu.au).

Please let me know if you have any further questions about the interview, or have any other concerns.

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## APPENDIX C – PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**Project Title:** Stakeholder Salience and Strategy in Event Tourism

**Aim:** This research project aims to identify and prioritise key event stakeholders, and explore their interests and influence strategy in events.

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- I have been provided with the participant information sheet.
- I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.
- I understand I can withdraw at any time without prejudice.
- I understand that no personal identifying information like my name and address will be used and that all information will be securely stored for a minimum of 5 years before being destroyed.
- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions.
- I agree to participate in the study as outlined to me.

**Signature:**

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D – LIST OF RANKING OF STAKEHOLDERS

Who do you think are the key stakeholders in this event? Please use below table to list and rank 10 of them.

	Key stakeholders	Why and How are they important to this event? Give examples
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

## APPENDIX E - SHOW CARD

### Who are your stakeholders?

Audiences	Participants
Sponsors	Partners
Board Of Directors	Federal Government
Local Government	Government Agencies
Media	Tourism Organisations
Tourism Businesses	Local Entrepreneurs
Employees/Staff	Volunteers
Performers	Suppliers
Local Community Groups	Governing Bodies & Jurors
Environmental Agencies	Local Residents