

## The Evaluation of Event Sport Tourism on Regional Economic Development

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**Abstract :** Event sport tourism (EST) has become an especially important economic sector around the world. As the magnitude continues to grow, attracting more tourists, media, and investment for the host community, and many local areas/regions and states have identified the expenditures by visitors as a potential source of economic or employment growth. The main purposes of this study are to investigate stakeholders' insights into the feature of hosting EST and using them as a regional development strategy. Continuing the focus of previous literature on the regional development and economic benefits by hosting EST, a total of five semi-structured interview questions are designed and a thematic analysis is employed to conduct with eight key sport and tourism decision makers in Atlanta during July to August 2016. Through the depth interviews, the study will contribute to a better understanding of stakeholders' decision-making, identifying benefits and constraints as well as leveraging the impacts of hosting EST. These findings have provided stakeholders' perspectives of hosting EST and using them as a reference of regional development in emerging sport tourism markets in the US. Additionally, this study examines key considerations and issues that affect and are critical to reliable understanding of the economic impacts of hosting EST on the regional development, and it will be able to benefit future management authorities (i.e. governments and communities) in their sport tourism development endeavors in defining and hosting successful EST. Furthermore, the insights gained from the qualitative analysis could help other cities/regions analyzing the economic impacts of hosting EST and using it as an instrument of city development strategy.

**Keywords :** economic impacts, event sport tourism, regional economic development, longitudinal analysis

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