

EXPLORING THE AWARENESS AND APPLICATION OF THE TRIPLE BOTTOMLINE APPROACH TO EVENT EVALUATION OF SELECTED CORPORATE INSTITUTIONS IN GHANA

Justice Boffah Pokumensah ¹ (MAC) & Florence Pokumensah ² (MSc)

^{1,2} Christian Service University

ABSTRACT

The subject of effective evaluation approach in the corporate event management process is crucial for event professionals and researchers. This is because at the heart of event evaluation is the issue of sustainability of current and future events. The triple bottomline approach (TBL) to event evaluation which focuses on the economic, social and environmental concerns of event impacts has emerged in event evaluation literature. Despite its scope to address the sustainability of corporate events, not much had been researched on the TBL in the Ghanaian context. This study sought to explore the awareness and application of the TBL approach in evaluating corporate events of selected organizations in Ghana. The purpose of the study was to understand how the TBL approach informs event evaluation in Ghana and point out gaps that may exist to the attention of practitioners and researchers in the subject area. The study used exploratory research design and qualitative methodology. The study used in-depth interviews to collect data from 15 purposive sampled corporate event planners from three corporate institutions in Ghana. The study concludes that corporate event planners apply the rudiments of events planning but lack understanding of the theoretical basis of events evaluation informed by the TBL which covers economic, social and environmental dimensions. This apparent lack of understanding creates a gap in theory and practice. The study therefore advocates for training on the TBL approach to corporate event evaluation to deepen corporate event planning and management in contemporary theory and practice.

Keywords: *Corporate Event, Evaluation, Sustainability, Perspectives, Outcomes, Triple Bottomline (TBL)*

Publication History

Date received: 24-09-2025
Date accepted: 5-05-2026
Date published: 20-05-2026

Correspondence

Justice Boffah Pokumensah
jbpokumensah@csuc.edu.gh

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The subject of evaluation in the event management process is critical for event researchers. Events by nature are goal oriented hence effective evaluation ensures that desirable outcomes are achieved for current and future events. The concept of sustainability of events has made event evaluation a topical issue among event researchers. The question of how to ensure sustainability of events in the context of huge private and/or public investments into corporate event management is driving contemporary event evaluation research (Mair & Whitford, 2013). Theoretically, event evaluation focuses on key event success indicators such as objectives. Goldblatt and Supovitz (1999 as cited in Quinn, 2013) argue that success equates to the accomplishment of the organisers' predetermined aims, and evaluation is viewed as a way of determining success by reviewing what has been achieved in the light of predetermined objectives.

In the context of corporate practice, events are used to achieve marketing objectives and building strategic relationships. Events provide the means for corporate organizations to market themselves in terms of their brand and products and services in a unique way (Miric & Petrovic, 2013). As a key function in organizations, events are used to build mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders whose actions and inactions affect the growth of the organization (Argenti, 2010). Based on perceived positive outcomes, organizations spend huge sums of monies to plan and manage these events. In some sense, there is limitless possibilities for organizations to use events to impact the bottom-line in the context of increasing competitive business environment. To ensure that these investments are not made in vain, theory informed evaluation systems must be designed to positively impact event outcomes.

Several approaches to event evaluation exist in literature such as the cost benefit analysis approach, impact assessment approach, feasibility studies approach and others. Each of these approaches measures specific aspects of event outcomes (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006; Crompton, 2011). In an era of increasing competition, complexity and return on investments there is growing concern about the approach that answers the sustainability question (Watson & Noble, 2007), and it is clear that TBL approach provides a comprehensive answer to the question. Mair and Whitford (2013) explored event topics, emerging themes and trends argue that the TBL approach to event evaluation answers the sustainability question.

The TBL approach focuses on the social, economic and environmental impacts of events (Nordvall & Brown, 2018). Brown and Getz (2015) argue that this approach provides a comprehensive evaluation process model that connects all the evaluation paradigms in literature. Unlike the other event evaluation models, the TBL approach provides a methodology that clearly establishes the cause and effect of social, economic, and environmental aspects on event outcomes. Several studies have been done to examine the scope of the TBL and its impact on event outcomes (Gupta & Jain, 2022; Mair & Smith, 2022; Ziakis, 2013; Prebensen, 2010; Leopkey & Parent, 2009; & Mossberg & Getz, 2006). Nordvall and Brown (2018) support the TBL approach because in their view it is comprehensive and theoretically sound for evaluating all types of events.

In Ghana, not much research has been done on the TBL as current literature on the subject is either vague or non-existent. Despite the fact that the scope of the TBL provide a comprehensive framework for undertaking event evaluation, there is lack of literature to refer to in the Ghanaian context. This creates a gap in literature. The key question is, to what extent is the TBL approach to event evaluation which focuses on the social, the economic and the environment dimensions popular among corporate event practitioners in Ghanaian? A well balanced and satisfactory answer to this question is critical for theorists and practitioners in the sense that theory informed practice provides enormous benefits and positively shapes the field of event management.

Creating awareness on the TBL to promote its wider application among corporate event planners has several implications for the industry in Ghana. The adoption of the TBL will shape the dynamics of the event management industry to address the sustainability issue. In Ghana, the growth, interests and investments into corporate events are huge judging from the frequency and ambience

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

created for these events. This has several implications for the corporate event industry. First, it implies that the scope of the corporate event industry is growing in terms of inflows of cash; second, much attention is being given to this seeming lucrative industry; and third, the issue of accountability and efficiency must be given the necessary attention. Judging from the varied intended and expected corporate event outcomes, particularly from the stakeholder perspective, it is essential to view event evaluation from the lenses of their impact on the people, planet and profit, which is summed up as the triple bottom-line.

This study was important because evaluation offers opportunity for cost management in current and future events, improvement of processes and activities and finally, lessons for untapped areas. The researchers believe that corporate event planners and other stakeholders stand to benefit greatly from the TBL approach to event evaluation as Miric and Petrovic (2013) argue that contemporary literature and practice must strongly favour managing and evaluating corporate events from a holistic interest perspective not only in terms of its relevance to the behaviour of people in organizations, but also to the organizational aspects of the performance and economics of the organization. The purpose of the study was to explore the awareness and application of the TBL approach to corporate event evaluation in Ghana.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Empirical Review

The subject of event evaluation has been extensively researched (Haahti, 2014; Mair, & Whitford, 2013; Hudson & Hudson, 2013) and has been discussed to provide theoretical focus in the interpretation of the findings of this study. The practice of event evaluation is not new in the field of event management. Carlesen, Getz and Soutar in 2001 surveyed the perceptions of Australian and international experts in event evaluation from the public and private sector using both pre- and post-evaluation criteria and concluded that there was consensus on the frequency of use and importance of a range of criteria for event evaluation. This provided a platform for the development of a standardized approach to pre and post-event evaluation. Event evaluation whether pre or post, is goal oriented and approached from multiple perspectives. This assertion is confirmed by O'Sullivan, Pickernell, and Senyard (2009) who examined event evaluations conducted by local governments in Wales, and concluded that the majority had concentrated on process improvement and economic effect measurement although social-cultural goals were prevalent but were rarely assessed. In addition, Williams and Bowdin (2007) examined the literature on event evaluation and examined the goals, approaches, and applications of seven UK arts festivals. Their findings showed that evaluation was done to gauge the performance of events in relation to objectives, directing the planning process, satisfying stakeholder expectations, and bringing about improvements. The study by Williams and Bowdin highlights the significance of the choice of the right methodology and/or approach to arrive at desirable event evaluation outcomes.

In another study, Maarit Haahti in 2014 examined the visitor discourses on experience in relation to festival success and failure and found that success factors were varied. These included good quality food, sense of community, chill-out opportunities and building blocks of one's identity.

In 2016, Philip Xie and Andy Sinwald studied the perceived impacts of special events by organizers and found that "bringing community together, producing economic benefits for local businesses and creating socializing and educational opportunities for visitors" were the primary impacts anticipated by interviewed event organizers. These findings were significant to this study because they explained some of the drivers of event impact. Sometimes, in their attempt to identify the crucial drivers of event impact event organizers focus on narrow perspectives such as attendance, thereby ignoring other significant aspects of events. The lesson is that for an event to have an impact, it must be comprehensive and relevant to the organizers as well as the participants or end users. Moreover, the findings affirm the already existing knowledge that events serve both economic and educative functions, not despising their sociological significance. The critical question relates to how organizers

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

can be reliably informed about the impact of such events. Indeed, this can only be established through measurement aided by evaluation.

Most of the studies referenced in this section shed light on aspects of event evaluation in different contexts. What is missing is the relevant local Ghanaian contexts that reflect the reality of TBL approach event evaluation in the corporate organisations. This study attempted to fill this gap by exploring the perspectives of three different corporate bodies on the subject to bring relevance and context. In as much as the examples presented under the review of the empirical data at the global stage hold some lessons, it was important to get the Ghanaian perspective to further deepen the subject of corporate event evaluation. It is further argued that event evaluation is dynamic in the sense that it continues to evolve, expand, and become more complex as the discourse on events.

Bladen and colleagues (2023) have identified different categorizations of events in general within which corporate events are featured. These include mega events, cultural events, special events, sporting events and several others. They argue that such categorizations facilitate the management of their requirements even though they admit that such “labels are often too broad and unclear to be useful (Bladen et. al., 2023:7). Despite the limitations of the classification approach to events, Bladen and colleagues admit that industry professionals do use the classifications to bring more clarity to the vast field of events.

The term corporate event is used synonymously with terms like business events and organizational events in literature. For example, Bladen and colleagues in their book titled, *Event management: An introduction*, use the terms corporate events and business events to mean the same concept. Allen (2008) on the other hand preferred the term corporate events in his book titled, *Event planning: The ultimate guide to successful meetings, corporate events, fund raising galas, conferences, conventions, incentives and other special events*. Probably the nuance stems from the interests of the writers and the context in which they write. The term corporate event has been defined in different ways. The *International Dictionary of Event Management* (2001 edition) refers to corporate events as events that companies sponsor to achieve a specific goal. They include events like introduction and promotion of new products or services, providing incentives and training for employees among others. In this study, the term corporate event was used for two reasons: first, it provides a comprehensive umbrella of business or organizational events in terms of format and scope; and second, it is consistent with current literature trends in the subject area.

Baskin, Aronof and Lattimore (1999) identified eight conventional uses of corporate events as 1) to position the corporate brand; 2) to strengthen the corporate image hence enhance its reputation; 3) as means of increasing market share; 4) to obtain feedback from strategic constituencies/publics; 5) as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy; 6) to create mutually beneficial understanding with relevant stakeholders; 7) to enhance internal processes and activities; and 8) to achieve strategic marketing and advertising purposes. All these purposes are relevant in ensuring that at the end of the day, organizations achieve their goals and objectives within the broader framework of the TBL philosophy. Corporate events such as press briefing, plant visits, fundraising dinner, Annual General Meetings (AGM), crisis management events, corporate social responsibility events among others are targeted at specific individuals and or groups for specific purposes. In some sense, there is limitless possibilities for corporate bodies to use events to impact the triple bottom-line particularly when they are properly evaluated. Several evaluation perspectives exist in the literature and are worth noting even though this study focused on the TBL approach.

The question of the choice of the “right” methodology/approach to effective event evaluation has engaged considerable attention of event theorists and practitioners (Nordvall & Brown 2018). The authors examine these perspectives and strongly assume the TBL approach as the most plausible option for corporate event evaluation in the next sections.

2.2 Perspectives on Event Evaluation

The subject of the choice of the right methodology for event evaluation has been discussed from various perspectives leading to suggested models and or approaches (Nordvall & Brown, 2018). However, the meaning of the term evaluation, itself, provides some nuances on the debate. According to Trochim (2006), there are two commonly accepted definitions of evaluation: the methodical appraisal of an object's value or merit; and the methodical gathering and analysis of data to offer insightful commentary on an object. The term evaluation has again been defined as “an essential management function of information gathering and feedback through which processes can be improved, goals more effectively attained, and by which organizations can learn and adapt” (Brown & Getz, 2015:135). This study adapted the definition of event evaluation offered by Jago and Dywer (2006) as a comprehensive review of an event using a variety of metrics and methodologies to ascertain its worth and effects within a predetermined or established framework.

The debate on the choice of effective event evaluation methodology/approach is underpinned by its crucial role in policymaking, managerial development, and event design. After evaluating festivals in the UK, Williams and Bowdin, G. (2007) made the case that “in a culture of evidence-based decision making, reliable and robust evaluation is also essential.” According to their review, there were significant flaws in the way public-policy initiatives related to events were evaluated. Their concerns included poor reporting, advocacy masquerading as evaluation, and a lack of prioritisation. They also argued that evaluation itself has been underfunded or seen as optional, and that complex and politically sensitive objectives are hard to be objectively assessed. Even though their review was done on public funded events, their findings provide useful lessons for application within corporate contexts. O'toole and Mikolaitis (2002:10) rightly argue that “a corporate event is a part of the overall corporate strategy. It is a management function, and it is held to achieve a corporate goal”. Therefore, it will be measured as other corporate projects are measured using the same financial metrics”.

Besides the policymaking, managerial development, and event design factors informing event evaluation approach, the issue of *value* or *worth* debate has further broadened the scope of discussion of the subject. Alkin and Christie (2004) argue that the value or worth debate can be settled depending on whether the event is for profit or not for profit which is outside the scope of this study. Through rigorous research, seven event evaluation models have been standardised and discussed in literature. They are: 1) cost benefit analysis; 2) impact assessment; 3) triple bottom-line approach, 4) ethnography; 5) feasibility studies; 6) RoI Methodology and 7) Real time evaluation. Each of these models have their own strengths and weaknesses so it is recommended that a combination of more than one approach can yield useful results (*see* Mair & Whitford, 2013, for a comprehensive discussion on these popular event evaluation models). Despite strengths of these models, the TBL provides a comprehensive framework to conceptualise, plan, and apply it to corporate event evaluation.

2.3 A Case for the Application of the TBL Approach to Corporate Event Evaluation

The TBL approach to event evaluation as mentioned above examines event outcomes against three variables namely; economic, social and environmental, to determine the positive and negative impact on host communities. Brown and Getz (2015) argue that this approach provides a comprehensive evaluation process model that connects all the evaluation paradigms in literature. They draw on extant research on the subject of event evaluation from scholars such as Rosi et al., 2004; Potter, 2006; Wood 2009; Ensor et al, 2011; Hall, 2012; and Anderson et al., 2013 (as cited in Brown and Getz 2015) to evaluate the three main paradigms that have shaped the field in terms of theory and practice. They point out the considerable contributions and shortcomings of each of the three main paradigms and observe that:

The organisationalisation of a new paradigm is a process requiring many steps and possible setbacks, and for events, it requires full application of TBL thinking – a set of goals and measures advocated [to] cover the social, cultural, ecological, and economic dimensions of event outcomes . . . At a minimum, events and event-development

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

agencies must now demonstrate value in a multi-stakeholder context, and take a longer-term perspective on outcomes and legacy. As the paradigm gains acceptance at the political, corporate, and event operational levels, it will also lead to growing attention to long-term, cumulative impacts, resolution of stakeholder conflicts, the meaning and management of a “healthy” portfolio and population of events, and the synergistic effects arising from many actors pursuing event-related strategies and programs.

The above statement is profound in that it properly sets the TBL in the context of the operational processes of corporate organisations. According to Brown and Getz (2015), the TBL focuses primarily on the economic impact evaluation. They argue that the traditional approach to event evaluation present difficulty establishing cause and effect for intangible social and cultural outcomes, as well as the dearth of theory and methodological progress in the other outcome categories. The TBL approach focuses on broader and holistic view of evaluation by integrating the perspectives of the various event stakeholders such as the owners, producers, customers and employees in the event management process.

At the heart of the TBL approach to event evaluation is the *sustainability concept*. Brown and Getz argue that: “evaluation is at the heart of sustainability, as without it [corporate bodies] cannot learn and improve nor can they be held accountable for costs and benefits” (2015:135). Prudent use of corporate resources in corporate processes including events has always been and most recently been pivotal. Sustainability implies that an event has merit from a particular point of view or related to a specific set of criteria, and is therefore a confirmation of worth or merit. This statement is fully packed hence must be unpacked. A set of questions have been suggested by Brown and Getz to unpack the sustainability concept which is 1) What is the value of a one-time event? 2) Is it worth the effort and expense to bid on an event? 3) What are the benefits of festivals and events to our community? and 4) Is there great competitive advantage in developing [corporate events]?”. These and similar questions tend to shape the discourse, and evaluators whether group or individuals must learn how to comprehensively answer them. This study sought to answer these questions from the perspectives of the event planners of the selected organizations.

In our view, the choice of the TBL approach to corporate evaluation is grounded in literature. For example, Ranjan (2016) argues that the adoption of an event evaluation models [for academic enquiry] is influenced by situational circumstances hence proper event evaluation must be grounded in theory. Allen and colleagues (2011:292) argue: “event evaluation is critical to the event management process. It is the final step in the planning process, where the goals and objectives set at the start of an event are used as benchmarks to determine its final outcomes and success.” It is therefore important for corporate organisations to choose an event evaluation model that is comprehensive and theoretically sound [as does the TBL] as demonstrated in this study.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The choice of a methodology greatly impacts the validity of a study. In line with the purpose of the study, the researchers used the exploratory research design. The exploratory design uses qualitative research data and employs non-numerical data analysis to understand underlying themes and deeper experiences (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative data unlike quantitative data provides much more details as to why certain decisions and choices are made, which is crucial to understanding perspectives on issues (Kothari, 2009). The explanatory design is recommended for studies of this nature (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003).

A purposive sampling technique was used to select three organizations with unique and representative business processes and practices as well as established history of events management and event evaluation. They were Breast Care International (private corporate organisation), Hello FM (private media house) and Electricity Company of Ghana (public). The choice of these three

organizations was informed by their nature of businesses as prototypes of corporate businesses operating in Ghana. More so, their approach and practices to event planning and evaluation is synonymous with most corporate organisations in Ghana. To answer the research question, qualitative data, through the use of structured interview guide was obtained from 15 corporate event planners from the selected corporate institutions. The interview guide was structured in three sections (Section A, B & C) and data was collected on the background of the respondents' opinions on general knowledge of events planning and awareness and application of the TBL event evaluation model. The collected data was analysed using inductive approach to data analysis which focused on teasing out emerging themes and the key ideas presented and discussed as report in the next session.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of the study was to explore the awareness and application of the TBL approach to corporate event evaluation in Ghana. A total of 15 interviews were conducted on those who plan and manage the events of the selected corporate organizations namely, Hello FM, Breast Care International and Electricity Company of Ghana and have been discussed in this section. To facilitate the presentation of the findings, alpha-numeric codes were generated to represent the opinions of the respondents on the range of issues. This was done to protect their anonymity hence ensure ethical considerations.

4.1 Background Information on Respondents

To obtain information on the background of the respondents, four (4) questions were asked: 1) How many years have you been involved in planning and managing events in your organization? 2) Can you describe your involvement in the planning and evaluation of events in your organization? 3) Can you share information on some of the events you organize and why you organize those events? 4) Kindly describe the composition of your events planning team or committee. The answers to these questions have been discussed together to bring clarity and focus.

According to the data, the respondents had worked between 5- and 10-years planning events for their respective organisations hence have considerable length of experience on the subject. This finding is key in that Xie and Sinwald (2016) argue that experience and exposure of event planners have positive outcomes on event evaluation.

The respondents were asked to describe their roles in planning and managing events in their respective organisations. The findings show that all the respondents undertook specific roles in planning events for their respective organizations. BCI 1 explained that:

My role as a member of the organizing team is to oversee and supervise all events in my departments. I also suggest planned events for my organization.

ECG 1 said:

I am the chairman of the organizing team and I supervise all activities in that direction so far as organizing events in our company is concerned.

BCI 2 also added:

My role as a member of the marketing department is to help all activities in the department. I suggest and plan potential events for the organization; for example, we do blood donations, health screening, musical concerts and others to reach out to the public.

Another respondent, HF 2 commented about his role as follows:

Oh yes as a member of the organizing committee, I take part in almost all the important issues concerning events; as a head of particular department my contributions are also always needed in every aspect of events we do.

BCI 5 explained his role in event planning as follows:

My role basically has to do with the department that I work. I coordinate the information to my colleagues and try to mobilise them and partake in the events of the company.

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

These findings show that the respondents have in-depth knowledge of event planning and management which includes event evaluation.

The respondents were asked to share information on events they organize and the motivation for organizing those events. Several events were reported by the respondents including breast screening, reality shows, customer service week, staff durbar, blood donation, corporate social responsibility events among other. Several reasons were given for the mentioned events. ECG 2 explained:

As key service provider, we endeavour to stay closer to our customers hence we make a priority to constantly integrate customer service week in our yearly calendar.

ECG 5 added:

The customer service week enable us to address the concerns of our various stakeholders and issues like billing, metering, illegal connections are addressed. This event has been very useful to us a company. Many people have issues but they don't come out unless you reach out to them.

HF 5 explained that as a media house, they sometimes plan blood donation exercises in consultation with the Okomfo Anokye Blood Bank Unit and other stakeholders. We see this as a social responsibility contribution in building Ghana". BCI 3 also added that:

As a healthcare provider, we engage in quarterly free healthcare screening at various communities to meet the healthcare needs of the people.

Corporate events by nature focus on various stakeholders to meet various corporate needs; so, these views are not different from existing studies (Allen, 2008; Miric & Petrovic, 2013).

The respondents were asked to report on the composition of their event planning teams and or committees. The findings show that the three corporate institutions use different approach to select committees to execute event agenda. ECG 1 explained that event planning and management is a centralised function in their organization. He noted that:

. . . at ECG, every activity is planned from the corporate affairs or public relations unit from the head office in Accra. The decisions are communicated to our operational offices to operationalise.

BCI 2 explained that at their end, they have a team headed by the public relations officer who plan and manage their events. But beyond the current arrangements, the respondents shared other opinions that are worth noting. Some of the respondents were of the opinion that their current arrangement was not the best because it was not comprehensive enough in the sense that it did not make room for those with expertise to be co-opted into the committees. ECG 5 explained that,

Organizing events should be involved with all the members of the organization. In my opinion to maximise the benefit of events organization I think every working staff of the organization should be involved though I know there are always groups that will spearhead most of the activities but when the entire workforce of the organization is involved, it makes it quite easier and it helps in realizing our target and aims.

This view supports the stakeholder approach to event planning and management which is founded in empirical research (Robinson, Wale & Dickson, 2010; Chelladurai & Kim, 2022; Bladen et al, 2023). Some of the respondents favoured the view that membership to the event planning committee should be based on merit or experience. HF 3 noted that:

The involvement of all marketing staff is the best in organizing a successful event. Even though the marketing department should spearhead most of the activities, all other staff members must be included.

This view was corroborated in a different way by BCI 4 who argued that:

For an event to be very successful, you have to look at some resource personnel who can give you very constructive consultation so you look at every department and pick those who have the requisite skills to contribute.

Along the same line of thinking, ECG 5 added that:

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

Anybody can be involved but it depends on the particular event so you need to know the stakeholders who will be involved to bring out their best.

The dominant view among the respondents was that the various stakeholders must be involved in event planning and managing. BCI 3 added

You need experts like the opinion leaders, the chiefs, the retired people so as to come out with a good result.

On the background information about the respondents on the four key areas of years of involvement in event planning, types of events they plan and the composition of the committees or teams to manage events, the views are consistent with extant literature on the importance of expertise and stakeholder approach to effective event planning and management (Watson & Noble, 2007; Pereira, 2018).

Every organization has ways of selecting internal, external or combination of both experts to plan and manage their events. The next question sought to find out who was involved in the event planning and evaluation at the selected corporate institutions. HF 3 explained that at their organization,

One or two members are selected from each department to form the planning committee in order to help make good suggestions and also plan for successful events.

HF 3 further added that they recruit staff with some competence to plan and manage their events. He explained that:

Well, we have certain members of the committee who are selected based on their professional knowledge of events planning and also, we tend to select two members each from every department in my organization to make it wholly acceptable programme of the organization. We don't just select anybody just for the sake of it but we look at how resourceful a person is so that his contribution can raise the event that you want to run.

At another organization, it was explained that all the heads of departments based on knowledge and expertise of the impending event are selected to be part of the team. This fact was corroborated by BCI 4 when he argued that the selection was based on each event and nature of it. He noted:

Actually, in the selection, we look at the very event that is about to go on so we come out with stakeholder for the particular event.

The fact that corporate organizations rely on individuals with competence and expertise to plan and manage their events is well documented in literature (Getz, 2012; Cuskelly et. al. 2021; Chelladurai & Kim, 2022). Event management is a professional field hence event planners are required to demonstrate some level of competency relative to the event in focus.

4.2 Perspectives of Respondents on the TBL Event Evaluation Model

To assess the perspectives of the respondents on the TBL event evaluation model, five complimentary questions were posed to them. The questions were, 1) How do you assess the importance of evaluation of corporate events? 2) Can you describe the composition of your event planning and evaluation team? 3) What is your opinion on the effectiveness of your current event evaluation strategy? 4) Are you conversant with the Triple Bottomline (TBL) approach to event evaluation? 5) If yes, what is your understanding of the TBL approach to event evaluation?

4.2.1 Views on Importance of Event Evaluation

In response to the question on the importance of evaluation of corporate events, all the respondents affirmed that it was a key component of the event planning and management process. Two convergent views were expressed. The first views tied the importance of evaluation to the importance of events in achieving stated corporate goals whereas the second views justified the importance of evaluation based on the investments made into organizing such events. The following statements were made to support the first views. BCI 5 commented that:

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

In a [corporate] organization such as mine, we cannot do away with events...organizing events is part of us. We organize events such as blood donations, musical shows and health screenings so that we create publicity for ourselves and since events are important to us, we can also assess its benefits through effective evaluation which we do at the end of every event.

HF 5 explained some of the outcomes of events and the role of evaluation in achieving those outcomes. He noted that:

In an organization as mine, we cannot do away with events since events are part of our general branding and image campaign with our target market. As such, branding and events help us to get closer to our audience particularly to our targeted market. Evaluation plays a critical role in this process because through evaluation, we learn new lessons and address challenges.

ECG 3 noted that:

Events is part of building good and strong brand, image and also serve as being socially responsible in the community in which we operate. Events also is a strong promotional tool which organizations can adopt to create more revenues and publicity. How can you organize such events without monitoring to see that you are on track? It is virtually impossible!

HF 3 reported that:

Every event plays important role in the life of everyone in the society and branding positioning and corporate image is very important; social responsibility in every organization is very important to meet the expectations of the stakeholders. We learn always to correct our mistakes through evaluation at the end.

ECG 4 noted that:

My general understanding is that events play important role in the life of an organization like positioning, building corporate image, corporate social responsibility.

BCI 4 highlighted the stakeholder dimension of events when he noted:

Actually, an event is a program that brings all stakeholders of the organisation together in order to give them information, bring them on board, to seek their counsel in order for the growth of the organization to be improved.

On the second view, the following statements were made to explain the importance of evaluation in the context of corporate investments. HF 1 gave the following statement to support the view that evaluation is needed to ensure sustainability of events:

There are a lot organizations and if you want people to know what you really do then you have to invest a lot more in your events. This is because events of late involves huge amounts of money. For instance, when you want to build a brand name and image, you need huge investments and proper planning; to be socially responsible like any other organization, you need campaigns and such events come at a huge sum of money and planning for it to be successful . . . planning and organizing an event of such magnitude involves huge number of resources or money. The best way to ensure the continue to get the best out of them is to evaluate by asking yourself questions like, were we able to achieve our goals at the end of the day?

HF 2 further clarified that:

Evaluation is important because events cost huge money; secondly building a brand name involves huge sums of money and proper planning. In all I can say it is worth spending huge sums of money because in the long run, the organization will benefit from it. All events have their objectives, the targets, the goals or the mission so you don't put in much money it is going to have an effect on what you are doing - your input determines your output.

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

The following useful information were provided to support the importance of corporate event evaluation:

Yes, evaluation is very necessary because it will help the organization to assess whether they were able to reach the goals and objectives the events they host. If it's good or bad they would know so that next time whether to do it other way". Yes, evaluation is necessary because most events organization involves people and processes. When you are dealing with people and if you don't evaluate very well, at the end of the day you will not get a clearer of how things work and what should have been done. I think evaluation of event is very necessary it helps organizations to assess whether they reached their goals and objectives. Yes, evaluation of every event is very important that is the aftermath of the event. It helps you to know whether the event was successful or not for future considerations. Very necessary because if you don't evaluate, how do you know that your event was successful? And for next occurrences, how can improve upon that? It is very necessary because you can't spend money in organizing and you don't achieve anything.

4.2.2 Views on Current Event Evaluation Plans

The respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on their awareness of integration of evaluation plans in corporate events. All the respondents said they were aware of the fact that in planning events, evaluation plans are integrated for future considerations. As a follow up, they were asked to describe how evaluation was done (processes). BCI 2 explained that:

Some of the processes are [that] you go through participant interaction then the level of sales after the events. You get to know how much you made after the event; the number of enquiries from the attendees; how many people attended the event and also the level of awareness creation whether people knew about it or they didn't.

The above view was supported by BCI 3 who explained that:

We evaluate for instance through participant interactions, the level of sales after the event, the number of inquiries from the attendees and other people who come to the event, the level of awareness creation especially the general public after the event. "After an event has been organized, the only to evaluate is find out from the people who have involved in the planning of the event."

Another respondent highlighted the stakeholder approach to event evaluation which is popular practice in most organizations (Gupta & Jain, 2022). HF 3 explained the scope of their event evaluation activities as follows:

First of all, you check the participants' awareness (did people patronise the programme?) you check the level sales, you check the beauty of the programme, you check the security and how the programme has lifted the corporate brand. After the implementation of a successful program, all stakeholders come together to organize an exit conference to evaluate whatever event that has been organized and see if we can improve it another time."

4.2.3 Knowledge of the TBL approach to Event Evaluation

There are several approaches to event evaluation and each of them focus on an aspect of event outcomes. The respondents were asked to explain their opinions on the TBL approach to event evaluation. According to the data, all the 15 respondents indicated that they were not familiar with the TBL approach to event evaluation. Lack of awareness of the TBL approach to event evaluation meant that the scope of the knowledge of the respondents were limited so far as event evaluation in general is concerned. This situation has several implications for effective event evaluation. Brown and Getz (2015) argue that one of the indicators of effective event evaluation is to explore the theoretical sound options available to the event planner. Mair and Smith (2022) also supports this view and further adds

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

that evaluation by its nature requires depth of the subject to benefit from sustainable event outcomes. Juxtaposing these views with the opinions expressed by the respondents on the approach they currently use to evaluate events, this study has shown that there is lack of depth so far as corporate evaluation is concerned in the selected organizations.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to explore the awareness and application of the TBL approach to corporate event evaluation in Ghana.

The TBL approach examines the event outcome against economic, social and environmental variables. The findings of the study showed that the respondents had fair idea of events evaluation but undertake it in an incoherent manner. The responses lacked theoretical rigour thereby showing that they did not pay much attention to the cardinal principles of corporate event evaluation. Subject to the TBL approach, the findings show that selected corporate organizations lack understanding and application. The net effect is that they undertake events without a theoretical basis. This situation has several implications for effective event sustainability and outcomes. Resources are invested into events planning and management and must be accounted for. The study concludes that event planners and evaluators in the selected corporate organizations understand the rudiments of events planning but lack theoretical knowledge of the TBL approach to event evaluation hence their evaluation are not evidence based. There is lack of depth in the scope of options of event evaluation available to the event planners of the selected organizations. Based on the conclusion of the study, it is strongly recommended that training be organized for event planners in the form of capacity building and seminars where ideas could be shared. This will ensure professional approach to event planning and management which will cater for proper monitoring and evaluation concerns. Event evaluations theorist must engage in more focused scholarly research in corporate event evaluation in the Ghanaian context to address the gaps.

REFERENCES

- Alkin, M.C., & Christie, C.A. (2004). "An evaluation theory tree", in Alkin, M.C. (Ed.), *Evaluation Roots: Tracing Theorists' Views and Influences*, SAGE, pp. 12-65.
- Allen, J. (2008) *Event planning: The ultimate guide to successful meetings, corporate events, fund raising galas, conferences, conventions, incentives and other special events*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Allen, J., O'Toole, W., Harris, R., & McDonnell, I. (2011). *Festival and special event management*, (5th ed.). Wiley.
- Argenti, A.P. (2003). *Corporate communication*. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Baskin, O., Aronoff, C., & Lattimore, D. (1997). *Public relations: The profession and the practice* (4th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Bladen, C., Kennell, J., Abson, E., & Wilde, N. (2023). *Events management: An introduction* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Brown, S., & Getz, D. (2015). Event evaluation: Definitions, concepts and a state-of-the-art review. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 6 (2), 135-157.
- Carlsen, J., Getz, D., & Soutar, G. (April 2000). Event evaluation research. *Event Management*, 6, (247-257).
- Chelladurai, P., & Kim, A.C.H. (2022). *Human resource management in sport and recreation*. Human kinetics.
- Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approach* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Cuskelly, G., Fredline, L., Kim, E., Barry, S., & Kappelides, P. (2021). Volunteer selection at a major sport event: A strategic human resource management approach. *Sport Management Review*, 24 (1), 116-133.
- Getz, D. (2012), *Event studies: Theory, research and policy for planned events* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

- Gupta, A., & Jain, R. (2022). *Managing event information*. Springer Nature.
- Haahti, M.A.K. (2014). *Experiencing community festivals and events*. Routledge
- Hudson, S., & Hudson, R. (2013). Engaging with consumers using social media: A case study of music festivals. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 4 (3), 206-223.
- Jago, L.K., & Dwyer, L. (2006). *Economic evaluation of special events*. Common Ground Publishing.
- Kothari, C.R. (2009). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*. New Age International.
- Leopkey, B., & Parent, M. (2009). Risk management strategies by stakeholders in Canadian major sporting events. *Event Management*, 13 (3), 153-170.
- Mair, J., & Smith, A. (2022). *Events and sustainability: Why making events more sustainable is not enough*. Routledge.
- Mair, J., & Whitford, M. (2013). An exploration of events research: Event topics, themes and emerging trends. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 4(1), 6-30.
- Miric, A.A., & Petrovic, M. (2013). Managing corporate events and job satisfaction among young professionals. *Management Journal of Sustainable Business and Management Solutions in Emerging Economies*, 18 (66), 19-26.
- Mossberg, L., & Getz, D. (2006). Stakeholder influences on the ownership and management of festival brands. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 6 (4), 308-326.
- Nordvall, A., & Brown, S. (2018). Evaluating publicly supported periodic events: The design of credible, usable and effective evaluation. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 12 (2), 152 - 171.
- O'Sullivan, D., Pickernell, D., & Senyard, J. (2009). Public sector evaluation of festivals and special events. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 1(1), 19-36.
- O'Toole, W.O., & Mikolaitis, P. (2002). *Corporate event project management*. John Wiley & Sons Inc
- Pereira, L.B. (2018). Business and events tourism: Characterization of the 41st FIMEC and the consumption expectation and quality perception of visitors. cabdirect.org.
- Prebensen, N. (2010). Value creation through stakeholder participation: A case study of an event in the high north. *Event Management*, 14(1), 37-52.
- Quinn, B. (2013). *Evaluation*. SAGE.
- Ranjan, W. (2016) A review of sports events impact evaluation methods. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Sports* 19, 31-36
- Robinson, P., Wale, D., & Dickson, G. (2010). *Events management*. Wallingford, Oxfordshire: CABI.
- Teddle, C. & Tashakkori A. (2008). *Foundations of mixed methods Research: Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioural Sciences*. SAGE.
- Trochim, W. (2006). Research methods knowledge base. Web centre for Social Research Methods. Available at: www.eventimpacts.com/
- Watson, T., & Noble, P. (2007). *Evaluating public relations: Best practice guide to public relations planning, research and evaluation* (2nd ed.). Kogan Page.
- Williams, M., & Bowdin., G. (July 2007). Managing leisure: An exploration of seven UK arts festivals. *Managing leisure* 12 (2-3), 187-203
- Xie P., & Sinwald, A. (2016). Perceived impacts of special events by organizers: A qualitative approach. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 7 (1), 50-65.
- Ziakis, V. (2013), *Event portfolio planning and management: A holistic approach*, Routledge.

About The Authors

Rev. Justice Boffah Pokumensah is an ordained minister and a full-time lecturer in Public Relations in the Faculty of Humanities, Department of Communication Studies at the Christian Service University. He holds MA in Corporate Communication (researched) from Daystar University, Nairobi-Kenya. His research area is event management, public speaking, stakeholder management, corporate communication and publicity.

Journal of Applied Science, Arts and Business (JASAB)

Mrs. Florence Pokumensah is an Assistant Registrar of the Christian Service University. She holds MSc in Corporate Planning and Governance and an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Human Resource Management Practitioners. Her research interests in the area of human resource development, higher institutional management and event management.