Cape Peninsula
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THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND CULTURAL EVENT(S) CANCELLATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: VIEWS OF THE ROYAL REED DANCE IN KWANONGOMA, KWAZULU NATAL

by

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Technology: Tourism and Hospitality Management

in the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences

at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology

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District Six
November 2022

DECLARATION

I, Zimasa Felicia Ndaba, declare that the contents of this dissertation represent my own unaided work and that the dissertation has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

	08 November 2022
Signed	**Date**

ABSTRACT

Cultural festivals have emerged not only as events that showcase cultural and social values, but as instruments that promote tourism development, tourism seasonality expansion, image improvement, community pride and socioeconomic growth. The Royal Reed Dance Ceremony (RRDC) hosted annually in KwaNongoma, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa is one such events. Since March 2020 (until 2022), the events industry in South Africa has been severely impacted as all gatherings were prohibited owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. This engendered a spiralling effect on the sector with most cultural festivals being cancelled or postponed.

The aim of this study was to explore the effects of the cancellation of the RRDC cultural festival in KwaNongoma, by considering the sociocultural and socioeconomic effects resulting from the cancellation. The objectives were to discuss the effects of the cancellation of the RRDC, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the event stakeholders, to explore lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic; to propose guidelines and protocols for the organisation of safe cultural festivals in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and potential future pandemics.

In carrying out the study, qualitative research was conducted by means of phenomenological approach. Due to data collection constraints, the study followed non-probability convenience sampling and a total of 14 in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher had to conduct virtual interviews with the participants either telephonically or through other virtual platforms like Zoom or MS Teams. The recorded data obtained from the maidens, residents and organisers was transcribed into textual format whereafter the data were analysed using Creswell's six-step phenomenological approach.

The results indicated that, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic the cancellation of the RRDC had negative sociocultural and socioeconomic effects on the different stakeholder groups, such as the loss of a sense of belonging, loss of business opportunities and loss of opportunities to share cultural experiences. Stakeholders highlighted that COVID-19 restrictions affected the economy of KwaNongoma negatively since the festival is often attended by international and domestic tourists who contribute to improving the quality of life of the community. Furthermore, the study established the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and proposed guidelines and protocols for the organisation of safe cultural festivals in the context of the pandemic and beyond. The study recommends that organisers ensure resilience in the case of COVID-19 by encouraging communities to spread the hosting of such cultural events nationally during such crises as a means of product diversification and ensuring inclusive recovery which will contribute towards transformation in cultural tourism to secure sustainability both during and post the COVID-19 restrictions' era. Managerial and practical implications are also highlighted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When the time is right, I, the Lord will make it happen. Isaiah 60:22.

I wish to thank:

- God almighty. I give you all the Glory. Thank you, Lord for the strength, grace, health, unconditional love, wisdom and for never failing me – it was not easy at all.
- To my supervisors, Dr Hilary Kennedy Nji Bama and Mrs Parveen Ebrahim, thank you for not giving up on me. Thank you for standing by my side through this journey. Your supervision, support and assistance did not go unnoticed.
- To my family OKhoza OMsuthu OBhija this is for you. More especially, my late grandfather, I'm living the dream you had vision for all your grandchildren.
- For the prayers of my mother, the endless encouragement of my father and my biggest cheerleaders – my sister, uNobomi Ndaba and my little brother, Aphendulwe Ndaba: I hope you know how much I appreciate you for believing in my dreams and always having faith in everything that I do.
- To my late aunts, Nomfundo Mkhatshane and Vuyelwa Vumisa who succumbed to COVID-19 in 2020: Thank you for making education fashionable. I know that you are definitely proud of me. Continue resting well.
- To my people who showed up and believed that I'm going to make it: Unathi Mkhatshane, Milisa Mpu, Sabelo Yaphi, Siphosethu Vumisa, Nonkanyiso Conco, Athi Ndaba, Lolweth Luthuli and Lwando Mabophe. Thank you for everything and for always listening to me every time when I felt like giving up.
- To the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts & Culture: Thank you for allowing me this opportunity.
- To all the maidens, service provides, local residents and organisers who participated in the study. I will forever be grateful.
- To the National Department of Tourism for funding my study in 2020.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and background to the study

Over the years, there has been rapid development in the event-management industry where festivals and special events are hosted regularly (Singh, 2013:1). The tourism industry in South African has become a marketing strategy used by tourism stakeholders to develop destinations and to gain economic benefits (Tassiopoulos, 2005: xiv). There are various ways in which events can be grouped or categorised, including size, form and content (Allen et al., 2008). The common categories, when categorising events by size, include major events, hallmark events, mega events and local/community events (Bowdin et al, 2006:19). Local or community events are festivals or events that are mostly hosted in communities and that target the local audiences (Bowdin et al., 2006:19). As stated by Bowdin et al. (2006:19), local or community events are supported by the local government since such events create a sense of pride in the community and a feeling of belonging. According to Perić and Vitezić (2019:2), the most important impacts of festivals can be grouped into three categories, namely sociocultural, economic and environmental impacts. Such events include the Grahamstown National Arts Festival, Up the Creek, Cape Town Minstrel Carnival, and the Royal Reed Dance Ceremony. According to Janiskee (1996), community events can grow into hallmark events and can draw a large number of visitors to a community.

In South Africa, the tourism and events industry is regarded as one of the major contributing industries to the country's economy (Bauer et al., 2016). The tourism and events industry contributes about 9% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while further providing employment opportunities to approximately 11.1% of the national workforce (Sami et al., 2019). Tassiopoulos (2010:9) states that cultural events are celebrated through heritage commemoration, parades, religious pageants, carnivals and festivals. According to the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), cultural events have the potential to grow and to contribute to related sectors like the hospitality, tourism, infrastructure, and technical services sectors, and to create sustainable jobs for the locals (South Africa, 2019). In KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) alone, R7 million was invested to support events that have the ability to attract visitors to the KZN province (South African Government, 2018). KZN is known for hosting a number of cultural festivals, namely the First Fruits Cultural Festival (uMkhosi woSelwa), the gathering of Shembe, uMkhosi woMama and the Royal Reed Dance Ceremony (RRDC) (Nkosi, 2019).

Over three decades, the RRDC has become a popular heritage and tourist attraction for the KZN province because it attracts thousands of domestic and international tourists (Nkosi, 2019). Once a year, the RRDC takes place in September at the Enyokeni Royal Palace in

Nongoma, where thousands of young women gather to celebrate the custom of retaining their virginity before marriage (Nkosi, 2019). The RRDC also known as uMkhosi woMhlanga is a dignified traditional ceremony, which represents the rich cultural heritage of the Zulu kingdom and celebrates the proud origin of the Zulu people and according to Zulu tradition, only virgins are permitted to take part in the RRDC to ensure that the young maidens signify purity (Nkosi, 2013). This annual festival was reintroduced by King Goodwill Zwelithini in 1984 (Bentley, 2008), and in 1994 the KZN provincial government adopted the RRDC as part of promoting cultural practices within the province (Mtaka, 2007; Nkosi, 2019; South African Government News Agency, 2013). The king has previously relied on the RRDC as an opportunity to educate Zulu youth on vital social issues such as practising sexual morality and behaviours which prevent teenage pregnancy and lower the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (Mail & Guardian, 2010), while, according to the extant literature, the main aim of the RRDC is to promote the Zulu culture and to provide a financial injection for the host community of Nongoma by using this ceremony as a tourist attraction (KZN Top Business, 2019; Mtaka, 2007; Nkosi, 2019). The Annual RRDC attracts thousands of young women who undergo virginity testing to travel from as far as Swaziland, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, and the Eastern Cape (Rakubu, 2019).

However, this was not the case in 2020/2021 when this high-profile ceremony was forced to cancel owing to concerns over the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). COVID-19 is defined by Medscape (2021) as 'illness caused by a novel coronavirus called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCov)' and the virus was first identified in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China (WHO, 2020a). COVID-19 was initially reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on 31 December 2019 and on 11 March 2020 the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic, when at least 192 countries had already been impacted by this pandemic. Mass gatherings were banned as social distancing became the norm and South Africa was no exception.

President Cyril Ramaphosa announced a National State of Disaster while addressing the nation on 15 March 2020 and gatherings of more than 100 people were prohibited (SACoronavirus, 2020). The country was in lockdown, communities and households were under quarantine, and events were postponed or cancelled. Carnival and festivals, such as the Grahamstown National Arts Festival, the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, the Durban July, and also the Royal Reed Dance Ceremony (RRDC) were amongst some of the events that were cancelled. On 23 March 2020, the South Africa President announced that the country would be placed under lockdown from 26 March until 16 April 2020 but this lockdown was later extended indefinitely (SACoronavirus, 2020). The COVID-19 five-level alert system was introduced to bring about the gradual easing of the lockdown and the alert levels governed the

level of restrictions to be applied during the National State of Disaster. Alert Level 5 shows a low health system readiness with a high COVID-19 spread. Alert Level 4 points out a low- to moderate health-system readiness with a high COVID-19 spread: Alert Level 3 indicates a moderate health-system readiness with a moderate COVID-19 spread: Alert level 2 shows a high health-system readiness with a moderate COVID-19 spread and alert level 1 points out a high health-system readiness with a low COVID-19 spread (South African Government, 2020a).

These alert levels meant that several standard activities could recommence, with safety measures and health guidelines followed at all times. Alert level 1 was in place as from 21 September 2020 at 00h01 to 28 December 2020 at 24h00 (South African Government, 2020b). Alert level 1 allowed a limit of 250 persons or a smaller amount at an outdoor social event gathering. In case of an indoor assembly, 100 persons or fewer were allowed and if the venue was too small to hold 100 persons observing a distance of at least one and a half metres from each other, then not more than 50 per cent of the volume of the venue may be used (South Africa, 2020b). On 26 July 2021 South Africa was placed on adjusted alert level 3 and was then experiencing a deadly third wave of the pandemic. As of 26 August 2021, South Africa had 2.7 million cases recorded and 80 826 deaths since the pandemic started (SA Coronavirus, 2021). Various types of events were still forced either to be postponed and/or cancelled as gathering were permitted but limited to 50 persons or fewer for indoor venues and 100 persons or fewer for outdoor venues.

According to Ahmed & Memish (2020) cancellation or postponement of a festival is considered the ideal decision when it comes to a pandemic situation. Therefore, the need to determine the effects of the cancellation of a cultural festival such as the RRDC because of the COVID-19 pandemic, is very important given that the impact varies from event to event.

1.2 Clarification of basic terms and concepts

The following keywords were used throughout the research study; hence, there is a need for clarification: Coronavirus (COVID-19), culture tourism, event, event impacts and festivals.

1.2.1 Coronavirus (COVID-19) 2019

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is 'an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. COVID-19 is a disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, which was identified by the World Health Organization in Wuhan, China in December 2019' (WebMD, 2020). The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes (WHO, 2020).

1.2.2 Cultural Tourism

According to Richards and Palmer (2010:17), cultural events are used as means of reproducing identity and to celebrate different cultures or historical events. Cultural events are a worldwide form of events that pre-date the modern events industry (Bowdin et al., 2006:18). Shone and Parry (2010:11) state that cultural events have become very evident, often as a way of emphasising the significance of the event itself or the ceremony. According to Richards and Palmer (2010:33), cultural events enhance community pride, improve the image of cities, add life to city streets and give citizens renewed pride in their city. Getz (2007:305) confirms that cultural events have social impact that reinforces traditions and cultural events, and furthermore, cultural events assist in the development or maintenance of community identity.

1.2.3 Culture

According to Horn et al., (2014:277) culture is a way of life, shared by a group of individuals and includes shared customs, laws, beliefs, values and knowledge. Cleary (2003:28) elaborates that culture is also the specific knowledge and beliefs that community members have which enable individuals to operate in an acceptable manner. Schultz and Lavenda (2005:4) define culture as 'sets of learned behaviour and ideas that human beings acquire, learn and pass on to members of the community'. Furthermore, cultures bind people together and give each individual a sense of belonging (Cleary, 2003:28).

1.2.4 Events

According to Getz (1997:4-11), events, by definition, 'have a beginning and an end, meaning that events are temporary occurrences, either planned or unplanned, with a limited length of time'. Bladen et al. (2012:19) add that events have a defined starting time, a programme and a finishing time. Events are also regarded as purposive gatherings of people and often display rituals and a sense of uniqueness (Berridge, 2007:5).

Bowdin et al. (2006:14), highlight the term special events and define special events as 'celebrations or specific ceremonies that are created and planned deliberately to mark special occasions either corporate, social and/ or cultural'. Getz (2005:23) continues to define special events by stating that, 'to the customer or guest, a special event is an opportunity for a leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experience'.

The Convention Industry Council (2003) states that events are occasions that are organised, such as festivals, meetings, conventions, exhibitions, special events, or gala dinners, to name a few, while Getz (2007:21) states that conferences, fairs and festivals are planned events, which are created to achieve detailed outcomes. According to Van Der Wagen and Carlos

(2005:2), events are characterised as a 'once in a lifetime' experience for participants. They are generally expensive to stage and require careful planning. Furthermore, festival events are held annually, generally at the same time every year (Van Der Wagen & Carlos, 2005: 2).

1.2.5 Event impacts

Event impacts are the measurable effects of an event that exist even after the event has taken place (Cuckoo event, 2022). Events have a range of negative and positive impacts on the host communities and stakeholders. The impacts may include social impacts, economic impacts, political impacts, and environmental impacts (Cuckoo event, 2022). It is, therefore, important for the event manager to predict event impacts by countering potential negative impacts and maximising the foreseeable positive impacts (Colbourne College, 2022)

1.2.6 Festivals

According to Getz (2007:31), festivals are defined as 'themed, public celebrations'. Hauptfleisch et al., (2007:33) state that festivals are public events that are introduced into a particular cultural context as an important expression of human activity contributing much to an individual's social and cultural life. Festivals are community-planned events that involve the residents of the community, promote a positive city image, and attract tourists to the community (Getz, 2007:23). Furthermore, Allan & Alan (2016:4) state that festivals are themed and inclusive community event or series of events that are created as a result of a community-planning process to celebrate the specific way of the lives of the people living in a certain community. Festivals are also increasingly linked with tourism to generate business activity and income for the host communities (Allen et al., 2008:13).

1.3 Statement of the research problem

Shone & Parry (2010:5) indicate that hosting events and festivals go way beyond what can be measured in economic terms. Festivals can benefit the host community, with some of these benefits being: assisting in job creation, improving the spirit and pride of the local community; marketing the destination by means of attracting new, extra and/or repeat visitors to the hosting city or community, and building awareness of diverse cultures and identities. Donaldson (2018) states that over 10 000 festivals are hosted annually in South Africa while Snowball & Antrobus (2020) identified around 600 annual cultural festivals hosted in South Africa. As suggested by Slabbert & Viviers (2013) events create social as well as economic impacts and play an important role in tourism.

However, since March 2020, the events industry was one of the industry's most severely impacted by the mobility-related restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic as all events or gatherings of more than one hundred (100) people were prohibited and various types of events were forced to either be cancelled and/or postponed (Bama & Nyikana, 2021). Until

this time, the RRDC had continued for several decades without interruption, only to be halted by such an emergency in the form of a global pandemic in 2020/2021. Extant research studies have been undertaken on the impact of various pandemics inclusive of COVID-19, which have affected the tourism industry (Dwyer et al., 2006; Gu & Wall, 2006; Maphanga & Henama, 2019; Page et al., 2012). These studies focused on identifying the effects of such pandemics on tourism enterprises and operations in the different environments in which they occurred such as Australia, China, the United Kingdom and Africa. In addition, other studies have been conducted on the impacts and implications of the COVID-19 outbreak on various facets of the tourism and events industry (Cerulo, 2020; Madray, 2020; Mohanty et al., 2020; Rigwema & Celestin, 2020; Swart & Maralack, 2020). However, effects of the cancellation of cultural festivals owing to the COVID-19 pandemic remain largely unexplored in the literature, particularly in relation to the socio-cultural and economic effects thereto. Moreover, no study has specifically considered the cancellation of the RRDC, owing to COVID-19-related restrictions and its related ramifications on events' different stakeholders, specifically in the South African context. The current study, therefore, delves into the socio-cultural and economic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC, given the restrictions imposed as a result of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa.

1.4 Significance of the study

The reason for this study was prompted by the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the tourism sector and that there is a need to investigate and understand the nature of the impacts. The study conducted by Perić & Vitezić (2019:11) recommends measuring both the positive and negative effects of event cancellation from the viewpoint of residents. Therefore, this study builds on the call of Perić & Vitezić (2019:11) for continuous research about event cancellation. There is no current study which determines the socioeconomic and environmental effects of the cancellation of a cultural festival in the context of cultural events in South Africa owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the attendees, residents. and event organisers. Events were prohibited by the South Africa government in an attempt to flatten the curve of the COVID-19 outbreak, with consequent effects on the South African tourism and events industry (SACoronavirus, 2020).

As such, the researcher is interested in investigating the sociocultural and economic effects of event cancellation owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. This study will determine what the event organisers, local residents and event participants regard as the impacts of the RRDC cancellation. Furthermore, the study will contribute to the event-management literature by attempting to analyse the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cancellation of a cultural festival and will provide guidelines for how to deal with such pandemics in the future, helping the sector to recover and to remain resilient.

1.5 Aim of the research

The aim of this research is to determine the consequences of the cancellation of the RRDC in KwaNongoma, South Africa as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to meet the aim of the research, the following research objectives and questions will be identified.

1.5.1 Research objectives

In order to meet the above-mentioned aim of the study, the following objectives will be investigated:

- To determine the socio-cultural and socio-economic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the event stakeholders.
- To determine lessons learned by the event stakeholders from the cancellation of the RRDC, because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To propose guidelines and protocols based on stakeholder perceptions for the organisation of safe cultural festivals in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.5.2 Research questions

The research will aim especially to answer the questions developed from the aim and objectives:

- What are the sociocultural and economic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the event stakeholders?
- What are the lessons learned by the event stakeholders from the cancellation of the RRDC, because of the COVID-19 pandemic?

1.6 Method of research

Research design according to Blanche et al, (2010:34) provide a blueprint that specifies how the research is going to be achieved in such a way that it answers the research question. Blanche et al, (2010:35) state that research design ensures that the final report answers the initial research question as it involves decisions about the way in which data will be collected and analysed. To gather knowledge, date can be collected in two ways, by means of primary and secondary date collection (Bhat, 2018). According to (Bhat, 2018) primary research is defined as "a methodology used by researchers to collect data directly, rather than depending on data collected from previously done research". Bhat (2018) continues and defines secondary research as "a research method that involves using already existing data, existing data is summarised and collated to increase the overall effectiveness of research.

1.6.1 Literature study

In order to access literature for this study, numerous information searches were conducted to gather relevant information. Significant information was mainly collected from the internet and library catalogues. Apart from academic textbooks, e-books, Google Scholar, internet and

online scientific databases such as library catalogues, newspaper articles, published academic journal articles, theses and dissertations were also used. The keywords for this study included coronavirus (COVID-19), culture tourism, cultural events, event, event impacts, festivals, KwaNongoma and Royal Reed Dance Ceremony (RRDC). Through these sources and keywords, the questions of the study have been asked about what the socioeconomic and environmental effects of the cancellation of the RRDC are, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the event stakeholders.

1.6.2 Empirical study

An empirical study is the conclusion drawn from the collection and analysis of the primary data, based on hard evidence gathered from information collected from real-life experiences or observations (Kumar, 2011:9). This study followed a qualitative, phenomenological approach to determine and understand the consequences of the cancellation of the RRDC in KwaNongoma, South Africa as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Blanche et al. (2010:562) explain that a phenomenological approach is 'a research approach aims to understand human experience, behaviour and attitude through methods such as interviews or focus groups. According to (Maree, 2016:78) qualitative, phenomenological approach allows the researcher to collects data from individuals who experienced the phenomenon in order to develop a composite description. In this section, the methods selected for the empirical analysis is highlighted and includes the research design, sampling and the method of collecting data. Furthermore, the development of interview guide, the population and study area, issues of trustworthiness and data analysis is discussed.

1.6.2.1 Research approach

For the purpose of this study, a qualitative research approach was used in order to obtain in-depth detail and understanding of the effects of the cancellation of a cultural festival, such as the RRDC, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Qualitative research is generally based on describing and explaining individuals' experience and beliefs (Veal & Burton, 2014:218). Blanche et al. (2010:272) mention that, in order to interpret and describe people's feelings and experiences, it is considered best to use qualitative research. The main focus in qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people (Kumar, 2011:104).

1.6.2.2 Research design

A research design is a strategic plan or framework that guides the research activity and aims to serve as a bridge between the implementation of the research and the research questions (Blanche et al., 2010:563). This study is an exploratory study as it investigates the perceptions

of stakeholders regarding the impact that the cancellation of the event had on them, owing to COVID-19.).

A phenomenological approach was used for this qualitative study. Phenomenology, as defined by Blanche et al. (2010:562) is 'a research approach which aims to understand human experience in context'. The researcher thus collects data from individuals who experienced the phenomenon in order to develop a composite description (Maree, 2016:78). Exploratory research and the phenomenological approach assisted the researcher to understand the sociocultural and economic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the event stakeholders.

1.6.2.3 The target population

KwaNongoma is located to the north of KwaZulu-Natal and Nongoma Local Municipality is Zululand's second largest municipality in terms of population (Stats SA, 2011). According to News24 (2018) close to 45 000 young women gather to celebrate the custom of retaining their virginity before marriage at the RRDC. In addition, the RRDC represents the rich cultural heritage of the kingdom of the Zulu and the cultural festival is attended by thousands of people. The target population of this study focused specifically on the maidens who previously attended the RRDC in 2019 and were not able to attend the festival owing to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, the local residents in KwaNongoma, and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture, who are the event organisers and the service providers but only participants that were willing to partake were include in the semi-structured interviews.

1.6.2.4 Sampling method

This study used non-probability sampling. According to Blanche et al. (2010:564), non-probability 'refers to the kind of sampling in which the collection of elements is not determined by the statistical principle of randomness'. A convenience sampling method was followed where participants were selected based on the element that they are easily and conveniently available. Dörnyei (2007) states that the convenience sampling method is used in situations where members of the target population are selected based on certain conditions, such as availability at a given time, easy accessibility, or willingness to participate in the study.

1.6.2.5 Sample size

According to Patton (1990:184), the sample size in qualitative research is subject to what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the research, what is at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility and what can be done with the available time and resources. Thus, for this study, 14 interviews were conducted since they assisted in revealing detailed and rich knowledge about the effects of the cancellation of the RRDC owing to the COVID-19 pandemic

and also to ensure the minimum numbers of interviews are conducted to reach and achieve saturation levels.

1.6.2.6 Data collection instruments and methods

According to Merriam (1998), as stated by Maree (2016:37), data collection methods refers to how the researcher explains how data is to be collected in order to answer the research question. For the purpose of this study, a semi-structured interview guide served as the tool for collecting the data, since the aim of the interviews was to gain rich, descriptive data that helped the researcher to understand what participants considered to be the effects of the cancellation of the RRDC as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The first section determined the profile of the participants taking part in the study and the second part of the interview guide focused on investigating the socioeconomic and environmental effects of the RRDC cancellation owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Probing was applied in order to obtain more information, when necessary.

1.6.2.7 Data collection

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher conducted virtual interviews with participants, either telephonically or through other virtual platform such as Zoom or MS Teams, which were recorded in order to ensure accurate transcription. According to De Vos et al. (2005:167), such interviews have certain advantages similar to self-administered questionnaires as they provide the researcher with an opportunity to clarify questions with the participants. In addition, interviews allow the researcher to gather data quickly and to follow up immediately on responses given by the participant (De Vos et al., 2005:167).

1.6.2.8 Data analysis and coding

Creswell (2003) defines data analysis as 'a process consisting of specified steps with multiple levels of analysis'. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:99), the process for qualitative data analysis focuses on understanding how participants make meaning of a given phenomenon by analysing their feelings, values, understanding, knowledge and experience. The recorded data obtained from the maidens, local residents, and organisers were first transcribed into a Word document, whereafter the data was then be analysed using Creswell's six steps.

1.7 Delineation of the study

The study was limited to determining the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of the cancellation of the RRDC, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of the study was on the event stakeholders of the RRDC, such as local residents of KwaNongoma, the event organisers of the RRDC, and event participants.

1.8 Ethical considerations

The purpose of ethical considerations is to keep the researchers alert regarding ethical issues that may arise during the course of the research process and to encourage researchers to take responsibility for their own ethical practice (Struwig & Stead, 2013:216). The following is a list of features, which were considered to ensure that the rights of participants in this study were safeguarded.

Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and no data were collected without obtaining ethical clearance. Apart from this, the following were also applied:

- A letter of permission was obtained from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Art and Culture. This letter served as permission for the research to be conducted at the RRDC.
- The purpose of the study was outlined and explained to each participant before they were interviewed.
- Informed consent was obtained by the researcher from each participant as the interviews would be audiotaped and each participant may or may have not disclosed their names. They were given the option of anonymity.
- No under 18s were included in the data collection unless permission was obtained from the parent/ guardian.
- All participants were clearly informed of their right to withdraw from participating in the research at any moment.
- The researcher was open, and honest. Through introspection, the researcher role was also clarified in order to be aware of researcher bias at all times about the research and its purpose.
- During the interview, the researcher confirmed with the respondents that their perceptions were understood appropriately and correctly by repeating what was said, and providing respondents an opportunity to correct any misunderstanding and to eliminate any researcher bias. This is especially important in qualitative studies.
- All the data collected was stored at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology as evidence of the study.
- For confidentiality and anonymity in the data analysis of the interviews, participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identities, e.g. Interviewee One.

1.9 Chapter classification

This study consists of five chapters. A brief outline follows of what can be expected from each chapter:

1.9.1 Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter consists of an introduction, background to the research, the problem statement, aims and research objectives, method of research, the significance of the research and definitions of the key concepts used in this study. The aim of this chapter is to explain the purpose of this research and to provide a brief understanding of how this study will be conducted.

1.9.2 Chapter Two: Literature review

This chapter will presents the literature review pertaining to the background of events, classification of events, and cultural festivals, and information on the RRDC. The chapter will also look at the effects of the cancellation of the RRDC festival because of the COVID-19 pandemic and previous literature conducted on the cancellation of festivals.

1.9.3 Chapter Three: Research design and methodology

The methodology relating to this research will be discussed in detail. This chapter will also include topics relating to the research design and method of collecting data, sampling, the development of the questionnaire, data analysis and ethical considerations.

1.9.4 Chapter Four: Data analysis

This chapter presents the results from the analysed data collected. Chapter Four will be separated into two units: the first section will describe the profile of participants who were interviewed, and the second section will present the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cancellation of a cultural festival, specifically the 2020 RRDC.

1.9.5 Chapter Five: Conclusions and recommendations

The final chapter of this study will consist of the conclusions drawn from previous chapters. Recommendations about the festival cancellation will be made to assist event organisers and managers of the RRDC to improve the success and sustainability of the festival. This chapter will further deliberate the limitations of the research and create recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON CULTURAL TOURISM AND STRATEGIC LEVERAGES FOR CULTURAL FESTIVALS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the South Africa tourism industry, as measures to combat the spread of COVID-19 were implemented. In the light of this, from April 2020 to September 2020 South Africa did not receive visitors. From 10.2 million tourists in 2019 to just 2.8 million in 2020, which is a 72.6% decrease in the volume of tourists (Stats SA, 2021a). For the KZN province the 'final nail in the coffin' was the ban on major events and the RRDC, a local community event that has a great potential to attract tourists and generate revenue for the host communities of KwaNongoma, KwaZulu-Natal, was no exception. This chapter therefore presents a review of literature about the concepts of cultural tourism, events, festivals, cultural festivals, COVID-19, the impacts on a cultural festival, uMkhosi woMhlanga, also known as the RRDC, and how this can be leveraged to contribute to an event that can withstand future shocks and disruptions. The potential for recovery of the cultural festival and its contributions will be discussed within the broad context of tourism and sustainability.

2.2 Tourism

Every year, on the 27 September, world tourism is celebrated (UNWTO, 2022). Tourism in South Africa has been recognised as an important driver for economic growth and development. In 2013 the National Development Plan recognised the tourism sector as one of the highly labour-intensive sectors that could accelerate the process towards the achievement of targets set for job creation in the country. Based on the analyses done by SA Tourism (2021) the tourism sectors contributed R363.2 billion towards the GDP (6,9% of total GDP) in 2019. Tourism has been a global industry involving hundreds of millions of people travelling internationally as well as domestically each year for the purpose of leisure and pleasure. The tourism sectors have been globally acknowledged as one of the key sectors contributing to the world economy over the years (South African Tourism, 2021a).

It has to be noted that there are different types of tourism and tourist travel for different purposes. Therefore, according to Tourism Notes (2018), tourism can be categorised into two types: international and domestic tourism. International tourism occurs when tourists cross boundaries to visit a foreign country and tourists are, in most cases, required to have a valid passport, visa, and health documents. International tourism involves using different currencies, meeting different types of people and experiencing culture shock (Stainton, 2021). According to Stainton (2021), international travel gives tourists an opportunity to be immersed in different

cultures as this is not easy to achieve with domestic tourism. In addition, international tourism is divided into two types, namely inbound tourism and outbound tourism (Tourism Note, 2018), where inbound refers to tourists of outside origin entering a particular country. When visitors travel outside their country for reference to another country, then it is called inbound tourism for that country to which they are travelling. Outbound tourism refers to tourists travelling from the country of their origin to another country. When tourists travel a foreign region, then it is outbound tourism for their own country because they are going outside their country. Domestic tourism occurs when tourists discover local destinations within their native counties (Bama & Nyikana, 2021). UNWTO states that domestic tourism encompasses activities of tourists visiting within a country of reference and being interested in multiple aspects of their travels. Richards (2009) states that both international and domestic tourists have various purposes for travelling such as Agri-tourism, adventure tourism, scientific tourism, educational tourism and cultural tourism as categorised in Figure 2.1 and this study focuses on cultural tourism. A definition provided by the ICOMOS (International Scientific Committee on Cultural Tourism: 1997) defines of cultural tourism as

> *that activity which enables people to experience the different ways of life of other people, thereby gaining at first hand an understanding of their customs, traditions, the physical environment, the intellectual ideas and those places of architectural, historic, archaeological or other cultural significance which remain from earlier times.*

The definition relate to the cultural experience of the RRDC, hence it is important to understand cultural tourism and the roles of cultural tourism for host communities.

2.2 Cultural tourism

Cultural tourism was first recognised as part of the array of available tourism experiences in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It was only recognised as a distinct product category in the late 1970s when tourism marketers and tourism researchers realised that some people travelled specifically to gain a deeper understanding of the culture or heritage of a destination (Tighe, 1986). Worldwide, people have been travelling and visiting museums, cultural landmarks, historical sites, attending special events and festivals; this represents cultural tourism. Csapó (2014:201) states that cultural tourism is a very complex segment of the tourism industry and, to define cultural tourism, it is first necessary to have a basic understanding of the meaning of the term culture. According to Horn et al. (2014:277), culture is a way of life that is shared by a group of individuals in terms of their custom, laws, beliefs, values and knowledge. Hofstede (1997:297) states that 'Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving'. According to Cleary (2003:28), culture also refers to the specific knowledge and beliefs that community members have which enables individuals to operate in an

acceptable manner. We can conclude that culture is part of the lifestyle which binds people together and gives each individual a sense of belonging.

When taking cultural tourism into consideration, there is a rich and intense history in South African as the country offers a massive diversity in cultural tourism, countless world-class sites commemorating the past, such as the Hector Pieterson Square in Soweto or the famous battlefield sites Isandlwana in KwaZulu-Natal (South African Tourism, 2021a). As recommended by South African Tourism (2021), the best way to experience South Africa's cultures fully is to attend a country festival such as Street Food Festivals or the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown or a number of cultural festivals hosted in Zululand in KZN. Cultural tourism form part of alternative tourism as indicated in figure 2.1 and cultural tourism has important role to play in support local culture and sustainable tourism as highlighted below.
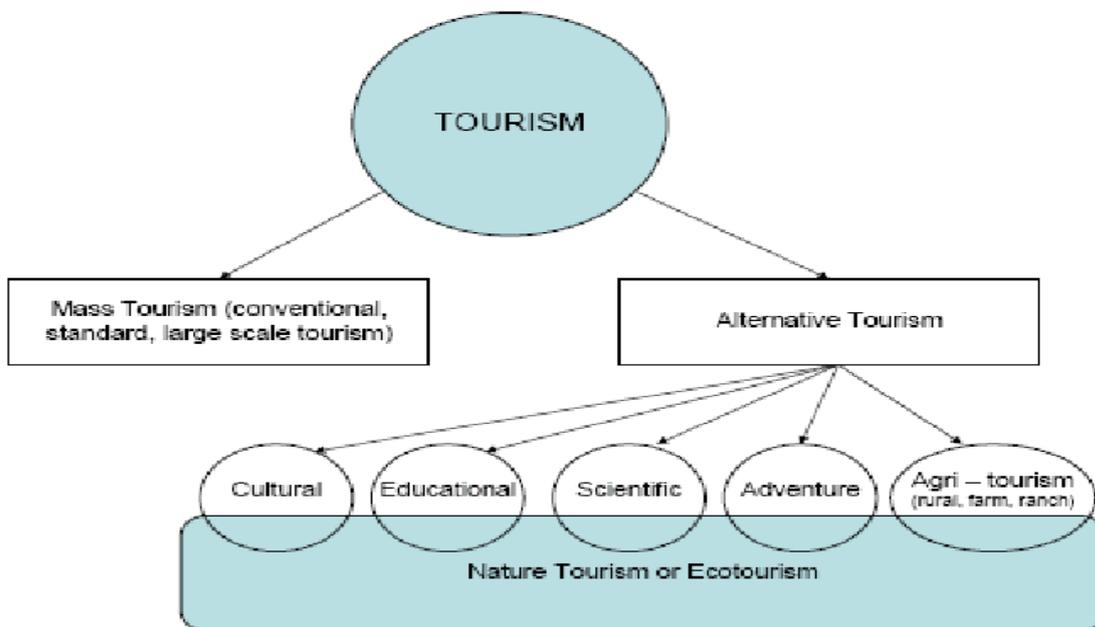
Figure 2.1: The role and place of cultural tourism within alternative tourism
Source: Mieczkowski (1995:459) in Csapó (2014)

2.2.1 The role and place of cultural tourism within alternative tourism

Cultural tourism has become one of the most desirable development options for communities and countries as cultural tourism has the potential to strengthen the local culture and traditions (Csapó, 2014). Through cultural tourism communities around the world can share unique tangible and intangible heritage and culture experiences to boost economic growth, improve the life quality of the local communities while ensuring sustainable development (Wu et al, 2020). Cultural tourism is becoming prominent as its programmes contribute to infrastructure development and national identity, support social development and local employment. Mousavi et al., (2016) highlight that one of the most important components of cultural tourism are identity whereby the host communities promote a unique identity to pull visitors to their communities.

There are three basic types of identity described by Mousavi et al., (2016) namely, legitimated identity, resistant identity and projectable identity and cultural tourism has significant role in contributing to the three types of identity. As national monument are promoted thus supporting legitimate identity, creating cultural itineraries for resistant identity and promoting new images for communities for projectable identity. Therefore cultural tourism has a role in diminishing local identity of communities. It has to be noted that cultural tourism is not just about consuming cultural products of the past but a very complex segment of the tourism industry, hence the following section classify cultural tourism into different types of tourism: activities or products, as illustrated in Table 2.1.

2.2.3 Types of cultural tourism

Table 2.1 introduces and highlights the most important types or elements of cultural tourism from a thematic perspective grouped by the principles of the preferred activity. Cultural tourism is classified in the following way:

Table 2.1: Classification of major cultural tourism forms

Types of cultural tourism	Tourism products, activities

Heritage tourism	• Natural and cultural heritage (very much nature-based or ecotourism).
	• Material
	  - built heritage,
	  - architectural sites,
	  - world heritage sites,
	  - national and historical memorials.
	• Non-material
	  - literature,
	  - arts,
	  - folklore.
	• Cultural heritage sites
	  - museums, collections,
	  - libraries,
	  - theatres,
	  - event locations,
	  - memories connected to historical.
	• Persons

Cultural thematic routes	• Wide range of themes and types:
	  - spiritual,
	  - industrial,
	  - artistic,
	  - gastronomic,
	  - architectural,
	  - linguistic,
	  - vernacular
	  - minority

Cultural city tourism, cultural tours	• 'Classic' city tourism, sightseeing • Cultural capitals of Europe • Cities as creative spaces for cultural tourism
Traditions, ethnic tourism	• Local cultural traditions • Ethnic diversity
Religious tourism, pilgrimage routes	• Visiting religious sites and locations with religious motivation

	• Visiting religious sites and locations without religious motivation (desired by the architectural and cultural importance of the sight) • Pilgrimage routes

Creative culture, creative tourism	• Traditional cultural and artistic activities
	  - performing arts,
	  - visual arts,
	  - cultural heritage and literature.
	• Cultural industries
	  - printed works,
	  - multimedia,
	  - the press,
	  - cinema,
	  - audio-visual and phonographic.
	• Productions,
	  - craft,
	  - design and cultural tourism.

Event and festival tourism	• Cultural festivals and events - Music festivals and events (classic and light or pop music) • -Fine arts festivals and events

Source: Csapó (2014)

The preferred activities in Table 2.1 demonstrate how culture and tourism have aligned to develop into distinctive products with event and festival tourism offering an opportunity for people to travel as well as to gain insights into the culture of a destination through cultural festivals.

2.3 Background of events

As stated by Zlatanov (2015), several events have long existed as a significant part of human society and have been devised as form of civic ritual, public display and collective celebration. Bowdin et al. (2006:14) define an event as 'anything that happens, results in any incidence or occurrence especially a memorable one; contingency or possibility of occurrence; an item in a programme; an organised activity at a particular venue'. An event is often composed of several different yet related functions' (Getz, 1997:4–11), and Tassiopoulos (2010:12), states that events are temporary occurrences, either planned or unplanned, over a limited period of time or irregularly occurring occasions outside the normal programme of the sponsoring or organising body. According to Singh (2013), events are all about the business of thrill and excitement and having fun and making money while working. Today, events are central to an individual's culture as perhaps never before (Bowdin et al., 2006:15). Throughout history, events have been an important feature of people lives (Tassiopoulos, 2010:12). Goldblatt (2008) places his focuses on special events as 'a unique moment in time, celebrated with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs'.

Getz (2008) suggested that, for event attendees, a special event is an opportunity to socialise, for leisure or a cultural experience that is outside the normal programmes or beyond everyday

activities. Six core attributes of special events were suggested by Jago and Shaw (1998) that special events should 'attract tourists or tourism development; be of limited duration. Once-off or infrequent occurrence; raise the awareness, image, or profile of a region; offer a social experience; and, be out of the ordinary'. In their summary definition of a special event, they draw together a number of the above areas: 'A one-time or infrequently occurring event of limited duration that provides the consumer with a leisure and social opportunity beyond everyday experience. Such events, which attract, or have the potential to attract, tourists, are often held to raise the profile, image or awareness of a region.'

Since 1994, events in South Africa have grown, offering international, local and community events (Saayman, 2016). South Africa has nine regions and each of the provinces has its own distinctive personality. Therefore, the local festivals reflect the culture, food, and interests of the people of the area (Culture trip, 2018). Here are some of the best-known festivals in South Africa: the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown; the Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (KKNK) (translated as the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival, KKNK) representing Afrikaans culture across the spectrum of music; the Cape Town International Jazz Festival; and the Durban July (Saayman, 2016).

2.4 Classification of events

Events could be classified according to nature, type, and size. According to Tassiopoulos (2010: 10) 'events' consist of two types: planned and unplanned events. As defined by Getz, (1997) and Saayman (2012:149) planned events are socially occasions that are hosted in order to achieve a specific outcome. They last for a period of time that is usually fixed and publicised. Planned events have a systemic programme that involves the implementation and designing for the event theme, activities for the event and constrained experiences for stakeholders, participants and the host community (Tassiopoulos, 2010:10). Planned events consist of two categories: ordinary or common, and special events (Tassiopoulos, 2010:11). As stated by Tassiopoulos (2010:11) ordinary or common events are more personal and common in nature and include birthdays parties, weddings, graduations and anniversaries to list a few. Whereas Goldblatt (2011:5) defines a special event as "a unique moment in time celebrated with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs" a one time, infrequently occurring event of a limited duration (Bowdin et al., 2006:14). Special event have the ability to attracts tourists in to the host community, ensure sustainable tourism and stimulates the economy by offering a social experience out of the ordinary and raises awareness or the profile of the host destination (Bowdin et al., 2006:14). Tassiopoulos, (2010:11) highlights that 'special event' is a generic term used in the tourist sense and includes the following categories: minor special events and major special events. Major special events contain two categories: hallmark events and mega events. Each of these classifications are discussed in the following section.

2.4.1 Classification of events according to size

Bowdin et al. (2006:15) state that there are many ways of categorising and grouping events such as 'size or scale' and 'form and content'. Events are often characterised according to size and scale. Common categories are major events, hallmark events, mega- and local/community events, as illustrated in Figure 2.2, where the arrow indicates the impact of the event. Local events have low impact compared to mega events (Bowdin et al, 2006:15). Mega events, as described by Jago & Shaw (1998:12) and Tassiopoulos (2010.12), are 'business, sport or cultural events that can attract very large numbers of attendees or have a large cost or psychological effect on host destination. According to Getz (2005:18), mega-events are generally developed following competitive bidding and mega-events includes the Olympic Games, FIFA World Cup, and World Fairs. Therefore, it is difficult for many other events to fit into this category that is why Marris in Getz, (2005:18) defines mega-events in terms of attendees volume should exceed one million visits and the event reputation should be that of a 'must see' events. (Getz, 2005:6) goes on to state that mega-events, by way of the size or significance, are events that yield extraordinarily high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige or economic impact for the host community, venue or organisation. Hence Hefnawy et al., (2016:687), states that large cities compete to host mega events as such events ensure global exposure, increase in recognition for the host city, in addition to many economic, social and cultural benefits.

Hallmark events are major, once-off or recurring events (Goldblatt, 2011:11). Richie (1984:2), defines hallmark events as 'major one time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance awareness, appeal, and profitability of a tourism destination in the short term or long term, such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status or timely significance to create interest and attract attention'. As stated by Getz & Page (2016:29) that the function of hallmark events is to achieve a set of goals that increase tourism and benefit the host community, namely; attracting tourists, creating and enhancing a positive image that is co-branded with the destination or community and delivering multiple benefits to residents. Hallmark events affects the host destination by contributing to its image, attracting the attention of the public, and maintaining and revitalising traditions (Getz et al.,2012:52). An example of a hallmark event is the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, known throughout the world as the largest arts festival on the African continent and one of the largest performing arts festivals in the world by visitor numbers (National Arts Festival, 2022). Major events are events that, by their scale and media interest are capable of attracting significant visitor numbers, media coverage and economic benefits' (Bowdin, et al, 2011:20). Tassiopoulos (2010:11) state that major events are expensive to host, may involve tradition or symbolism, attracts funds and creates demand for support services as well as being known for leaving legacies for the host destination. According to Jago & Shaw (1998:12) and Shone & Parry (2013:73) major events

are large- scale (usually national or international) which are high in status or prestige, and which attract large crowds and media attention. Examples of major events include the J &B metropolitan Horse Race - Cape Town, Knysna Oyster Festival and The Pick n Pay Argus Cycle Tour to name a few.

Local or community event as stated by Allen et al. (2005:15) and Getz and Page (2016:599), is small in scale event, which involves the participation of the local community and is hosted over a period of one to two days. According to Bowdin et al. (2011:16), as defined by Janiskee (1996:404), a **local or community event** is defined as 'a family-fun event owned by the community, while using volunteer services such as the host community, public venues like streets, parks, and schools, supported by local government agencies and non-government organisations (NGO's)'. Allen et al. (2005:15) indicate that a local or community event attracts local audiences and is staged for fun, social and cultural reasons. Such events are hosted to showcase a specific local community with little effect in attracting tourists (Getz & Page, 2016:29). The demand for local or community events has increased business opportunities for event organisers and has played a major part in the economy of the local community (Raj et al., 2013). By hosting local or community events, event organisers have the opportunity to improve the benefits of creating community pride, a sense of place and strengthening the feeling of belonging (Allen et al., 2005:14). With the above-mentioned classifications in mind, the RRDC can be described as a local or community event owing to its size and the festival mainly impacting specific stakeholders.
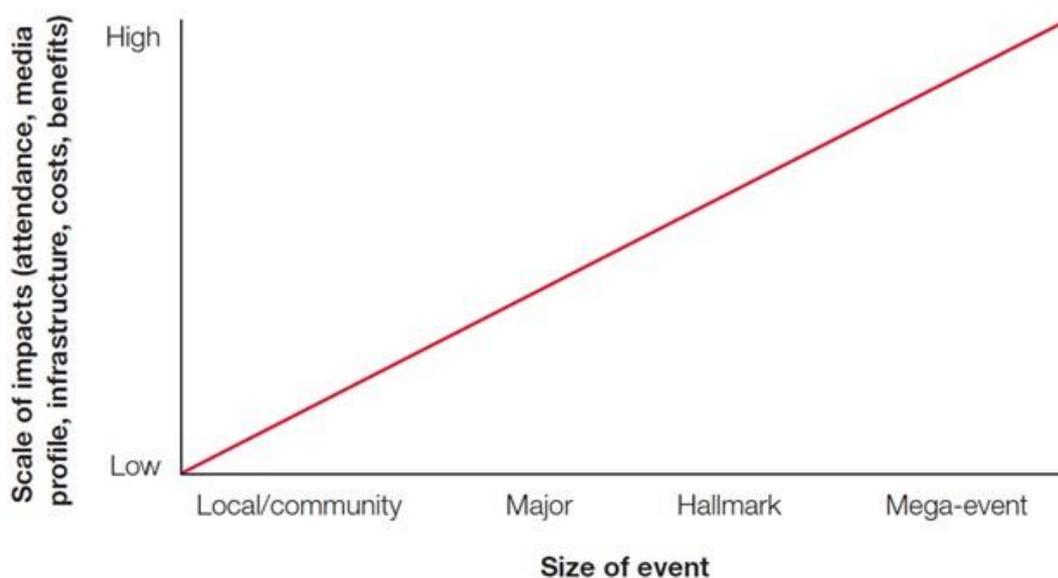
Figure 2.2: Categorisation of events
Source: Bowdin et al. (2011)

2.4.2 Form or content

Bowdin et al., (2011:18) classify events according to their form or content and figure 2.3 provides a typology of the main categories of planned events namely **business & trade events** which include conferences, exhibitions, incentive travel and corporate events. Bowdin et al. (2011:18) state that the above industries are sometimes grouped as discretionary business tourism of the MICE-industry and the purpose of business & trade events is to promote, market or directly engage in meeting corporate objectives. **Sports competition events** range from the largest of international events to local leagues and competitions for communities and children (Raj et al., 2013: 14). Bowdin et al. (2011:18) state that sports events are an important and growing part of the event industry, encompassing the full spectrum of individual sport and multi-sport events such as the Olympic, Commonwealth and Masters games. **Art & entertainment events,** as defined by Tassiopoulos (2010:14), are 'universal and display considerable diversity in the forms and types of art featured'. **Political & state events** are treated, implicitly, as a subset of debates regarding the nature of the political (MacKenzie, 2008). Such events need high security since political event are attended by government VIPs and leaders. It takes a huge effort, at great cost, to mount these kinds of events. **Educational & scientific event** according to Getz (2008:42) theme-specific academic and professional symposia are the focus of educational and scientific events. Educational & scientific event includes events such as conventions, retreats, webinars, congresses, clinics, seminars, conferences, workshops and symposia (Tassiopolous, 2010:14). Recreational events as stated by Getz (2007:43) are events organised by non-profit organizations, recreation agencies and affinity groups (like churches, schools and clubs) for non-competitive reasons, and are often playful in nature. Such events include football, card games, and exercise or dance classes.

According to Getz (2007:44) **private events** are used for individuals who want certain guests to arrive at the venue. These events will have a guest list to ensure that the venue is not open to the public and include weddings or birthday parties. Cultural events are celebrations with a specific topic "that involves tourists experiencing and having contact with a host population and its cultural expressions, experiencing the uniqueness of culture, heritage and the characters of its place and people" (Wall & Mathieson, 2006:26).

According to Richards & Palmer (2010:17), cultural events are used as means of reproducing identity and to celebrate different cultures or historical events. Cultural events are a worldwide form of events that pre-date the modern events industry (Bowdin et al., 2006:18). Shone and Parry (2010:11) state that cultural events have become very evident, often as a way of emphasising the significance of the event itself or the ceremony. According to Richards & Palmer (2010:33), cultural events enhance community pride, improve the image of cities, and add life to city streets and give citizens renewed pride in their city. Getz (2007:305) confirms

that cultural events have social impact that reinforces traditions and cultural events, and furthermore, cultural events assist in the development or maintenance of community identity. Cultural events allow attendees at express various aspects of an individual's culture as such events celebrating the history of the community, traditional elements of identity and cultural value Witepski et al. (2016:10). There are different types of events that can be classified as cultural events that are present today, such as exhibitions of artistic works, carnivals, street shows, commemorations and Tassiopoulos (2010:13) continues to state that the most common form of cultural event is through festivals. Therefore the RRDC could be categorised as a cultural event which is a festival, hence the next section will explain festival and cultural festivals in Zululand.

Business & Trade	**Political & State**	**Recreational**
-meeting	-summits	-sport or games for fun
-conventions	-royal occasions	
-consumer and trade shows	-political events	**Private events**
-fairs, markets	-VIP visits520	-weddings
		-parties
Sport Competition	**Educational and Scientific**	-social
-amateur/professional	-conferences	
-spectator/participant	-seminars	**Cultural Events**
	-clinics	**-**festivals
Arts & Entertainment		-carnivals
-concerts		-commemorations
-award ceremonies		-religious events

Figure 2.3: Typology of planned events
Source: Getz (2008)

2.5 Festivals

Festivals are organised with a purpose for developing and protecting local history and culture, creating employment opportunities and developing the tourism industry of the community (Gunersel, 1997:28). Getz (1994) defines a festival as 'a celebration with a public theme where the social and symbolic meaning of the event is closely related to a series of overt values that the community recognizes as essential to its ideology and worldview, its social identity, its historical continuity, and its physical survival'. Festivals are community-planned events that involve the residents of the community, promote a positive city image and attract tourists to the community (Getz, 2017:23). Furthermore, Allan & Alan (2016:4) state that festivals are themed and inclusive community events or series of events that are created as a result of a community-planning process to celebrate the specific way of the lives of the people living in a certain

community. Quinn (2009:5) notes the festive and public celebratory characteristics contained in this definition and argues that they are important because festivals and events have long existed as significant cultural practices devised as forms of public display, collective celebration and civic ritual. In addition, as stated by Raj et al. (2013, 8), festivals enable tourists to see how the local community celebrate culture because festivals create a sense of shared values, perspectives and beliefs within the local community. While providing an opportunity for the host destination to bring people from diverse backgrounds to the destination for the duration of the festival (Raj et al., 2013: 8). A number of annual festivals are hosted in South Africa as shown in Table 2.1

Table 2.1: South Africa annual festivals

Name of the event	Hosted in	Year Started
Aardklop National Arts Festival	Potchefstroom	1998
Cape Town International Jazz Festival (CTIJF)	Cape Town	2000
Hermanus Whale Festivals	Hermanuse	1991
Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (KKNK)	Oudsthoorn	1994
Knysana Oyster Festival	Knysna	1983
Robertson Wacky Wine Weekend	Robertson	2004
Royal Reed Dance Ceremony	Nongoma	1991
South African Cheese Festival	Sandringham Farm	2002
The National Art Festival	Grahamstown	1973

Source: SA-venues (2023)

2.5.1 Cultural festivals in Zululand

A number of cultural festivals are hosted in the Zululand regions as a way of celebrating the Zulu culture. According to South African Government (2015) **Umkhosi weSivivane (uMkhosi woMama)** is an annual event hosted at the KwaKhangelamankengane Royal Palace that sees women from across the KZN province gathered to be equipped with skills on how to deal with socioeconomic challenges. The aim of the ceremony is to educate and empower women through discussions with the Zulu queens, during the uMkhosi weSivivana, the women present bundled reeds to His Majesty (South African Government, 2015). **Umkhosi woSelwa (First Fruit Ceremony)** is the traditional Zulu first fruit ritual, an annual harvest celebration, where the king, after having tasted the new season's crop, blesses the crops (South African Government, 2015). Umkhosi woSelwa or uMkhosi woKweshwama takes place annually in December or early January at the Enyokeni Royal Palace and during the event young men who are referred to as amabutho (warriors) participate in a series of rituals such as killing a bull with their bare hands and stick fighting as a sign of their strength and their ability to defend the nation (Ulwazi Programme) (KZN Sport and Recreation, 2016).The South African Government (2020e) stats that **Umkhosi waMaganu (the annual Amarula Festival)** annual

festival taking place at the eMachobeni Royal Palace in Ngwavuma, celebrates the harvesting of the first amarula fruit of the season in KZN. The king is the one to take the first sip of the traditional drink made from marula fruit before declaring it open for responsible consumption. According to the KZN Department of Arts and Culture, the annual Amarula Festival attracts people from neighbouring countries such as Mozambique and the Kingdom of eSwatini who also practise the same cultural ceremony (South African Government, 2020e). According to the KZN Department of Arts & Culture (2020) **Umkhosi weLembe (King Shaka commemoration)** is an event that honours the legacy of AmaZulu founder King Shaka Zulu. The ceremony provides a unique opportunity for South Africans to glimpse the heartbeat of Zulu pride as they witness hundreds of Zulu men and women dressed in full traditional gear (North Coast Courier) **(**KZN Department of Arts & Culture,2020).

The **Royal Reed Dance Ceremony** or uMkhosi woMhlanga is a dignified traditional ceremony, which represents the rich cultural heritage of the kingdom of the Zulu and celebrates the proud origin of the Zulu people. According to Zulu tradition, only virgins are permitted to take part in the RRDC (Mail & Guardian, 2010). Over the first weekend of September, thousands of maidens come out in numbers to attend uMkhosi woMhlanga at eNyokeni Royal Palace in KwaNongoma (Gwebu, 2019). Under the rule of Sobhuza in Swaziland in the 1940s, uMhlanga was created and the festival was introduced in South Africa in 1991 by the former King Goodwill Zwelithini (Heyiamindians.com, 2019). Participants of the Royal Reed Dance are girls who are virgins (have not had sex) known as the maidens. This cultural festival attracts thousands of maidens from all over KZN, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and Swaziland (Shandu, 2017) because as the event promotes high self-esteem to the girls and encourages them to wait for the right time to be intimate with their partner (Shandu, 2017). According to Nkosi (2019), uMkhosi woMhlanga celebrates the maidens' purity. The event aims to celebrate the and honour maidens for taking pride in their virginity, while the late king has used the cultural festival to promote sexual abstinence for young girls as part of a strategy to prevent the spread of HIV/Aids (Duma, 2020). As part of the festival, the maidens wear traditional attire including beadwork, izigege and izinculubu they as dance bare-breasted. Each of them carefully chooses the strongest and longest reed, then carries the reed with pride in a slow procession up the hill to Enyokeni Palace (Shandu, 2017). The event starts about three weeks before the main event when ibutho (a group of men or regiment) set off to harvest thousands of reeds (Nkosi, 2019). The reeds reflect a deep Zulu myth that if a young girl who is not a virgin takes part in the Royal Reed Dance Ceremony, her reed will break and embarrass her in full public view (Nongoma inn, 2022). Festivals impact every aspect of our lives and it is therefore important to identify, monitor and manage the impacts of events and festivals.

2.6 Impacts of hosting cultural festival

Every city or country has its own reasons for wanting to host an event, but financial benefits are likely to be at the top of the list (Clipper Round the World, 2017). Events have numerous types of impacts on the host community ranging from environmental and cultural, to social and economic (Raj et al., 2013:40). According to Allen et al. (2005; 31), events and festivals have both positive and negative impacts on the host community and the stakeholders and event managers have the task to identify and predict these impacts. These have to be well managed in order to ensure the best outcomes for all stakeholders by maximising the positive impacts and countering the negative impacts (Bowdin et al., 2011:37). Cultural festivals that are organised at a local level have direct and indirect impacts on communities. Cudnyet al. (2012) explain that cultural festivals provide opportunities that go well beyond what can be measured in economic terms because such events promote the communities, showcase the culture of the host city, attract tourists and ensure the opportunities to improve the quality of life for the local residents. The participation of the stakeholders in cultural festivals affects the success of the event directly and, according to Janeczko et al. (2002) it has to be noted that there is a direct relationship between the size or scale of the festival and the impact it produces. This means that, as the festival increases in size, the media coverage of the festival increases, there is more potential attendance and both possible costs and benefits for the host community. This is why it is suggested that event managers should be able to identify, describe and manage the event impacts, better known as the 'triple bottom line' (Bowdin et al., 2011:39). Tourism literature has indicated that the impact of any event hosted should be examined under the three headings (social, environmental and economic) both in positive and negative manners (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012). Table 2.2 summarises the impacts of event on the host communities highlighting both the positive and negative outcome.

Table 2.2: Social, environmental and economic impacts of events

	Social and Cultural	Physical and Environmental	Event and Economic
Positive	Shared experience	Showcasing the environment	Job creation
	Revitalising traditions	Infrastructure legacy	Higher yield
	Building community pride	Urban transformation and renewal	Destination promotion & increased tourist visits
	Validation of community groups	Providing models for best practice	Extended length of stay
	Increased community participation	Increasing environmental Awareness	Business opportunities
	Introducing new and challenging ideas	Improved transport and communications	Increased tax revenue
	Expanding cultural Perspectives		Commercial activity
Negative	Community alienation	Environmental damage	Loss of authenticity
	Manipulation of community	Pollution	Community resistance to tourism
	Negative community image	Destruction of heritage	Financial management and financial loss
	Bad behaviour	Noise disturbance	Damage to reputation

	Social and Cultural	Physical and Environmental	Event and Economic
	Substance abuse	Traffic congestion	Opportunity costs
	Social dislocation		Inflated prices
	Loss of amenity		Exploitation

Source: Allen et al. (2010:68–69)

2.6.1 Social and cultural impacts

Today, the motivation for hosting events and festivals is to ensure that the event affects the participants and the host community **positively** both socially and culturally (Raj et al 2013:37). Events and festivals increase the pride of the community, offer a shared entertainment experience, while other events and festivals leave a greater awareness and involvement in sporting and cultural activities. Events can revive the cultural and social life of the local people, provide a sense of identity, or enhance the image of a destination (Pasanen et al., 2009). Festivals and events play a number of significant roles in towns or regions (Yeoman et al., 2004). According to Grames and Vitcenda (2012), festivals promote community pride by celebrating things that make a town special and by evoking good feelings (Yeoman et al., 2004). Tassiopoulos (2000:395) states that such events are attractive to host communities because festivals help to develop local pride and identity for the residents. As maintained by Getz (1997:24), events and festivals provide an opportunity for community cultural development and in South Africa we have seen popular events and festivals being hosted such as the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, and the National Arts Festival, which both have big media coverage. For KZN, the number of hosts of cultural festivals have increased and have been a key part of promoting the province. However, because such events are increasing in the number of attendees, there is a greater potential for things to go wrong, which generates the negative impacts (Bowdin et al., 2011:41). Allen (2010:68) highlights negative consequences, such as the manipulation of communities and community alienation which could arise from the pursuit of event objectives. Festivals such as the RRDC therefore need to manage aspects such as crowd behaviour carefully because the event is attended by more than 40 000 attendees. Getz (1997) highlights that events and festivals have unintended social consequences, such as bad behaviour by crowds, substance abuse or an increase in criminal activities.

2.6.2 Physical and environmental impacts

Events and festivals have some form of physical or environmental impact, which certainly increases relative to the size of the event (Visit Monmouthshire, 2022). Events and festivals are a critical way to showcase the unique features of host environments, as stated by Hall (1989). Selling the images of festivals and events includes the marketing of intrinsic properties of the destination. Bowdin et al. (2011:44) say that event managers should consider the impacts of events and festivals on the environment because such impacts are restricted if

events or festivals are hosted in suitably purposed venues or buildings such as conference centres, stadiums or showgrounds. And if the event is hosted at a space that is not ordinarily reserved for events and festivals, the impact may be greater (Bowdin et al., 2011:41). Events have numerous positive effects on the natural and physical environments. The infrastructure at the destination is re-organised, a proper road network is ensured, lighting and other facilities are set up to accommodate events. Major impacts could be noise levels, crowd movement and control, and parking. Another common environmental impact includes littering in the event site and in the areas around the event. Events managers need to minimise this impact and to demonstrate best waste management practices during events, such as following the mantra of reducing, reusing and recycling (Visit Monmouthshire, 2022). In the case of the RRDC being cancelled owing to the COVID-19 pandemic there were no negative environmental impacts for the host community, but event managers will need to consider aspects such as environmental damage and waste management for the coming festivals.

2.6.3 Events and the economy

Events and festivals should always attempt to generate economic benefits for the host community and the surrounding area in which they take place (Visit Monmouthshire, 2022). According to Bowdin et al. (2011:50), the growth in the tourism industry is capable of providing job creation and economic benefits and the tourism revenue generated by events and festivals is considered to be one of the most important impacts. Event and festival attendees are likely to spend money travelling to the event, spend money at the event, and on the services and goods in the host community (Bowdin et al., 2011:50). Major events have a positive effect on employment since such events generate substantial employment in the phase of construction during the planning stages of the event. Events and festivals also provide the host community with a platform to showcase their capabilities and knowledge and to promote new business opportunities. On the other hand, Allen (2010: 68-690) cautions that inflated prices, and loss of authenticity through exploitation could lead to community resistance, which would inhibit the growth of tourism and its benefits.

2.7 Pandemics within the tourism and cultural event industry

Doshi (2011) defines a pandemic as 'an epidemic occurring worldwide or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people'. In contemporary times, the world has faced several epidemics and pandemics. These pandemics and outbreaks such as Ebola & Zika virus impacted on the tourism industry in negatively (Maphanga & Henama, 2019). According to Maphanga & Henama (2019) mass gatherings events, or religious gathering attract millions of travellers around the world to the host-country and those travellers, are at risk of acquiring local endemic infectious diseases (Blumberg et al., 2016:38). It started with the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome

(SARS) coronavirus in 2002, followed by the Middle Eastern respiratory syndrome (MERS) and the Ebola in 2013, and still currently circulating in parts of the world. The SARS was the first epidemic to be experienced in the 21st century, the virus first broke out in Guangdong province in southern China in November 2002 and, on 2 April 2003, WHO declared Guangzhou and Hong Kong as high-risk tourist destinations as the virus spread rapidly throughout China and Southeast Asia (Jamal & Budke, 2020). According to Zeng et al. (2005), as the SARS cases were increasing, countries started to restrict Chinese travellers from entering their countries and international tourist were also warned not to visit. The outbreak of swine flu in 2009 was defined as a pandemic and the virus clamed approximately 284 000 deaths worldwide (Viboud & Simonsen, 2012). The impacts of the pandemic were examined by Russy & Smith (2013) and the findings showed that in Mexico there were losses of about US$2.8 billion owing to losing almost a million overseas visitors over a five-month period. Meanwhile, some counties had to deal with other pandemics such as the MERS-Cov that was identified in Egypt in 2012, and Ebola, which saw its first outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2014 affected various African tourism destinations (Maphanga & Henama, 2019). Event were cancelled in DRC while travellers cancelled their trips to countries such as Kenya and South Africa where there was no hint of the virus (Maphanga & Henama, 2019). Therefore, when there is a global pandemic festival and event takes a massive hit as festivals will experienced low consumption due to restrictions.

2.8 The COVID-19 Pandemic

The coronavirus is defined as a 'large group of viruses that cause diseases in animals and humans' and, since December 2019, the world has been battling against COVID-19 but this is not the first time in the 21st century that a coronavirus has taken the public health community by surprise (National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, 2022).

COVID-19 was initially reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on 31 December 2019 and on 11 March 2020, WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic. Drastic actions were taken by the Chinese government to limit the spread of the virus, meaning that numerous restrictions were imposed on travelling within and outside the country and on event gathering. Nevertheless, as of 6 February, 2020, over 600 deaths had been recorded in China from COVID-19 and at least 192 countries were already impacted by this pandemic. Numerous countries also imposed various forms of travel restrictions and travel bans. Furthermore, many airlines were limiting or stopping flights in and out of China (Bloomberg, 2020).

South Africa reported its first case on 5 March 2020. The patient was a 38-year-old male who travelled to Italy in a group of 10 people and arrived back in South African on 1 March 2020

(Bama & Nyikana, 2021). A risk- adjusted strategy was adopted by the South African government on 1 May, which ensured that measures were in place to reduce the transmission of the virus. As part of the approach, the five COVID-19 alert levels were introduced. In the regulation, the tourism-related industries such as accommodation, food and beverages, and aviation were not permitted in level 5, which had a negative impact on the tourism and events industry (South African Government, 2020).

2.8.1 COVID-19 and the impact on tourism and cultural events in South Africa

Tourism in South Africa contributes to the economic growth of the country as the sector plays a significant role in responding to the socioeconomic challenges faced by the country. The Department of Tourism acknowledges the tourism sector as a tool for economic development. The sector has been providing employment to individuals at varying skills levels and has been estimated to contribute more employment opportunities than the individual efforts of agriculture, automotive and chemical manufacturing, and mining (GVI people, 2020).

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic led to an unprecedented crisis for the South Africa economy and the tourism section was one of the first economic sectors to be impacted deeply by the pandemic. With measures to contain its spread, including restrictions on movement this placed many businesses and households in distress and many jobs were lost (South African Tourism, 2021). The South African government introduced the travel ban and a national lockdown, which led to all international and domestic travel being prohibited (Bama, Nyathela-Sunday & Makuzva, 2022). The international tourist arrivals collapsed, leaving airlines, hotel occupancies and tourism attractions either closed or operating below capacity, and massive numbers of jobs were lost (South African Government, 2021). According to Stats SA (2020) over two million jobs were cast off during 2020 and led to the official unemployment rate increasing at 34.6 per cent in the third quarter of 2021 and an expanded unemployment rate stands at 46.6 percent. Over 6 million people had applied for the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant (Statista, 2021).

The five-level risk-adjusted strategy was aimed at saving lives and preserving livelihoods. The event industry was badly hit by this risk-adjustment strategy because mass gatherings were prohibited and countless events had to be cancelled leading to many jobs being lost owing to the coronavirus pandemic (Bama et al., 2022). Given the mobility restrictions government implemented to protect people, manage the disease, and reduce the impact of the virus on the country, society and economy meant travel bans on visitors from high-risk countries, limited numbers at funerals, quarantine for nationals returning from high-risk countries, social distancing, and screening at ports of entry, which hit hard on every individual in South Africa. Level 5 was a full lockdown and level 4 still had high restrictions, as shown in Table 2.4. During

level 5 and 4, the tourism industry faced high restrictions, no travel for tourism purpose was permitted (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020). Level 5 lockdown restrictions were expected to be in place for three weeks but the restriction were extended as showed in Table 2.4 which led to about 50,000 companies closing temporarily with many in danger of closing permanently, leaving 600,000 employees depending on the Unemployment Insurance Fund's (UIF) Temporary Employee Relief Scheme (South African Tourism, 2020). The tourism sector according to the South Africa's risk-adjusted strategy was the last sector to re-open fully as it was assessed as level 2/1 activity within the risk-adjusted strategy (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020).

The hosting of event was re-opened in Alert level 2 which allowed a limit of 250 persons or fewer for an outdoor social event gathering (South African Government, 2020b). In the case of an indoor assembly, 100 persons or fewer were allowed and if the venue was too small to hold 100 persons observing a distance of at least one and a half metres from each other, then not more than 50 per cent of the volume of the venue may have been used (South African Government, 2020b).

Table 2.4: South Africa's risk-adjusted strategy/framework for phasing-out COVID-19 lockdowns

Alert level	Defining features	Implementation period	Measures
Level 5	High virus spread and/or low health-system readiness.	27 March for three weeks but later extended to 30 April 2020	Full lockdown
Level 4	Moderate to high virus spread with low to moderate health system readiness	30 April–30 May 2020	High restrictions
Level 3	Moderate virus spread, with moderate health-system readiness	31 May–16 August 2020	Moderate restrictions
Level 2	Moderate virus spread with high health-system readiness	17 August 2020–31 January 2021	Moderate to low restrictions
Level 1	Low virus spread with high health-system readiness.	28 February 2021–25 July 2021	Low restrictions
Level 3	Moderate virus spread, with moderate health-system readiness	26 July 2021–12 September 2021	Moderate restrictions
Level 2	Moderate virus spread with high health-system readiness	13 September 2021–30 September 2021	Moderate to low restrictions
Level 1	Low virus spread with high health-system readiness	01 October 2021–4 April 2022	Low restrictions
National Health Act: Regulations: Surveillance and control of notifiable medical conditions: Amendment			
None	Low virus spread with high health-system readiness	4 April 2022–22 June 2022	Low restrictions

Source: Adapted from Rogerson and Rogerson (2020)

In 2020 December during the second wave of the virus, Durban, as one of South Africa's top holiday destinations had to cancel major parties and events during the festive season. The KwaZulu-Natal government stated that hosting the events would not be allowed as COVID-19

infections were on the rise in the province (eNCA, 2020). According to Premier Sihle Zikalala, not hosting major events has an economic impact as such events inject millions of rands into the province but the lives of the citizens are more important and need to be protected (eNCA, 2020). For almost two years, events such as Durban Jazz Festival held at Hazelmere Dam on December 26, the well-known Fact Durban Rocks on New Year's Eve at People's Park and the cultural events hosted in the Zululand region were temporarily cancelled (IOL, 2020).

2.8.2 Guidelines and protocols used as recovery strategies for cultural events

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced unprecedented crisis to the global economy and, even with measures to contain the spread of the pandemic, the tourism sector was impacted as the sector faces profound and simultaneous demand and supply shocks. Stated by South African Tourism (2021b), it is highly uncertain when the tourism sector will recover. UNWTO suggests that the sector is expected to return to its pre-crisis level only in 2023. In the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) published in 2020, eight priorities were identified to drive the reconstruction and recovery of the South African economy. Tourism was positioned as a major sector that contributes to the South African economy (South African Tourism, 2021b). The recovery strategy developed by the government recognised three recovery phases: protect and rejuvenate supply, re-ignite demand, and strengthen the enabling capacity in the sector, as shown in Figure 2.4.
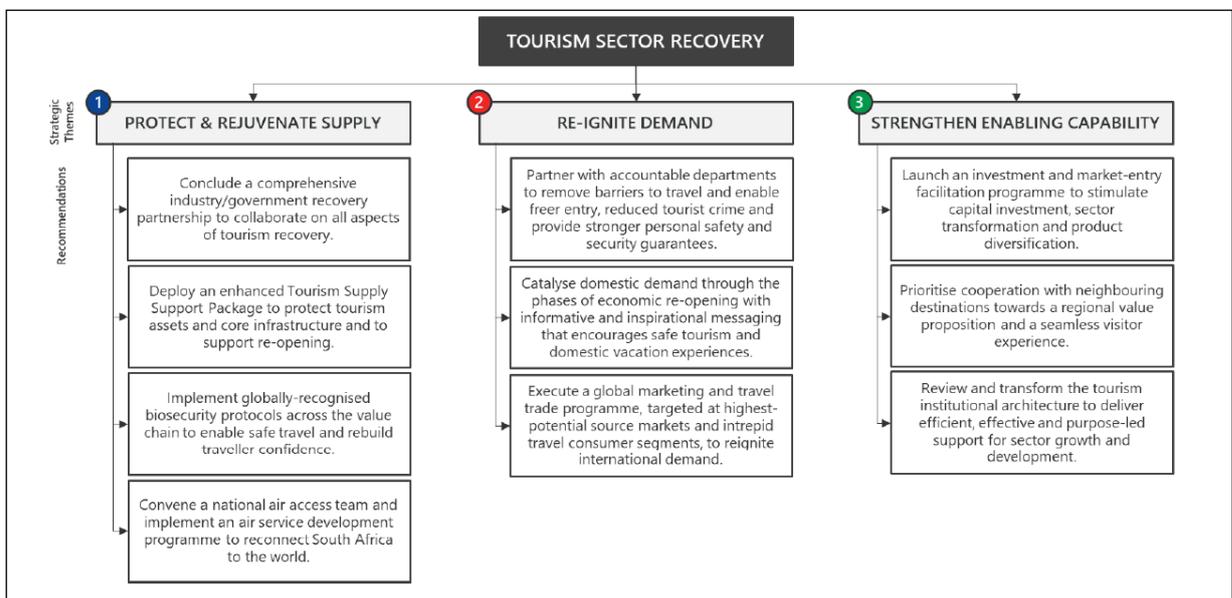
Figure 2.4: Tourism sector recovery plan
Source: South Africa (2020)

The Tourism Sector Recovery Plan (TSRP) is a response by the sector to identify the need for targeted, coordinated action to mitigate the impacts of the crisis and set the sector on the most optimal path to recovery, transformation and long-term sustainability. The key driver of the tourism recovery plan is domestic travel, encouraging domestic demand such as business events for which campaigns need to be launched and implemented. Communities such as

townships, villages and small towns will be encouraged to host national events as this will ensure inclusive recovery. Therefore, events such as the RRDC are events that will be used to encourage domestic tourism. The sector believes that by implementing the TSRP, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis could be reduced and employment will be up by 120 000 jobs as the TSRP will allow for a 'reset' of the tourism sector (South African Tourism, 2021b). According to South African Tourism (2021a), the COVID-19 pandemic presented an opportunity for the tourism sector to focus on *environmental sustainability, promote structural transformation, and ensure greater use of technology*, which are necessary elements towards an inclusive, more sustainable and resilient tourism sector (South African Tourism, 2021b).

2.9 Resilience in cultural events

Resilience is the ability to recover quickly from difficulties such as disaster or misfortune situations (Responsible Tourism Partnership, 2020). Walker et al. (2004: 5), defines resilience as the 'system's capacity to absorb disturbance and reorganize itself while undergoing change to retain essentially the same function, structure, identity, and feedbacks'. Merriam Webster (2022) defines resilience as 'the capability and the ability to adjust easily or recover from misfortune changes', while the business world identifies resilience as a strategy/tool to manage crisis for stability within the business, and adaptability to all kinds of risks, during natural disasters and emergencies (Hadi, 2020). Therefore, disaster researchers state that resilience is not simply a matter of restoring the festivals to their pre-disaster state; it also includes the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, adapt successfully to adverse events (Yamamoto, 2015), and to respond to change (Magis, 2010). In tourism, commonalities in writing on resilience relate to actual or potential response to crisis and, for this study, the researcher looks at the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 is not the first of its kind to hit the tourism industry as epidemics and pandemics such as SARS, MERS and Ebola have previously impacted the industry and it has managed to bounce back after disasters (Sharma et al., 2021). To ensure resilience in the case of the COVID-19, Sharma et al. (2021) recommend and outline the following factors: *government's response, technological resilience, local belongingness, and customer and employee confidence*. While there is support for the SMME, which are the market players of the industry, and resilience is in place, transformation for the tourism industry will occur, as illustrated in Figure 2.5.
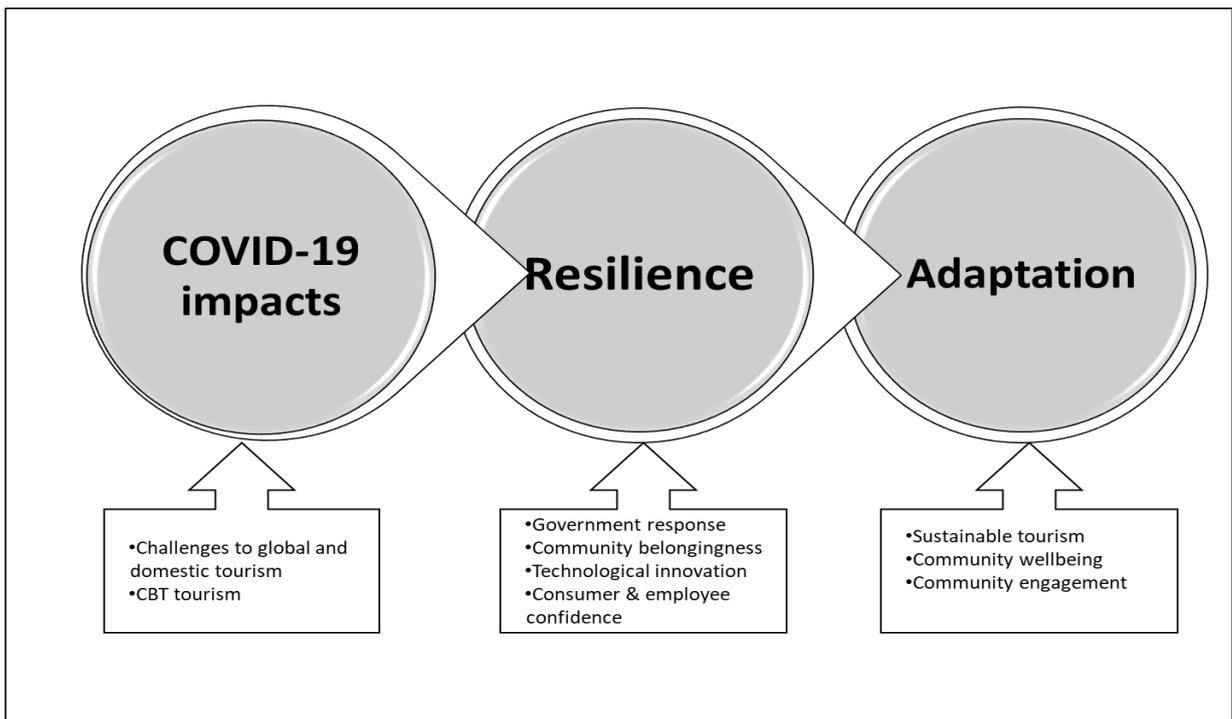
Figure 2.5: Resilience and transformation-based framework for the new global economic order in the COVID-19 context

Source: Adapted from Sharma et al. (2021)

Governments should strive to respond to the COVID-19 impact. The South African government, during the phase of re-opening the economy, has encouraged domestic tourism. Technology is a major force in creating flexibility in the tourism industry (Hall & Prayag, 2020). The event industry faced a travel ban and limitation of event attendees, so the use of technology for virtual events was the solution (Graham, 2022). Sharma et al. (2021) suggest local belongingness should come to the rescue where domestic travellers attend community events and receive the feeling of belongingness among locals. The COVID-19 impact influenced consumers' perceptions of tourism products and services (Yu et al., 2020), while employees were left jobless. Therefore, it is essential to gain consumer trust to travel again by sharing inspirational and informative messages that encourage safe tourism and domestic vacation experiences (South Africa, 2020). With the above being noted, Sharma et al. (2021) recommend that the tourism industry needs to demonstrate resilience from numerous sides and propose a working together of three segments: local communities, market players, and government in order to lend resilience to the tourism industry. Where the government encourages domestic tourism, local communities are able to host events and festivals that allow tourists to experience the feeling of belongingness. Noorashid & Chin (2021) and Sharma et al. (2021) state that transformations in tourism refers to the effort of recalibrating, restarting and readapting to the new environment and latest standards in the ever-changing tourism industry. COVID-19 has various impact in the tourism industry, hence it is important for cultural event organises to rethink and readapt in order to remain sustainable even after the COVID-

19 era (Noorashid & Chin, 2021). Sustainable tourism is one of the major transformation factor in reviving tourism post-COVID19 as stated by Sharma et al. (2021).

2.10 Chapter summary

This chapter provided an overview of the literature on tourism, culture tourism and the role and place of cultural tourism in alternative tourism. Cultural tourism is not simply the consumption of cultural products but a complex segment of the tourism industry classified into different types of activities or products. Event and festival tourism being a product of cultural tourism, an in-depth background and event classification of events was provided. The review noted that the RRDC is a local or community event and planned cultural event. This literature also highlighted that events and festivals have numerous types of impacts on the host communities, ranging from environmental and cultural, to social and economic, which have to be well managed in order to ensure the best outcomes for all stakeholders. The chapter further considered pandemics that have affected the tourism industry, focusing on the impacts of COVID-19 on tourism and cultural events, guidelines and protocols for recovery for cultural events. In the next chapter, the methodology relating to this research will be discussed, including the methods of the empirical study, methods of collecting data and data analysis.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research is a process of systematic investigation that is designed to collect, analyse, interpret and use data (Mertens, 2015:2). In order to provide new information about a topic or to explore the gaps in existing knowledge, researchers review existing knowledge by testing old findings with new participants (Mertens, 2015:2). Gratton & Jones (2010:4) also define research as being 'a systematic process of discovery and advancement of human knowledge'. Blanche et al. (2010:44) states that the purpose of a research project is reflected in what the researcher aims to attain through the study. Research methodology as defined by Rajasekar et al. (2013) 'is the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena". Methodology provides the focus and approach for the study and the stages that researcher pinpoint the methods that will be used in order to address the research problem (Kothari, 2004:101) in this case, the researcher identifies the effects of the cancellation of the RRDC in 2020 and 2021

The intention of the current chapter is to outline the rationale for the research methods chosen in this study. The chapter provides philosophical positioning of qualitative research and an explanation of research design. Further to this, this chapter describes and explains the study population, sample size, research instruments, and methods of data collection used in the study. Also, the chapter provides a description of how the data was analysed and ethical considerations that were followed, and it discusses the issues of data collection and analysis as it pertains to the study. The chapter concludes with a summary.

3.2 Research design

A research design is a procedural plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer questions, validly, objectively, accurately and economically (Kumar; 2011:94). Research design, according to Blanche et al. (2010:34), "a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem". Blanche et al. (2010:35) state that research design ensures that the final report answers the initial research question as it involves decisions about the way in which data will be collected and analysed. As stated by Magi (2010) that in a research design, the researcher must clearly indicate who the research respondents are, how they will be selected, and, most importantly, where they will come from. On the other side, Kumar (2011, 10) explains that objective perspective of a research study could be classified as descriptive, explanatory or exploratory. Descriptive research studies attempt to describe a situation, problem, and phenomena systematically (Kumar, 2011:10), whereas explanatory research studies provide causal explanations of phenomena (Blanche et al., 2010:44). This study will

follow the exploratory research approach as the objective of the study is to identify the key issues and to gain greater understanding of a phenomenon or a group of people (Maree, 2016:55). Maree (2016:55) furthermore states that exploratory study analyses and explore in detail a better understanding of a particular phenomenon typical of the case. For this research study the respondents include The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture officials, maidens who previously attended the RRDC, The adult women, known as the matrons and the service providers. The selection of the sampling techniques for this study is further discussed under 3.9 in detail.

Accordingly, this research study has followed the qualitative research study approaches which aims at gaining a deep understanding of specific event in this case is the cancellation of the RRDC, because of the COVID-19 pandemic (Bhawna & Gobind, 2015). By way of non-probability convenience sampling, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted as means of data collection from the respondents. Data were collected through virtual platforms like Zoom or MS Teams owing to pandemic-related restrictions. The research method, study area, population size, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data coding analysis, evaluation of qualitative research, ethical consideration and limitation are further discussed in detail in this section. Justifications of the chosen elements within the research study were provided in order.

3.3 Research philosophy

Creswell (2003:16) states that, for good qualitative research, the researcher must begin the research designs with philosophical assumptions as this will shape the direction of the research study. Philosophy is simply the use of beliefs and ideas that inform the research, and philosophical assumptions are normally the first ideas in developing a study as these assumptions are deeply rooted in shaping how the researcher formulates the research problem and questions to the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:12). Therefore, in the selection of qualitative research, queries make certain assumptions. These philosophical assumptions consist related to the nature of reality (ontology), to what counts as knowledge and how knowledge claims are justified by the research (epistemology), the role of values in research (axiology), and the methods used in the process (methodology). This research study followed the epistemological assumption, as the aim of the researcher was to understand the experiences and the participants being studied. This is knowledge about reality made known. Qualitative researchers use inductive logic, study the topic within its context and use an emerging design. The assumption reflects a particular stance that researchers make when choosing qualitative research and, after researchers make this choice they further shape their research by bringing to the inquiry paradigms or worldviews.

3.4 Qualitative research

Blanche et al (2010:563) define qualitative research as 'the kind of research that seeks to preserve the integrity of narrative data and attempts to use the data to exemplify unusual or core theme embedded in contexts'. According to Berg (2007:7), qualitative research seeks answers to questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit the settings. The focus in qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people (Kumar; 2011:104). According to Creswell, (2007:40), researchers conduct qualitative research to follow up on quantitative research to assist in understanding and to explain the linkage in causal theories.

3.4.1 Types of qualitative research

Creswell, (2007:53), Blanche et al. (2010:561), Merriam & Tisdell (2016: 24), states that there are five approaches to qualitative research designs namely: Narrative research, Ethnography Grounded theory, Case study and Phenomenology approach. In Table 3.2, the five approaches are summarised in terms of the focus of each, typical data collection methods, data-analysis strategy, and the synthesis or reporting format most frequently used. For this study, the phenomenological research approach was followed. Phenomenology, as defined by Blanche et al. (2010:562), is 'a research approach which aims to understand human experience in context' and then the researcher collects data from individuals who have experienced the phenomenon in order to develop a composite description (Maree, 2016: 78). As the researcher aimed to understanding the sociocultural and economic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the event stakeholders. Owing to pandemic-related restrictions the phenomenology approached allowed the researcher to conduct interviews with at least 14 respondents as suggested by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007:22).

3.5 Study area

The current research was conducted in Nongoma eNyokeni, in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa, focusing on the cultural festival uMkhosi woMhlanga (RRDC). Nongoma According to Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, (2020) the name Nongoma derived from the Zulu word, 'ngome' – the mother of songs. KwaNongoma is considered to be one of the busiest rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal, and the town is fast becoming a major tourist attraction, being the only area in the world which has six royal palaces (Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, 2020).

3.5.1 KwaZulu-Natal

KwaZulu-Natal, one of South Africa's nine provinces, is also referred to as KZN. Under apartheid in 1977 KwaZulu (place of the Zulu) was the old homeland and was granted self-government with the intention to be home of the Zulu people, while Natal was the old province.

In 1994, KwaZulu and Natal merged to be become KwaZulu-Natal with Pietermaritzburg being the capital city and Durban its major city (Berry, 2013). KZN is lucky to have two World Heritage Sites at the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park and the Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park (iSimangaliso) (Integrated Marketing, 2020). The province is home to the late Zulu monarch, King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu (TravelGround, 2022), and is made up of eight distinct regions with Zululand being the host region for cultural festivals as shown in Figure 3.1. Zululand is generally known as the rural area of KZN where many cultural practices remain intact and there are sites of great cultural significance to be explored (Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, 2020). The region has a number of amazing town such as Ulundi, Pongola, Richard's Bay, Eshowe and Nongoma where a number of cultural events takes place.

3.5.2 KwaNongoma

According to Nongoma Local Municipality (2020), Nongoma is situated in the northern part of KZN. The town is located on the R618 between Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park at Hlabisa and Hlobane, and the R66 between Pongola and Ulundi (55km). Nongoma is considered to be one of the busiest little towns in rural KZN. It is a unique town that offers tourists the opportunity to step back in time and experience the Zulu royal cultural events with Nongoma being the only area in the world to have six royal palaces that belonged to the late Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini (Nongoma Local Municipality, 2020), namely Osuth Royal Palace, Khethomthandayo Royal Palace, KwaDlamahlahla Royal Palace, KwaKhangelamankengane Royal Palace, Linduzulu Royal Palace and Enyokeni Royal Place. The Zulu Royal Household Trust receives support from the KZN Office of the Premier. In 2021/2022 The Office of the Premier allocated R66, 074 million for the Royal Household sub-programme. This budget is allocated for activities which include, among other things, the hosting of annual traditional and cultural events to preserve Zulu culture, events which the recently demised King Goodwill Zwelithini was famous for hosting (KZNonline, 2021). In addition, the current king of the Zulu nation resides in KwaNongoma, which makes Nongoma considered to be the Heart of the Zulu Kingdom. Figure 3.1 displays the area of Nongoma and the Royal Palace in Enyokeni.
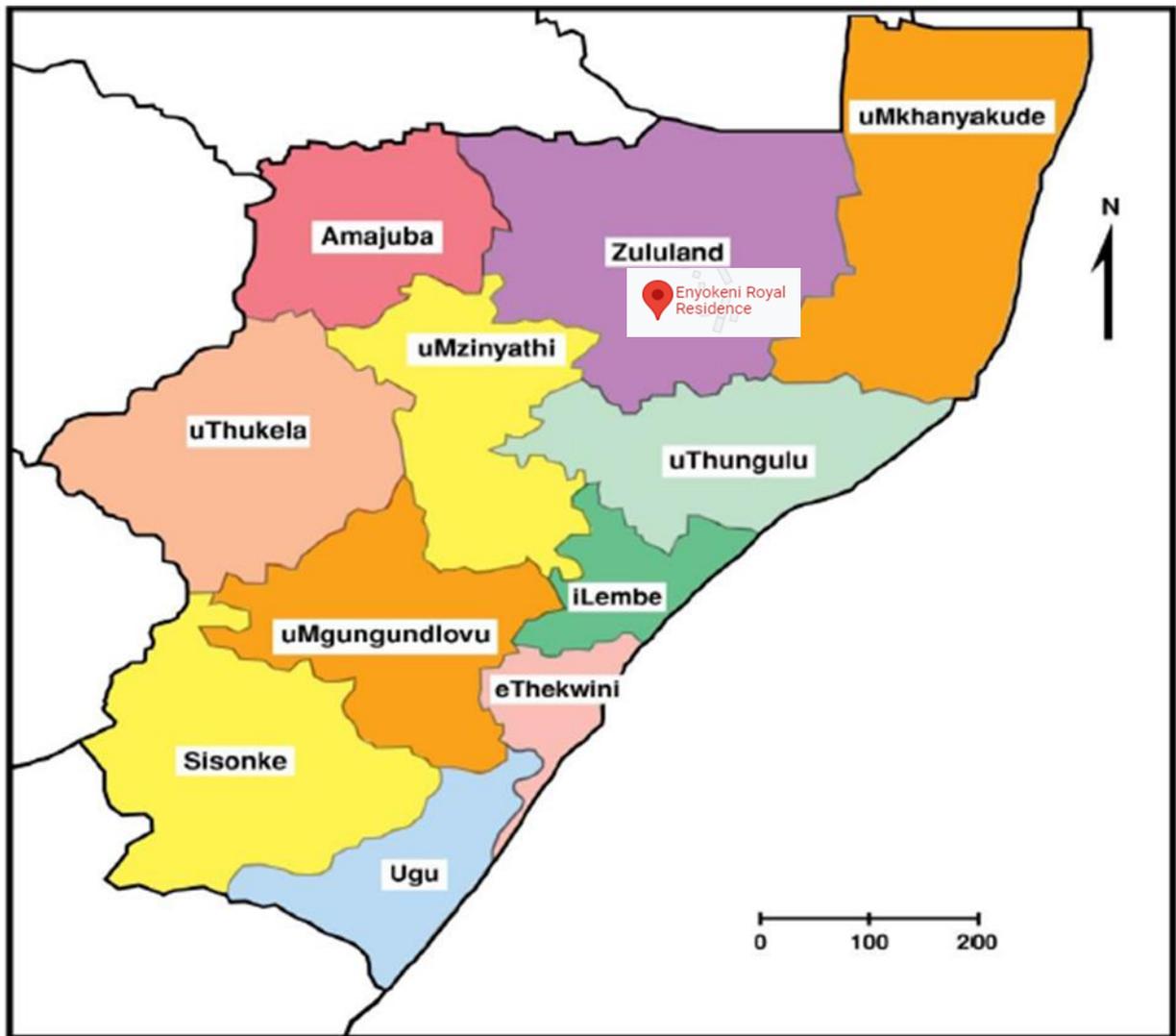
Figure 3.1: Map of KwaZulu-Natal indicating the eight distinct regions
Source: Nkosi (2019)

3.7 Justification of the study area

Nongoma is known for hosting special rituals and vibrant traditional festivals or ceremonies that tourists could experience. From private family events attended by close friends and family such as uMemulo (the coming of age for a girl child), uMkhehlo (hosted by the groom after lobola payment) or uMgcagco (the fascinating Zulu wedding), to annual events such uMkhosi wokweShwama (First fruit ceremony) or even the coronation of the king that happened on 20 August 2022.The coronation hosted at KwaKhangelamankengane Palace was attended by thousands of people from all over South African and neighbouring countries (Maseko, 2022). Festivals and events in KwaZulu-Natal have been contributing to towards the economy and creating jobs.

3.8 Study population

A study population is the larger group from which individuals, that the researcher selects to participate in a study and are usually selected, often denoted by N (Kumar, 2011:400). A study

population could be a group of people living in an area, employees of an organisation, or event attendees (Kumar, 2011:400). According to News24 (2018) close to 45 000 young women gather to celebrate the custom of retaining their virginity before marriage at the RRDC. In addition, the RRDC represents the rich cultural heritage of the kingdom of the Zulu and the cultural festival is attended by thousands of people.

The target population of this study specifically focused on the following stakeholders:

a) The maidens who previously attended the RRDC in 2019 and were not able to attend the festival owing to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020;

b) The adult women, known as the matrons, who accompany the groups of maidens from communities;

c) The local residents in KwaNongoma;

d) The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture officials, who are the event organisers; and

e) The service providers who supply hired equipment and various services to ensure the successful staging of the RRDC.

3.9 Sampling techniques

Sampling is the selection of research participants from an entire population, and this involves decisions about who will be sampled in the particular study (Blanche et al. 2010:49). Blanche et al. (2010:564) state that the aim for sampling is to select a sample that will be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusions. According to Patton (1990:184), for qualitative research the sample size depends on what the researcher wants to discover, the purpose of the analysis and what will have credibility. There are two major sampling methods, namely probability and non-probability (Maree, 2016:192), A non-probability sampling approach was adopted for this study. Conversely, when the objectives of the study are to seek in-depth understanding of a phenomenon, non-probability sampling is often employed. Given the phenomenological stance adopted for this enquiry, particularly given the COVID-19 context where restrictions almost rendered large-scale physical data collection improbable.

3.9.1 Non-probability sampling

According to Blanche et al. (2010:564), non-probability sampling refers to any kind of sampling when the selection of elements is not determined by the statistical principle of randomness. According to Kumar (2011:206), non-probability sampling is defined as a 'sampling design which is used when the number of elements in a population is either unknown or cannot be individually identified'. There are four main types of non-probability sampling method commonly used, each based on a different consideration. Quota sampling, snowball sampling, purposive sampling and convenience sampling. For this study a convenience sampling approach was adopted and Maree (2016:197) states that a convenience sampling method

refs to the situation where potential respondents are selected based on the fact that they are easily and conveniently available, geographical proximity or known contacts. Dörnyei (2007) states that the convenience sampling method is used in situations where members of the targeting population are selected based on certain conditions, such as availability at a given time, easy accessibility or willingness to participate in the study. Given the fact that the data for this study was collected during the lockdown period where availability and accessibility of respondents was a huge challenge, participants were sought and interviews conducted based on their relevance, but also on their availability and willingness to participate.

3.9.2 Sample size

Kumar (2011:397) states that a sample is a subgroup of the population which is the focus of the research enquiry and is selected in such a way that it represents the study population. Furthermore, the number of individuals from whom the researcher obtains the required information is called the sample size and is usually denoted by the letter n (Kumar, 2011:397). Sandelowski (2010) states that the sample should not be so small that it is difficult to achieve data saturation. Maree (2016:84) reveals that data saturation in qualitative research is a key aspect that must be considered, and describes data saturation as the point where no new data is generated (Maree, 2016:84). Patton (1990:184) states that, in qualitative research, the sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose, what is at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility and what can be done with the available time and resources. Bertaux (1981) states that 15 is the smallest acceptable sample size, while Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006:74) clarify that data saturation occurred by the time 12 interviews were analysed – in other words – after 12 interviews, they had created 92% of the total number of codes for the studies being analysed. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007:22) suggest that, for a phenomenological approach, at least 10 participants are required. According Maree (2016:84), the sample size depends on the research question(s) and the type of research. Maree (2016:85) believes that researchers should select more participants purposefully as this will reveal detailed rich experience and rich knowledge about the researched objectives.

3.10 Data collection methods and techniques

Data for this research study was obtained by exploring primary research and secondary research. According to Bhat (2018) primary research (interviews) is defined as 'a methodology used by researchers to collect data directly, rather than depending on data collected from previously done research'. Moustakas (1994) in Maree, (2016:74) states that qualitative researchers collect data from several individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. Bhat (2018) defines secondary research (literature review) as 'a research method that involves using already existing data, which is summarised and collated to increase the overall effectiveness of research'. Relevant literature pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic and

cultural event(s) were obtained through various academic databases including Google Scholar, published academic journal articles, academic text books and e-books. Therefore, primary sources provide first-hand information, while secondary sources provide previously established data.

3.10.1 Interviews

Numerous data collection methods can be used to collect primary data, such as observation, questionnaires or interviews and the choice of a method depends on the purpose of the study (Kumar, 2011:140). According to Kumar (2011:140), when selecting a method of data collection, it is important for the researcher to know the socioeconomic–demographic characteristics of the study population and, for this study, the researcher is aware for the age structure, ethnic background and educational level of the population. The researcher used interviews to collect data since, according to Kumar (2011:144), an interview is a person-to-person interaction, either face to face or otherwise, between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind. Maree (2016:92) states that an interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and learn about the beliefs, ideas, views and options of the participant. Creswell (2007:61) states that data collection in phenomenological studies entail multiple interviews or in-depth interviews with participants. There are numerous specific interview methods that include, but are not limited to, structured interviews, unstructured interviews, and semi-structured interviews (Leavy, 2017:14). For this study, semi-structured interviews were employed by the researcher to collect data. According to Lane and Berg (2017:68), semi-structured interviews involve the implementation of several predetermined questions. Questions are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers are allowed freedom to digress. As suggested by Welman et al. (2007:167), there are key aspects to conducting interviews that the researcher has to prepare.

When preparing for an interview the researcher has to draft the interview guide or questions by means of analysing the research problem and understanding the information that needs to be obtained during the interviews from the interviewee. Different interview guides for different groups of participants was used as shown in Appendix C. For this study, the researcher conducted a pilot study as part of preparing for the interviews. According to Bell et al. (2019:381), a pilot study is a preliminary study used to determine how well your research interview questions function. According to De Vos et al. (2005:331), in qualitative research it is important to conduct a pilot study. Royse (1995:172) states that the purpose of conducting a pilot study is to determine whether the relevant data can be obtained from the respondents. Also, by carrying out a pilot study of the actual field to be studied, this will ensure that the main investigation will be worthwhile. The researcher might find out which research questions are

not practical and should be changed before the main inquiry starts (De Vos et al., 2005:278). The researcher used the same data collection method as in the main study. For the purposes of this research, one maiden who had attended the RRDC for the past two years was used to pilot in the study. The pilot study assisted the researcher in determining the amount of time needed for the questions and for improving the final draft. Potential participants were approached by telephone call at which time the researcher explained the purpose of the study and asked whether they were willing to part take in the study. The researcher then requested an email address. See Appendix C, where the researcher explains the problem statement and the kind of information that the researcher is interested in collecting. The email also mentions the date and time of the interview and the period of time that the interview would take. Per to the interview, the researcher had to rehearse for the interview and ensure that the equipment needed to record the interview is ready, also that the connection is working fine. The researcher scheduled a reminder of the interviews on Google Calendar.

3.10.2 Field study course of action

The interview. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher conducted virtual interviews with participants either telephonically or through other virtual platforms like Zoom or MS Teams. The researcher introduced herself and the purpose of the study. The researcher also required consent from the participants to record the interview and explained that the research data would be solely used for academic purposes and to ensure accurate transcription. All participants were told that they had the option to withdraw from the study. Open-ended questions were used for this study and all questions were asked in English. The researcher used simple and understandable words and if the participant did not understand the questions, the researcher had to explain the questions in the Zulu language. Follow-up questions or probing was applied in order to obtain more information, where necessary. Towards the end of the interviews, the researcher asked the participants to give any suggestions or recommendations. Most importantly, the researcher thanked the participants for their time and willingness to participate and it was also stated that feedback on the research would be send to the participants. The interview guide was divided into two sections: the first section determined the profile of the participants taking part in the study, and the second part of the interview guide focused on investigating the sociocultural and economic effects of the RRDC cancellation owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 14 interviews were conducted, even though the researcher had planned to conduct 20 interviews but owing to pandemic-induced restrictions and other challenges during the time of data collection. The online interview were schedule for the month of March 2021 to June 2021 but due to the passing of the King Goodwill Zwelithini the researcher had to reschedule and start the interviews during the last week of March 2021 and the last interview was in July 2021. More challenges were experienced such as load shedding which made it difficult to connect to the internet for the participants and

leading to cancelling the interviews. Followed be the looting that happened in July which made some other service providers to withdraw from participating, hence the researcher managed to collect 14 interviews which is acceptable. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007:22) suggested that, for a phenomenological approach, at least 10 participants are required.

3.11 Data coding and analysis

Data analysis is an ongoing process of making sense out of the collected data. Flick (2014) describes the process of data analysis as 'the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it'. Kumar (2011:232) states that for qualitative studies, the researcher must describe how their plan to analyse the interviews will draw meaning from what the respondents have said about the issues discussed. When analysing qualitative data, the researcher follows the general process of prepare and organise the data such as text data to transcripts, and then reduce the data into themes through a process of coding, and finally representing the date in a discussion or tables (Creswell, 2007: 148). As stated by Maree (2016:110), the process of analysing data in qualitative research is summarising what was heard during the interviews in terms of common words, patterns, phrases and themes that aid understanding and interpretation of what is emerging.

The researcher adopted and implemented Creswell's (2014:197-200) six-step approach of data analysis as follows:

Step 1: Organisation and preparation of data

The first thing the researcher did was to organise and prepare the data for analysis. The recorded interviews were renamed based on the order in which the interviews occurred. Followed by the process where the researcher transcribed the interview recordings and arranged the data into file folders wherein the researcher compiled a file for each participant. This rendered the data easy to identify and discuss later on during the discussion of the findings.

Step 2: Reading through all the data.

Before horizonalisation of the significant statements and descriptions of experiences, Creswell suggests that the researcher must continue to analyse the data by reading the transcripts and getting a feeling for the whole database, as this process assists in obtaining an understanding of the data before breaking the interview into parts. Once the researcher had completed the phase of organising the data, and as Creswell (2014:197) suggests, the researcher continue to analyse the data by reading through all the transcripts and getting a feeling for the full content of the database. This process assisted the researcher in obtaining an understanding of the data before breaking the data into smaller parts through coding. After understanding the

collected data, I proceeded to consider every interview statement important and having equal worth. I identified verbatim parts that were stated by the participants to describe the phenomenon in order to develop a list of significant statements. A number of horizonalised statements were generated from the transcripts that represent the participant's experience of the phenomenon. The horizonalised statements represent what participants experienced as the consequences of the cancellation of the RRDC because of COVID 19.

Step 3: Initial data-analysis process using coding procedure

This is the process where the researcher reduces and classifies the data generated by using the coding procedure. The significant statements found during the horizonalisation process are then grouped into large units of information called themes for the phenomenon of transition (Creswell, 2007:156). According to Creswell (1998), once horizonalised statements are identified, then the identification of variant constituents is the next process. The researcher analysed the horizonalised statements of all the participants formulated in Step 2, to identify their significance and to determine the socioeconomic and environmental effects of the cancellation of the RRDC because of COVID 19. The invariant constituents provided the opportunity to gather an explicit picture of the perspectives that each stakeholder attached to the phenomenon of the cancellation of the RRDC (Moustakes, 1994). Since every significant statement was initially treated as possessing equal value, this next step groups the relevant statements into large units of information called themes (Moustakes, 1994).

Step 4: Identifying subthemes and themes.

This step involved writing a textural description of what each participant in the study experienced with the phenomenon. The researcher identified patterns and combined the related codes into categories or themes. Themes are often considered as the major findings in qualitative studies and are often used as headings in the finding sections. The researcher then created themes and sub-themes in order to categorise the data collected. The aim of this step was to analyse the words of the participants into rich and thick descriptions (Moustakes, 1994). This step resulted in rich, thick descriptions, mainly in participants' words, of how the cancellations of the 20219/20 RRDC impacted upon them. These also described the guidelines and protocols suggested for the event organiser for a safe cultural festival in the context of the COVID 19 pandemic. Ultimately, the impacts of the RRDC were described in detail.

Step 5: Discussion of themes

In order to answer the research question, the researcher has to look at the *What and Cause* of an experience. This step provides opportunity for the presentation of each participant's structural description, and explanations of how certain perceptions and feelings are related to an experience and the cause for such feelings (Moustakes, 1994). In this instance, the

researcher used visual images, textual presentations and figures to present the analysis of the collected data (Creswell, 2007:156).

Step 6: Interpretation of the data by discussing meanings attributed to the research findings

The final step of a phenomenological data analysis is where the researcher interprets the findings. The synthesis was written after the composite textural and structural descriptions. Here, the researcher presented a narration of the 'essence' of the experiences in discussions, stating what the participants experienced with the phenomenon. Additionally, the researcher suggested questions that could be posed to clarify elements within the discussion.

3.11 Evaluation of qualitative research

Qualitative researchers must establish the trustworthiness of the research study (Statistics Solutions, 2022). Guba (1981) proposed four criteria that should be considered by qualitative researchers in addressing a trustworthy study: credibility, transferability, conformability and dependability.

3.11.1 Credibility

According to Maree (2016:123), credibility presents the questions: How do I ensure that the reader will believe my findings? How congruent are the findings with reality? Lincoln & Guba (1985) state that credibility is operationalised through the process of testing the findings and interpretations with the participants. Another measure to ensure credibility is to do subsequent interviews by asking for verification of data collected from participants in earlier interviews, and the researcher may sound out their initial understanding with the participant to verify whether what was shared has been interpreted correctly (Maree: 2016,123). For this study, data were collected using the semi-structured interviews. During the interview, the research has follow-up questions for the participants to ensure that the information shared was well understood.

3.11.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the generalisability of inquiry and is the second factor for trustworthiness offered by Lincoln & Guba (1985). According to Bryman & Bell (2011), transferability is defined as the 'quality of a report that its findings can be applied to other context and milieu'. Qualitative researchers should increase transferability by focusing on (a) how typical the participants are to the context being studied, and (b) the context to which the findings apply. For this study, participants were selected based on their having experienced on the phenomenon being studied and that they had previously attended or participated in the RRDC.

3.11.3 Dependability

Dependability is a parallel to reliability that depends on the researcher following good practice procedures, such as keeping completed records and theoretical inferences that could be justified (Bryman & Bell, 2011:376). As stated by Tobin & Begley (2004), for researchers to achieve dependability, the process of research must be traceable, logical, and clearly documented. For this study, when analysing qualitative data, the researcher followed the general processes of preparing and organising the data, such as text data to transcripts.

3.11.4 Conformability

As described by Lincoln and Guba (1985), conformability is 'the degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by participants not by researcher bias, motivation or interest'. Conformability is established once credibility, transferability and dependability are all achieved. Therefore, throughout the study, researchers must have markers that show methodological reasons for theoretical and analytical choices, so that readers can understand how and why the decisions were made. In order to shape the findings for the study, the researcher followed Creswell's six steps description of phenomenological data analysis (Creswell, 2014:197).

3.12 Ethical considerations

The purpose of ethical considerations is to make researchers aware of the ethical issues that may arise throughout the research process and to encourage researchers to take responsibility for their own ethical practice (Struwig & Stead, 2013:216). The following is a list of aspects which should be considered to ensure that the rights of participants in research are reasonably dealt with. Ethical approval (Certificate No: 2021_FBMSREC_002) was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences at Cape Peninsula University of Technology as shown in (Appendix A). Apart from this the following permissions and considerations also obtained:

- A letter of permission was obtained by the organisers of the event from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Art and Culture. This letter served as permission for the research to be conducted at the RRDC (Appendix B).
- The purpose of the study was outlined and explained to each participant before they were interviewed.
- Informed consent was obtained by the researcher from each participant as the interviews were audiotaped and each participant may or may not have disclosed their names. They were given the option of anonymity.
- No under 18s were included in the data collection unless permission from the parent/ guardian was obtained.

- All participants were clearly informed of the right to withdraw from participating in the research at any time.

- The researcher remained open and honest and, through introspection, the researcher's own role was clarified to be aware of researcher bias at all times about the research and its purpose.

- During the interview, the researcher confirmed with the respondents that their perceptions had been understood appropriately and correctly, by repeating what was said, providing respondents with an opportunity to correct any misunderstanding and to eliminate any researcher bias. This is especially important in qualitative studies.

- All of the data collected is stored at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, as evidence of the study.

- For confidentiality and anonymity in the data analysis of the interviews, participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identities e.g., Interviewee 1 by name.

3.13 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the critical aspects of research methodology, focusing on the links between the philosophical approaches and the research design (qualitative research), presenting in detail the techniques used in sampling methods, and data collection and data analysis in order to answer the research question. The researcher also pointed out the pilot study and the ethical considerations exercised for the full study. The next chapter entails the results and findings of attendee profiles and the factors that the attendees regarded as important for attending a cultural event.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter detailed the methodological approach employed to gather the primary data and to satisfy the research objectives determining the sociocultural and socioeconomic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the event stakeholders. The literature review for the current study revealed that the impact of COVID-19 varies from event to event and even varies according to the event size, form, and stakeholders. In this section, the researcher concentrates on the phenomenological approach to the analysis of the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews. The questions were based on the stakeholder perceptions; hence, all responses were based on their opinions, insights and experiences of not attending the RRDC owing to the pandemic. For the purposes of this study, the phenomenological approach was used to analyse the data. According to Maree (2016:105), phenomenological data analysis focus on how individuals experience the world. The researcher followed the description of data analysis, as outlined by Creswell (2014:197-200). Themes have been formulated regarding sociocultural and socioeconomic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the event stakeholders, from semi-structured interviews. The findings will be discussed in detail below in two sections; the first section highlights the description of the respondents and is followed by their reasons for attending the RRDC. Lastly the sociocultural and economic effects of the cancellation for the RRDC, and the lessons learned.

4.2 Demographics of the respondents

For this study, criteria were established to select participants who possessed the necessary traits to provide the researcher with the information that the research project was designed to collect, as mentioned in Chapter One:

- participants must have previously attended the RRDC in 2019;or
- adult women, known as the matrons, who accompany the groups of maidens; or
- local residents in KwaNongoma; or
- have been service providers to the festival; or
- be employed by KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture who are the event organisers.

A total of 14 participants were included in this study. Table 4.1 characterises all 14 stakeholders who participated in the study, including their year of birth, home language, highest level of education, and their occupational status, province of residence, and their main role when participating in the RRDC.

Table 4.1: Respondents' profiles

Interview	Year born	Home language	Highest level of education	Occupation	Current province	Main role when participating in the RRDC (performer, organiser or local resident)?
Respondent 1	1976	isiZulu	Diploma in Project Management	Speaker of the local municipality	KwaZulu-Natal	Organiser at the local level
Respondent 2	1997	isiZulu	Grade 12	University student	Gauteng	Maiden
Respondent 3	2002	Sesotho	Grade 12	University student	Eastern Cape	Maiden
Respondent 4	1969	isiZulu	PhD in African languages IsiZulu	Senior Lecturer	KwaZulu-Natal	Official of the Department of Arts and Cultural
Respondent 5	1988	isiZulu	Diploma in Education	Self-employed	KwaZulu-Natal	Maiden
Respondent 6	1985	isiZulu	Tertiary Degree	Independent contractor	KwaZulu-Natal	Service provider
Respondent 7	1980	IsiZulu	Grade 12	Senior Operations manager at Nongoma TV	KwaZulu-Natal	Service providers
Respondent 8	1956	isiZulu	PhD: Indigenous Knowledge system	Project manager	KwaZulu-Natal	Matrons
Respondent 9	1993	isiZulu	Master's Degree	Manager	KwaZulu-Natal	Maiden
Respondent 10	1980	isiZulu	BTech in Human Resource	Supervisor	KwaZulu-Natal	Local Resident
Respondent 11	1968	isiZulu	National Diploma	Tourism Officer	KwaZulu-Natal	Organiser at the local level
Respondent 12	1989	isiZulu	Master's Degree	Social Worker	KwaZulu-Natal	Maiden
Respondent 13	1997	isiZulu	Grade 12	Undergraduate student	KwaZulu-Natal	Maiden
Respondent 14	1982	isiZulu	Degree	Self-employed	KwaZulu-Natal	Service provider

4.2.1 Age of respondents

At the time of the study, the respondents' ages ranged from 19 to 65 years. The youngest respondent was born in 2002, and in 2021 she was 19. The oldest respondent was born in 1956 and she was 65 in 2021. This varied range in age indicates that the RRDC, as a cultural event, was valued by both young and old. Figure 4.1 shows that most attendees fall in the youth age bracket (aged from 19–29 years and 30–29 years) which both has a percentage of 29%
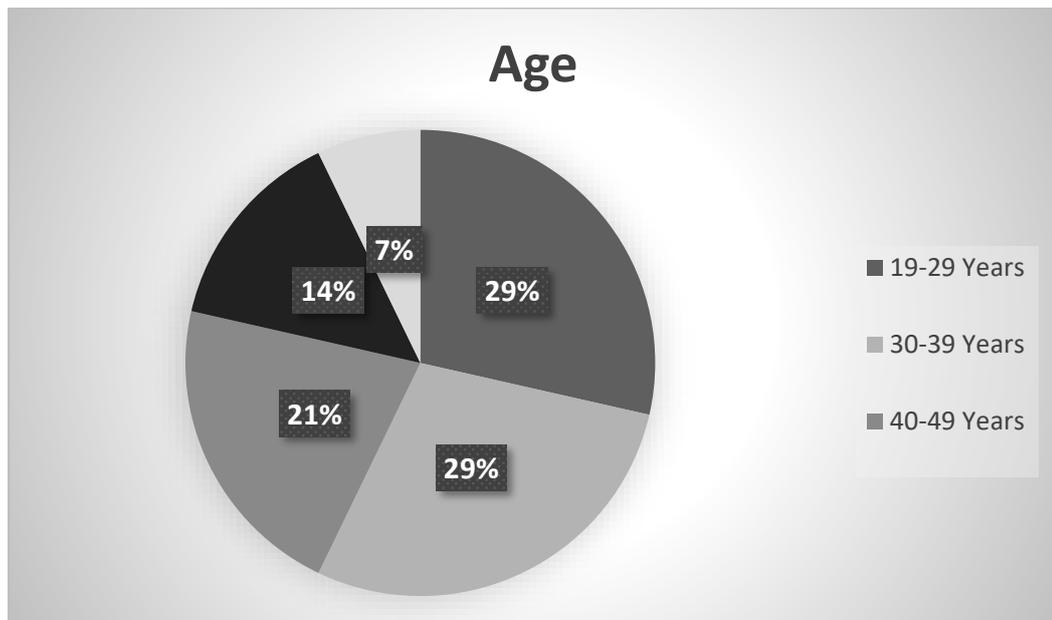
Figure 4.1: Age of respondents

According to Nkosi (2019), the youngest age for a maiden to start participating in the RRDC is at 15. For ethical reasons the researcher ensured that no one under the age of 18 was included in the data collection unless permission was obtained from the parent or guardian. Since interviews were conducted through the use of a video conferencing platform, namely Zoom, the data were collected while the country still faced uncertain times. The researcher decided to exclude under 18s because parents were not available to sit with them during the interviews.

4.2.2 Respondents' place of origin and home language

According to Table 4.1, 12 of the respondents were current residents of KwaZulu-Natal province, but not all of them reside in the Zululand district. One of the participants resides in the Eastern Cape province and the other one in the Gauteng province. The majority of the respondents have isiZulu as their home language and one respondent has Sesotho as their home language. These results indicate the importance of the RRDC to the local people in the KZN province while also being of interest to some who reside outside of the province.

4.2.3 Educational status and main role when participating in the RRDC

According to Table 4.1, all of the respondents possess at least Grade 12 as their highest level of education and five of them are currently studying towards tertiary education qualifications. Two of the respondents have PhD degrees, one has a PhD in indigenous knowledge systems and the other one as a PhD in African languages: IsiZulu. Despite the respondents' variation in educational levels, they all attend the festival to learn from it and to participate in this cultural experience. The study also categorised the respondents into performer (maidens), organiser, local resident, or service provider. From among the 14 interviews, five were maidens, three were organisers, three were part of the local residents, and three were service providers.

In the next section the researcher analysis the relevance of RRDC (uMkhosi waMaganu) and reasons for attendance start by looking at the number of visits and revisits. Follow by sociocultural and economic effects of the cancellation for the RRDC, and the lessons learned.

4.3 Number of visits and revisits at the RRDC

The researcher was also interested in the number of times the respondents had attended the RRDC in the five years before 2020. Results in Table 4.2 show that most of the respondents had attended the RRDC at least once, while Respondent 5 stated that she has been attending the RRDC since 2004 and that in 2019 she attended the festival for the fifteenth year. This is an indication that there are motives that make respondents keep revisiting the RRDC and that this cultural festival has an impact on every respondent. Respondent 5 mentioned that the festival is like an annual prayer: 'Just as Christians celebrate Good Friday once a year, that's more like us in the Reed Dance'.

Table 4.2: Visits and revisits of respondents

Unique identifier	Attendance (in last five years before 2020)
Respondent 1	One
Respondent 2	Three
Respondent 3	Four
Respondent 4	Two
Respondent 5	Fifteen
Respondent 6	Three
Respondent 7	Five
Respondent 8	Five
Respondent 9	Five
Respondent 10	One
Respondent 11	Four
Respondent 12	Five
Respondent 13	Five
Respondent 14	Five

4.3 The relevance of RRDC (Umkhosi woMhlanga) and reasons for attendance

One central question of this phenomenological approach to analysis was to elicit the respondents' perspective on the purpose of the RRDC and the reasons they attend. The RRDC is a significant historical cultural event that has been around for a long time. The festival gets its name from the riverbed reeds, and the reed sticks are carried in a parade by thousands of young maidens who attend the festival each year. One of the daughters of the Zulu king opens the occasion by being the one to take the first reed, to lead the group of maidens, and to present the reed to the king. The reeds are cut at the riverbed and each maiden carries a reed as this symbolises the power that is vested in nature. According to the Zulu mythology, if a young woman who is not a virgin takes part in the Reed Dance Ceremony, her reed will break and it will be an embarrassment. The purpose of the event and the reasons that people attend

are, inter alia, to celebrate culture, come together, share cultural values, honour maidens, find motivation for life choices, minimise teenage pregnancy, preserve purity, and get educated. The respondents demonstrated the purpose of the RRDC and why they attend the festival. An analysis was done using the 'word cloud' to identify the most frequently used keywords across the respondents when they described the purpose of the event. These keywords are shown in Figure 4.2, where the size of each word indicates its frequency of mention using word cloud. Respondent were asked what they think the purpose is of celebrating the RRDC.

> *The purpose is for us to coming together as maidens and celebrate our purity, our ability to be able to resist temptations... it's not only about celebrating the virginity but about learn from each other* (Respondent 2).

> *… For those who have kept themselves pure, attending the Reed Dance is a time for them to showcase, a time to motivate, a time to actually be celebrated in a cultural way.*

> *… Attending the Reed Dance minimising teenage pregnancy in many ways.*

> *The purpose, for us as AmaZulu, I can say, it's a must for a young girl to preserve purity for a certain stage but not for marriage. RRDC actually teaches a young lady how to stand for herself and preserve purity.*

> *The Reed Dance, which we refer to as uMkhosi woMhlanga, is where we as the maidens are celebrated; it's where we are respected; it's where we are honoured and it's where we get to celebrate our culture and the beauty of it all as the maidens.*

> *More specifically, the purpose of the Reed Dance is for us young ladies to get to know our cultural values and to evaluate ourselves as young women. We also learn how to stand for ourselves, how to manage ourselves, they also teach us to get educated*

Figure 4.2: Purpose of the RRDC and reasons for attending

As highlighted by other respondents, the purpose of the RRDC is also an opportunity to promote the culture of the Zulu nation and to pass on cultural values, symbols and practices. The magnitude of the event appeals to locals and international tourists alike. The coming together of so many people also offer entrepreneurial and business opportunities. Of particular significance is that the event offers its attendees an opportunity to share a common belief to come together while providing an opportunity to reinforce and pass on cultural values. Thus, the event does not just represent a fleeting and momentary get together but is influential in guiding and offering the youth motivation for certain life choices and education that will sustain them throughout the year.

4.4 Other traditional and cultural festivals similar to the RRDC

Cultural events are hosted in a community, but in South Africa families also host cultural events as a way to honour the ancestors. Respondent 2 explains that she has attended many cultural events just to catch the sense of being a person because there is much to learn in those events. Aside from the RRDC, the respondents also stated that they have attended other cultural festivals. A number of cultural festivals were mentioned by the respondents. What follows are some statements taken from the interviews:

> *Yes, I have attended uMkhosi Umthayi, the Marula Festival, which happens every year in Mhlabuyalingana. It is basically the harvesting of the marula. So the festival takes place around August or September, depending on when is the fruit ready to be harvested* (Respondent 6).

> *Yes, I once attended Indoni, Miss Cultural SA in 2017 June in the Eastern Cape. Indoni is more like a youth camp hosted in every province for a week where we get to be educated and learn about our roots. Each province host different cultures and in September we attended the main event in KZN, where we had the opportunity to meet up with other young people from different cultures* (Respondent 3).

Umemulo and uMkhosi KaNomkhubulwane are the two ceremonies that were mostly mentioned by the respondents. Respondent 9 explained uMemulo, also known as the coming of age.

> *As a ceremony done for a young girl child by their family to celebrate and thank the girl child for keeping themselves pure until a certain age, as she is now ready go to the next stage of life which is marriage. However, this ceremony is done in a Zulu manner where a cow is slaughter; that's a celebration with other maidens, Zulu dancing and singing. So basically, uMemula is where your family formal tells you that, my child, you*

are now an adult. We are giving you our blessings that now you can take the next step of finding yourself a husband.

Respondent 8, who is the founder and project manager of uMkhosi kaNomkhubulwane, refers to uMkhosi kaNomkhubulwane as a thanksgiving ceremony to the princess Nomkhubulwane.

The festival of uMkhosi kaNomkhubulwane is an annual festival, which takes place in June, is where maidens usually come together and go to the mountain and pray to uNomkhubulwane. uNomkhubulwane is referred to as the Mother Earth, so we pray for rain, we pray for harvest, we ask for blessings, we ask for guidance as the maidens and obviously there will be singing and there will be Zulu dancing and food (Respondent 12).

Interestingly, Respondent 5 has been attending the Reed Dance in Swaziland since 2010 and mentions that she was motivated to attend as result of the love she has for celebrating pureness and culture.

Attending uMkhosi woMhlanga in Eswatini was because I wanted to experience other cultures,... and I leant that AmaSwati are very respecting; their respect their culture and they respect other cultures. We have experienced a lot from the Swati people from the way they singing and dancing, to their traditional attire and how different the attire is for older women, young girls with babies, and young girls without babies.

The above-mentioned cultural events are similar to the RRDC since they include maidens as participants and each event has its own significant role to ensure that they educate and reinforce cultural values for the participants. Participants' interactions with similar cultural festivals, evident from the above responses, demonstrate that they are knowledgeable and understand the significance of cultural festivals.

4.5 Stakeholders' perspectives of the cancellation of the RRDC because of COVID-19

The section will analyse the impact of the cancellation of the RRDC owing to COVID-19, as mentioned by respondents during the interviews. Sociocultural effects will be presented, followed by the socioeconomic effects in order to understand how the different stakeholders were impacted by the event cancellation. This section will later present the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic by the event stakeholders and will propose guidelines and protocols for the organisation of safe cultural festivals in the context of the pandemic.

4.5.1 Sociocultural impact of the RRDC

According to Accurate Essays. (2022), hosting cultural festivals in a community creates direct sociocultural impacts on the event stakeholder. Cultural festivals provide opportunities for shared cultural experiences between visitors and the locals. Such festivals build the pride of the community while providing entertainment and leisure opportunities for both visitors and

locals (Accurate Essays, 2022). Festivals promote community pride and evoke good feelings by celebrating things that make a town special (Yeoman et al., 2004).

The RRDC has been hosted for over three decades in the local community of KwaNongoma and the festival has created a strong identity of the host community, who invite visitors to share the cultural experience of the Zulu nation. As noted by one of the respondents, the festival is an expression of culture and it showcases traditions started by Zulu forefathers.

Respondent 10, born in the community of KwaNongoma and a supervisor at one of the guesthouses in the community, expressed his view on the sociocultural impact the RRDC has on the community and how the festival build community pride of KwaNongoma.

> *The RRDC promote the culture of the Zulu nation as the festival is one of the oldest festivals that have been happening for years and it's attract people for around the county and tourists from all over the world.*

The RRDC is attended by close to 45 000 thousand maidens who are from Swaziland, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and KZN. They gather to celebrate the custom of retaining their virginity.

Respondent 14 mentions that the festival attracts international and domestic tourists.
> *The Reed Dance does not only bring local tourists but it brings your international tourists, it brings delegates from other African countries, delegates from overseas, it's a national activity …*

According to the Mail & Guardian (2010), the king has used the RRDC as an opportunity to educate the Zulu youth, focusing on vital social issues such as practising sexual morals and behaviours which prevent teenage pregnancy. Respondent 8 supports the above explanation that attending the Reed Dance minimises teenage pregnancy in many ways.

Other respondent mentioned the following:

> *The RRDC is an opportunity to 'learn about the beauty of the Zulu culture, … thanking God and the ancestors for keeping the girls as virgins and getting advice from the king'.* (Respondent 4)

> *The purpose of the RRDC is for us to coming together as maidens and celebrate our purity, our ability to be able to resist temptations... it's not only about celebrating the virginity but about learn from each other* (Respondent 2)

The RRDC educate maidens on how to make sure that they abstain and learn about respect (Respondent 4)

Respondent 9 highlights that, at the RRDC, maidens are celebrated;

The RRDC is where maidens get to celebrate the culture and the beauty of it all as maidens. So the purpose of attending the RRDC is to celebrate and keep the spirit alive of who we are as maidens and why were are maidens and why did we choose this path.

Based on the responses, the RRDC does indeed have a direct sociocultural impact on the event attendees, event participants, and the local community. The researcher was also interested in the sociocultural effect of the RRDC cancellation because this cultural festival was cancelled for the year 2020/21.

4.5.2 Sociocultural effect of the RRDC cancellation

The outbreak of COVID-19 had shocking effects on the event industry as most events had to be postponed and/or cancelled in response to the pandemic (Swart & Maralack, 2020). During 2020/21, events and festivals of more than 100 people were prohibited or banned as social distancing became the norm and the RRDC was amongst the events that were cancelled. Shone and Parry (2010:5) indicate that festivals can benefit the hosting community, with some of these benefits being: improving the spirit and pride of the local community, marketing the destination by means of attracting new, extra and/or repeat visitors to the hosting city or community, and building awareness of diverse cultures and identities, to name a few.

For two years, the live experience of the RRDC did not happen owing to COVID-19 and the community was set to lose out on the live celebrations, while there was nothing to report on, said Respondent 6, a content producer at SABC.

We go to the Reed Dance year-in-year-out to report on different stories that are happening in and around uMkhosi woMhlanga and to showcase the whole tradition. So for the last two years we had nothing much to report about because of COVID-19 so the visual uMkhosi woMhlanga did not have that effect. uMkhosi woMhlanga is all about that live experience. We need to getting pictures of the maidens singing, getting pictures of the omama and getting pictures of Amabhuto (regiment), … and that was all not there. I can safety say that we do not have a story to tell about the 2020/21 event.

According to Traveller24 (2017), the RRDC has become a popular heritage and tourist attraction for the KZN province as it attracts thousands of domestic and international tourists. The University of KZN uses this cultural festival to share the cultural experience of the Zulu nation but, as indicated by Respondent 4, who is a senior lecture at the University, the international students could not attend and experience the culture.

> *The other impact of the cancellation of the RRDC is that, we as the University of KZN could not take the international students to go witness this ceremony and to see and learn about the beauty of the Zulu culture.*

Maidens are the main participants of the RRDC and, according to Zulu tradition, only virgins are permitted to take part in the RRDC to ensure that the young maidens signify purity (Mail & Guardian, 2010). This shows the importance of the maidens attending and ensuring the success of this festival. The maidens described the situation of the cancellation as follows:

> *The cancellation of the RRDC made me to lose the sense of belonging, lose that spirit and this is not just me but also my follow maidens because at the RRDC we are honoured and not being able to attend the festival has killed the spirit* Respondent 9).

Respondent 3 highlights the cancellation as loss of motivation to keep up the values encouraged at the festival.

> *When attending the Reed Dance one gets motivated and with the cancellation for the festival some of the maidens got demotivated and could not deal with the peer pressure. As at the RRDC they learn about has to deal with such social issues and some are pregnant.*

Therefore, it shows that if the maidens do not attend cultural festivals such as the RRDC, they become demotivated and lose the spirit or desire for abstinence, a value that is encouraged at the festival to combat teenage pregnancy, a social issue in South Africa.

The results of the analysis reveal that RRDC had a positive sociocultural impact on different stakeholders since this cultural festival builds community pride in KwaNongoma, resulting from hosting one of the oldest festivals while promoting the Zulu culture. The celebration of the Zulu culture through the RRDC encourages social values and guidelines and promotes a positive community identity in KwaNongoma. The RRDC offers tourists a chance to share in the cultural experience of the Zulu nation, as suggested by Sharma et al. (2021), offering the feeling of belonging among the locals to ensure resilience. The cancellation of the RRDC, on the other

hand, had negative sociocultural effects on the stakeholders, such as loss of lived personal experiences where the event was hosted, loss of belonging, loss of sociocultural values and lost opportunities to share the cultural experience.

4.5.3 Socioeconomic effects

Cultural festivals, like any other form of tourism development, have a critical role in local community well-being. According to Whitford and Dunn (2014), cultural festivals are used to attract tourists who contribute to the development of the local community and hosting cultural festivals has socioeconomic implications on the development of the host community. Festivals have a significant role in improving the quality of life and standard of living of the local residents by increasing aggregate income, providing employment opportunities, and enhancing infrastructure (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt 2005; Visit Monmouthshire, 2022). Events and festivals also provide the host community with a platform to showcase their capabilities and knowledge and to promote new business opportunities. Cultural festivals play a role in the marketing of the host community as a tourism destination and increases the number of tourists.

With the above highlighted, Respondent 1, who is an organiser of the RRDC at the local level, explains that when the RRDC is hosted several tourists visit the province of KZN and the community of KwaNongoma, creating opportunities for employment.

> *While hosting uMkhosi Womhlanga, many people are visiting this province … this create business opportunities, but the person need to be business minded in order to benefits as the community has the opportunity to sell traditional attires, sell food or rent out their houses. Also, there are some job opportunities where people are becoming marshals, others are securities in the event and others are cleaners throughout the event.*

The statement is supported by Respondent 11, who works as a Tourism Officer in the local Municipality of Nongoma. His role is to market Nongoma as a place where people can come and visit. During the RRDC, he works with the SMMEs and cooperatives that are service providers for the festival, and notes the following:

> *The number of the SMME, cooperatives and tourism establishments that get established each and every year shows that the Reed Dance is growing, which meaning that the Reed Dance of 2018 is not like the Reed Dance in 2008 because now we see more businesses are evolve and growing and more people are getting employment*

Respondent 11 further highlights the importance of the RRDC for Nongoma, stating:

> *With Nongoma being a deep rural area, we got no mines and no other industry that are available in other areas. So with the Reed Dance, it's time for people to be exposed to employment opportunities because they are producing a lot of traditional clothing, so this becomes a time when they are able to showcase and market themselves* (Respondent 11).

The impact of festival hosting on a local community is measured by business opportunities and jobs created during the festival. In this case, Respondent 14 states that she saw an opportunity and a niche in the market to compile packages around the Reed Dance with the main role of taking tourists to experience the Zulu culture during the Reed Dance.

> *When I attended the Reed Dance for the first time, I noticed that tourists were not looked after … some female tourists were turned back at the gate as they were not aware of the fact that females cannot entry the king palace when wearing pants, they needed to wear skirts. I did my research and started the company and the company has managed to create more sustainable business opportunities for the local residents of KwaNongoma.*
> *The company has grown that it has tours throughout the year and exclusive rights to take people to the Royal palaces, not only to the Enyokeni Palace, which is the main palace for the Reed Dance, but also other palaces.*

The business owner also highlights that, when bringing in tourists she ensures that she employs the local tour guides and local women to cook African cuisine.

> *I make sure that I employee local people as opposed to coming with people from other town. So I make sure that I source employment from them and this brings money to the community and it generates a lot of economic development because there is also accommodation facilities that get highly booked. Tour guides get booked because people have to go on tours pre and post the Reed Dance, so it generate economic boost for local woman that do craft as well as their craft get sold on high numbers*

The diverse range of services required and how the RRDC, as an event, contributes to various tourism sub-sectors such as transport, accommodation and entertainment in KwaNongoma, emerges from the statement by Respondent 14:

... The nice thing about tourism is that it's not restricted to one thing. In every event there is transport needed, accommodation needed and everything, so it speaks volume in terms of local economic development for Nongoma.

The need for transport is not limited to the local businesses in KwaNongoma. Every town that has maidens knows that, during the first weekend of September, transport will be required and booked to travel to the RRDC.

Respondent 7, who is a Senior Operations Manager at the Nongoma TV, states that the Royal Reed Dance has shown growth year after year to a point that, in 2014, King Goodwill Zwelithini stated that more money had to be invested into the festival.

We have seen that since then the festival has improved and there are more facilities. Security has also improved and more people get hired during the festival

Investment in facilities and infrastructure is a significant benefit that comes from preparing and hosting festivals and this investment leaves a lasting legacy for the whole economy (Pettinger, 2017). The Zulu Royal Household Trust receives support from the KZN Office of the Premier for activities in the hosting of this annual traditional cultural event (KZNonline- 2021).

According to the respondents, the RRDC has the ability to promote KwaNongoma as a tourism destination and to increase the number of tourist visits. The cultural festival creates job and business opportunities for local residents who are business minded, as stated by Respondent 1. Based on the objectives of the study, the researcher investigated the socioeconomic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.5.4 Socioeconomic effects for the cancellation of the RRDC

The COVID-19 pandemic forced South Africa to adopt a risk-adjusted strategy during level 5 and 4. All tourism activities were restricted. On 26 August 2021, just with weeks before the RRDC, the country was experiencing a deadly third wave and gatherings were permitted but limited to 100 persons or fewer for the outdoor venues which meant that the RRDC was cancelled for two years 2020/21.

The cancellation of the RRDC was stressful as there were lost opportunities to trade for the SMMEs and the level of unemployment was increasing in the county. Nongoma was no exception. Respondent 11 explains the situation of the SMMEs as a result of the cancellation of the RRDC.

As I'm the one who is responsible of organising the event at the local level, some of the service providers were flocking into my office looking for answers to what in the municipality doing about the cancellation of the festival. uMkhosi Womhlanga bring many people to the area for KwaNongoma, so most for our people get job opportunities some even get time to cater for those people driving to Nongoma and also the tourist uses the local accommodation

The local community of KwaNongoma has shown that they are highly dependent on the event to provide business opportunities. Respondent 1 also highlights:

The cancellation of the RRDC collapsed the economy due to the fact that people rely on the event to trade … Financially, the pandemic was a disaster because everything had to be put on hold. People who owned property in KwaNongoma were even prepared to sell the properties. Also, there are cooperatives that used to bid so that they could cook during the Reed Dance; they also did not get that opportunity.

The cancellation of the RRDC due to the COVID-19 was devastating in a sense that people were not able to be employed as they were sitting at home and there was nothing to do.... The cancellation highly impacted the local people in the area of Nongoma because they are highly dependent on the Reed Dance (Respondent 14)

While Respondent 10, who is a supervisor at one of the guesthouses in the community, states that the cancellation of the RRDC did not have that much impact as this festival only happens during one weekend, the problem that they are currently facing is the pandemic itself.

I'm not going to be specific on the Royal Reed Dance because, as I said, it's a once-off event that is during the weekend …
Because of the restrictions, people cannot move as they would like. Therefore, for the business the pandemic is the problem, not the cancellation of the event … We, as the business, are not getting any bookings during this time of the COVID-19 and we mostly have guests all year around such as government officials, construction workers or just individuals attending funerals, weddings or church services.

According to Prayag et al. (2013) festivals create economic benefits to the host community, such as business opportunities, increased employment, and the generation of additional revenue for the host community. Festivals can also help destinations to develop their tourism industry by increasing visitors' arrivals and this also promotes a positive image of the host community in the minds of the residents and prospective visitors (Prayag et al., 2013). As

stated by the respondents, during the event cancellation, the economy of KwaNongoma collapsed because the festival is attended by international and domestic tourists who contribute to improving the quality of life the community. Without the festival being hosted, there were no jobs created, and business opportunities dried up. A service provider further added that, even though there were benefits from the RRDC being hosted, there were other reasons for people to visit the community of KwaNongoma and this too had to stop because of South Africa's risk-adjusted strategic response to the pandemic.

4.6 Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic by event stakeholders

Hosting cultural festivals is an opportunity for the host destination to bring people from diverse backgrounds to the community for the duration of the festival (Raj et al., 2013: 8). After the first confirmed COVID-19 case reported in South Africa, the government had to implement urgent and drastic measures in order to protect the people of the South Africa, manage the disease, and reduce the impact of the virus on the country. The forced cancellation had a severe impact on high-profile festivals owing to concern over the spread of COVID-19. The researcher aimed to understand the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic by event stakeholders.

4.6.1 Event participants

The maidens, who are the participants at the festival, indicated that for them attending the RRDC is a chance to get together, learn and be motivated. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the maidens did not have the opportunity to attend the festival. Even though a virtual celebration was hosted with a limited number of maidens, the impact of the festival was not the same.

Respondent 12 states:

> *The RRDC is an experience that starts from the moment we get into the bus and start travelling for six hours to Nongoma. When we arrive in KwaNongoma, we sing and dance, we meet up with people that we only see once in a year and there is the time of us to sit and get address by the king. So, if only one person is selected to represent the whole group, the experience is not the same.*

According to Respondent 4:

> *… the Reed Dance is a different ceremony where every maiden wants to showcase themselves holding the reed, so it's not about being represented but it's about representing yourself and your family, meaning that every maiden need to attend the RRDC and feel that sense of being proud.*

Based on the above, it indicates that maidens need to be present at the RRDC because every maiden would love to attend the RRDC. The festival is a live experience, which includes

carrying and delivering reed sticks to the king. This is the significant impact of the festival. Therefore, hosting a virtual celebration and inviting a limited number of maidens is not enough. The maidens want to be present and not to be represented.

4.6.2 Event organisers

With Nongoma being a deep rural area, there are no mines and no other industries available. Therefore, with the Reed Dance, it is time for people to be exposed to employment opportunities. Respondent 1 explained the over-reliance lessons that were discovered during the cancellation of the RRDC

> *As the municipality we have learned that people depend a lot on this festival as to sell their craft so we have small exhibition events where they could exhibit their work during the year and not just at the Reed Dance.*

This shows that the community of KwaNongoma was over reliant on the festival and with the festival being hosted over one weekend, the employment opportunities are not sustainable. The exhibition event will be of benefit for the local community. The intervention prompted by the municipality to spread the economic benefits beyond the event illustrates how local government can provide guidance to the community, ensuring that the opportunities become sustainable in the long-term. This confirms the findings of Sharma et al. (2021) that the government's response is requested to assist with transformation to occur.

Respondent 14 also explain how the local community dependent on selling their craft to the tourists arriving in KwaNongoma and the COVID-19 forced them to embrace technology.

> *The Reed Dance does not only bring local tourists but it brings your international tourists, it brings delegates from other African countries, delegates from overseas, it's a national activity. So when COVID-19 flipped, it was a bad knock but people maintained the passivity and were able to come up with innovative ways to say, we know that you're interested in buying crafts, so let do it online. So some of those ladies get ordered done online.*

This shows that the SMMEs were able to response to the COVID-19 impact and used technological resilience to gain back consumer trust because now they were able to sell their crafts online. This indicates sustainability for the SMMEs and even post-COVID-19, the SMMEs could sell their products. If they are sold out, they will tell the tourists to shop online. As highlighted by Respondent 14, the crafts are often sold out during the first day of the Reed Dance.

> *Reed Dance generate economic boost for local woman that do craft which get sold on high numbers, some even worry that on the first day everything is sold and there is nothing else to sell on the second day.*

This indicates that event organisers prepare and plan, and recover successfully from the COVID-19 impacts, which confirms what Yamamoto (2015) said about resilience being a matter of restoring the festival to its pre-disaster state and responding to change. Sharma (2020) agrees that if an event wants to remain resilient they would have to continue using technology, not as internal measure but as part of sustainably going forward.

4.7 Proposed guidelines from stakeholders

In the COVID-19 risk-adjusted strategy, alert Level 3 allowed 250 persons or a smaller number for an outdoor social event gathering. In order to ensure that the RRDC is hosted even when the country is faced by another pandemic, the researcher investigated guidelines and protocols that event organisers could propose of a safe cultural festival in the context of any pandemic or crisis. The respondents stated the following:

> *In the context of the any pandemic, the event organisers could split up the festival into the other palaces in KwaNongoma. In this why more service providers could benefit and also this will ensure that the community of KwaNongoma benefits from this festival … and the government must hire local service providers, meaning that the government must first hire within the local community before looking for other service provides* (Respondent 10)

Nongoma is the only community in South Africa to have five palaces. This could then be used to the community's advantage to promote the town as a tourism destination and to ensure that more business opportunities are created and more facilities are improved. Respondent 9 proposed the guidelines from a maiden's point of view:

> *The best way to keep the spirit alive is by organising a series of camps in all provinces because the COVID-19 regulation clearly states that no big events must be hosted. So they need to organise camps for KZN maidens, a camp for Gauteng maidens, and a camp for the Eastern Cape maidens and etc. As this will help to keep the spirit alive and for us to continue to come together and celebrate our culture* (Respondent 9)

> *So, what I think could be done is to celebrate maidenhood in the place that you reside in, like for us I'm quite fortunate that where I am we did celebrate Umkhosi Ka Nomkhubulwane. So another community that have maidens could do something like that and the Department of Arts and Culture could bring someone who will represent the Royal house. So to get the excitement going for the maidens … Also, there is one thing I need to point out that by not being motivated we have a lot of maidens who just lose the spirit* (Respondent 12)

According to Respondent 9, keeping the spirit of the maidens alive is very important and in the case where the interprovincial travelling is prohibited, the celebration of maidenhood still continues. Respondent 12 supports the statement by saying that she has been fortunate that where she comes from they did celebrate an event similar to the RRDC and she suggests that some from the Royal House should be present during such events.

Respondent 6 supports the above statements by saying :'Why not have mini RRDC in each province that will be in commemoration of the main uMkhosi woMhlanga?'

> *So instead of hosting one uMkhosi woMhlanga in KwaNongma, if we are still in a pandemic and people's lives are at risk. I would then suggest that each and every province has its own uMkhosi woMhlanga where iSilo Samabandla onke (king) and the queens will be the ones who a visiting the people. I think this could be a birth of something else and it could be called something else but which is like a lower hanging fruit of uMkhosi Womhlang. So these mini uMkhosi woMhlanga will be in commemoration of the main uMkhosi woMhlanga.*

Spreading the festival over the whole month of September and hosting two or three provinces in one week were some of the mostly shared statement by respondents.

Respondent 2 called it an emergency plan:

> *The event organisers should create an emergency plan and have a plan prior to the pandemic … for instance, they would have said, okay, so if ever that is a pandemic that is contagious. We will arrange that provinces takes turns in coming to the Reed Dance. That would have been helpful in this situation because even during the pandemic we would have been able to go to the RRDC*

Respondent 3 looks to ensuring that the festival is still celebrated in KwaNongoma and that the community still benefits from the festival.

> *So, to better the standards of the Royal Reed Dance, I will suggest that their just have a thing of saying that September is the month of the Royal Reed Dance and then they can say maybe this week we having two provinces attending the festival. Also, they could use nearby schools for sleeping because we usually sleep in tents and I believe that the COVID-19 does not want anyone to feel cold. So in the tents we are exposed to very harsh environmental temperatures so we would prefer to use schools.*

> *Again, usually when we go and collect the reed and take it to the king, we usually just come and past by so when the can hire some people who are going to sanitise. This will create job opportunities for the whole month of September and decreasing unemployment in South Africa.*

As mentioned by Respondent 2, celebrating the RRDC in KwaNongoma is significant for them as maidens:

> *… so we will really love to go KwaNongoma and actually be there with the spirit of the ancestor of the Zulu Royal house because for us as maidens we believe that when we are there even the ancestor of the Royal house are there with us and they are watching over us.*

Maidens are the key players of the RRDC and it is important to find ways that will keep them motivated and keep the spirit alive because once there, they do not get the chance to come together and celebrate the cultural values; they become demotivated.

This is therefore why the event organisers plan to have other engagements such as seminars and to invite the women who guide the maidens and teach them. They educate the maidens about keeping up the values that are encouraged at the festivals.

> *There are other engagements planned, such as the event that invites the mother who guides the maidens will be having some seminars, so that they will be able to keep the maidens aware on how to handle themselves.*

4.8 The vaccine as an option to avoid another cancellation of the RRDC

Even though there were measures implemented to combat the spread of COVID-19, the country was experiencing deadly waves, and vaccines were the only hope to reopen the country and the economy. Vaccines have been used to save millions of lives each year as vaccines prepare the human immune system to fight off the viruses and bacteria, preventing illness (WHO, 2021).

The rollout of the vaccine in South Africa was a three-phase approach, where Phase 1 focused on the frontline healthcare workers, Phase 2 was dedicated to essential staff and Phase 3 focused on persons older than 18. During the time of the interviews, the vaccine rollout was at Phase 2 and the majority of the respondents had not yet been vaccinated. There were some in favour and a few were not entirely convinced that the vaccine would be the answer. The views of the respondent are presented in the excerpts that follow.

More information and transparency about the vaccine is what Respondent 2 highlighted.

> *… So, as much as I do not want to say that I'm anti vaccine, but I just want to bring into the picture that we do not know for sure whether the vaccine will work, so me saying that it is a great measure or it is not a great measure just won't cut it. But I*

feel like if had we have more information on the vaccine, more transparency about the vaccine. Maybe I would have been able to come up with a solid answer …

Respondent 3 refers to the case in Germany where people who were vaccinated were again able to be contaminated by COVID-19

They previously broadcasted and reported that in Germany they had vaccinated about 15% of the people and I'm not sure how many contaminated the COVID-19 virus. Which means that the vaccine does not really give you a shot point that you won't be infected …

The vaccination can only help to a certain degree; you still need to follow protocols. This is indicated by Respondent 4

From what I heard about the vaccine, is that there is nothing that makes you different from other people. When you are vaccinated you wear a mask; social distancing is expected again from you. So at the moment I cannot say that when the vaccine is rolled out, it will make a difference.

Little information was shared with the people before the rollout out and this is why many people were not aware of the impacts of the vaccination, while other respondents were looking for any solution that would help in going back to normal.

Respondent 9 stated:
Vaccination is the only option that we have currently, so this is our only option to vaccinate, wear our mask and sanitise as that's what is there for us currently. So, to answer the question, yes, we must be vaccinated and after everyone has be vaccinated maybe we could go back to uMkhosi woMhlanga because there is believe that once you have been vaccinated, chances for to get very sick are slim to none.

Respondent 11 agreed and further explained:

Not just vaccination only could solve this thing for COVID-19; this relays on us as people. We need to obey the regulations like wearing the masks, sanitising and doing all those things that can protect them from getting infected. Yes, the vaccination can solve a certain portion but we also need to be dedicated to obey the regulations

Respondent 14 states: 'Yes': rollout of the vaccination would definitely ensure confidence in travelling and highlights that some countries, as mentioned by the UNWTO, are not allowing people who are not vaccinated to travel into their counties.

So, the rollout of the vaccination would definitely give back the confidence in travelling, like when we know that I'm surrounded by people that are vaccinated. I will be more at ease, I will be more comfortable in travelling knowing that I'm surrounded by people that are vaccinated as opposed to not knowing whether am I around people that are going to expose me to COVID-19 and I have to go through isolation when I go back home.

4.9 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the findings obtained from the semi-structured interviews. The data collected have been interpreted and discussed with reference to the research objectives of the study, and presented in figures, tables and graphs. The chapter has outlined the sociocultural and socioeconomic impact of the RRDC, a cultural festival hosted in KwaNongoma.

The research objective has helped to establish that the cancellation of the RRDC owing to the COVID-19 pandemic has had negative sociocultural effects, such as the loss of live experiences, lost opportunities to share the cultural experience, loss of belonging, and there was also loss of sociocultural values for the different stakeholders. The cancellation of the RRDC owing to the COVID-19 pandemic also negatively affected the RRDC economically, since the economy of KwaNongoma collapsed, as the festival is attended by international and domestic tourists who contribute to improving the quality of life of the community. Without the festival being hosted, there were no jobs created and the restrictions implemented also had a negative impact. Some of the service providers added that, even though there were benefits from the RRDC being hosted, there were other reasons for people to visit the community of KwaNongoma and this too had to stop because of South Africa's risk-adjusted strategic response to the pandemic.

This chapter also focused on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic by event stakeholders and unpacked the proposed guidelines from stakeholders. Being innovative and using technology as a resilience factor was one of the responses to the COVID-19 impact, used by SMMEs to ensure that business opportunities continue, while the event organisers used technology to host a virtual celebration.

In the final chapter of this study, Chapter Five, the research is summarised in order to reach conclusions and make recommendations about the sociocultural and socioeconomic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The primary aim of this research was to answer the question: What are the consequences of the cancellation of a cultural festival in KwaNongoma, South Africa because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with this, and the objectives of the study, the outcomes of each are discussed in Section 5.2, including how they were achieved and their implications for the main research aim. Therefore, this chapter builds on the findings presented in Chapter Four, combined with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, to present conclusions drawn from the findings and make recommendations regarding the effects of the cancellation of a cultural festival as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, conclusions are arrived at by discussing and summarising the key findings of the study. Recommendations and research contributions made by this study are explored, and suggestions for further research are proposed based on the findings made in this research.

5.2 Conclusions

The research objectives are listed below, as identified from the research problem and aim. Thereafter, conclusions are presented in line with each of the listed objectives. Furthermore, recommendations, research contribution, limitations and future research direction are proffered.

5.2.1 Objective one: The sociocultural and socioeconomic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived by the event stakeholders

The first objective of the present study aimed at determining the sociocultural and socioeconomic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Hosting the RRDC has been an opportunity to promote KwaNongoma as a tourism destination and an opportunity to celebrate the Zulu culture. The results have shown that the main reason for celebrating the RRDC is to come together and to celebrate culture. However, owing to COVID-19 the festival was forced to be cancelled and the cancellation had negative effects on the maidens who participated in the RRDC, the local residents in KwaNongoma, the service providers and the event organisers. The different sociocultural effects of the cancellation of the RRDC that emerged from the data were: loss of live personal experiences where the event was hosted, loss of belonging, loss of sociocultural values, and loss of opportunities to share in the cultural experiences of the community. Respondents highlighted that the hosting of the RRDC is an opportunity to come together and to celebrate purity in a cultural way. With the cancellation, all of that was lost.

The literature review shows that the main motive for hosting cultural festivals is that such events lead to important economic impact and this has been the case for the RRDC because the festival has been enhancing local economic development and improving facilities in the community. However, the data collected indicated that the socioeconomic effects of the cancellation of the RRDC were negative since the economy of KwaNongoma collapsed owing to the fact that there were no tourist arrivals, no jobs created and no business opportunities. In addition, local enterprises turnover was low during 2020/21.

5.2.2 Objective two: Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic by the event stakeholders

The tourism sector has been recognised as a key sector for South African economic growth and development (Department of Tourism, 2021). The sector, according to the National Development Plan (NDP, 2013), is one of the highly labour-intensive sectors that could achieve job creation targets set within the country. Different stakeholders had different lessons learned to share, as indicated by the event participants (maidens). Carrying the reed sticks and delivering them to the king is very significant to them. Hence, the cancellation of the RRDC for the maidens was a loss of social and cultural values, which made them demotivated in terms of upkeeping the values encouraged at the festival. The lesson learned from the maidens is that a virtual celebration and inviting a limited number of maidens is not enough because each maiden looks forward to attending this festival every year, and for them, every maiden wants to take part in the RRDC as this is a matter of pride and joy for them. Being present at the RRDC and carrying the reed while singing and dancing in the parade leading to the Royal Place to deliver the reed to the king is more important to each maiden because they know that they were able to represent themselves.

The RRDC has been hosted for over three decades before it was cancelled in 2020/21. According to Traveller24 (2017), the RRDC has become a popular heritage and tourist attraction for the KZN province since it attracts thousands of domestic and international tourists. For the community of KwaNongoma, this cultural festival has been a source of business opportunities as there are no other industries available in KwaNongoma besides the host of the cultural festivals and RRDC being the biggest one, which has made the SMMEs in KwaNongoma over-reliant on the festival to provide job creation and business opportunities. The lesson learned is that one annual festival cannot be the only way to improve the quality of life in the community.

5.2.3 Objective three: Guidelines and protocols for the organisation of safe cultural festivals in the context of the pandemic

COVID-19 was first identified in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China (WHO, 2020a) and on 11 March 2020 the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global

pandemic. COVID-19 has had shocking effects on the event industry since most events had to be postponed and/or cancelled in response to the pandemic (Swart & Maralack, 2020). Cultural festivals need to be celebrated annually because such festivals have significant cultural values. Therefore, there is a need to propose guidelines and protocols for the organisation of safe cultural festivals in the context of the pandemic. Different stakeholders proposed different guidelines and protocols such as splitting up the festival into all five palaces in KwaNongoma. This will not only ensure that the festival continues but it will also increase business opportunities, create more jobs and promote the other palaces as tourism destinations while infrastructure will be improved.

Another proposed guideline is that every province host camps or main uMkhosi woMhlanga as a way to celebrate maidenhood and for maidens to continue coming together while keeping the spirit alive and celebrating the culture. In addition, the king and the queens could be the ones visiting each province. This will ensure that the social values promoted by this cultural festival are encouraged even when the maidens are not at KwaNongoma.

Another proposed guideline was to celebrate the RRDC for the whole month of September since that month is celebrated as Tourism Month all over the world and in South Africa, it is celebrated as Heritage Month. The RRDC could be hosting in KwaNongoma, but the event organisers could invite two or three provinces during each weekend. This will lead to a positive effect on the RRDC even during something like the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.3 Recommendations

The results have demonstrated that hosting the RRDC has a positive impact not only on the host community but also on the event participants and the SMMEs. Nevertheless, the consequences of the cancellation of the RRDC in KwaNongoma proved to have a negative effect. The impact of COVID-19 on the event and festivals in South Africa can be illustrated with some basic government decisions. The following section suggests recommendations for the recovery of cultural festivals.

5.3.1 Planning

According to the respondents, the festival should not be cancelled but instead there should be an alternative for its continuation. The plan should include running the festival over a month so that the community can have increased benefits. This is in line with the recovery plan developed by TSRP, where the main solution of the tourism recovery plan is domestic travel; hence, communities are encouraged to host national events to ensure inclusive recovery. Nongoma is a rural area that has been known for hosting the RRDC and the top tourism destination in the Zululand region. A major challenge highlighted by the respondents was over-reliance on one event that happens over only one weekend. To improve this and to answer the

call of domestic travel, prompted by TSRP, the local municipality at KwaNongoma should host the RRDC over the month of September and continue to market the other cultural festivals hosted in the community. As the results have shown, the community benefits through business opportunities created by hosting the RRDC.

5.3.2 Innovation

For the community and SMMEs, the RRDC is an opportunity for business and for selling craft. They have to be innovative and sell their crafts online, according to the resilience-based framework formulated by Sharma et al., (2021). Technological resilience is outlined as one of the four main factors involved in the process of resilience-making that contributes to the transformation in tourism in order to secure sustainability after the COVID-19 era. The use of technology increased during the pandemic and some SMMEs in KwaNongoma were forced to go online as to ensure sustainability in their operations of selling crafts. In order to recover and reimage tourism, technology needs to be embraced after COVID-19, as stated by Noorashid & Chin (2021). The use of e-tourism could be employed by the event organisers of the RRDC as a way to market cultural events in the community while the guesthouses could also use e-tourism for bookings.

5.3.3 Guidelines and protocols

There were a number of protocols that were put in place and the respondents indicate that following the protocols will ensure that the RRDC is not cancelled. They also highly recommend vaccination. According to Sharma et al. (2021), government's response is one of the factors involved in the process of resilience. After the rollout of the three vaccine phases, the government announced that by 8 October 2021 the South Africa would be moved to Adjusted alert level 1, allowing 2000 attendees to an outside event. The government's response to the COVID-19 impact was to encourage domestic tourism during this phase of re-opening the economy, which mean that the RRDC is able be hosted again.

5.3.4 Building resilience

COVID-19 may have interrupted the RRDC with some negative effects, but the interruption also provided an opportunity to reset the way the cultural festival is offered. While there is definite room for greater community participation, stakeholder awareness and perceptions about the importance of the cultural festival are positive, providing a solid foundation for the event to be used as a catalyst for tourism development. To overcome the challenge of an event like COVID-19, the RRDC organisers should access the stimulus packages distributed through government's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP.) Further impetus can be created through guidance and interventions by local government that can involve the local community and offer support formalised within the framework provided by the TSRP, a government initiative to help rebuild tourism. The inclusion and participation of the KwaNongoma community would lead to the support and acceptance of tourism development if the benefits related to their needs, such

as employment and/or business opportunities. Traditional cultural products and cultural initiatives such as exhibitions, workshops and cultural interactions can be made available throughout the year. The relationship between the community, attendees and event organisers, i.e., all stakeholders, should, however, be built on the premise that the festival and its products are hosted to protect and pass on the Zulu cultural traditions and thus any tourism activities must respect Zulu culture and avoid its over commodification.

The development of infrastructure to accommodate the influx of participants to the event, using practices that consider climate change and mitigate environmental damage, could benefit KwaNongoma while also making it more attractive for tourists. Furthermore, technology may have been an emergency response during COVID-19, but it should become a strategic and innovative tool to provide a continuous online platform for the distribution of products and to manage relationships with networks as well as with markets. Marketing and advertising should be used to encourage demand, reassuring tourists, local or international, that a cultural experience awaits, in line with safety protocols for COVID-19. Perhaps, most importantly, reconfiguring the festival to be more resilient to change or disruptions could offer KwaNongoma an opportunity to restart the festival with sustainable tourism practices for tourism development.

5.4 Research contribution

This study was prompted by the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic affected the tourism sector and that there is a need for investigation and understanding of the nature of the impacts. The study conducted by Perić and Vitezić(2019:11) recommended measuring both the positive and negative effects of event cancellation from the viewpoint of local residents. Therefore, this study builds on the call of Perić and Vitezić (2019:11) for continuous research about event cancellation. There is no current study that has done that in the context of cultural events. As previously mentioned, events were prohibited by the South Africa government in an attempt to flatten the curve of the COVID-19 outbreak, which consequently affected the South African tourism and events industry (SACoronavirus, 2020).

Moreover, the study determines the sociocultural and socioeconomic effects of event cancellation owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically in KwaNongoma KZN, South Africa. As such, the study aimed to fill existing gaps in the literature by providing guidelines and protocols for the organisation of a safe cultural festival in the context of the pandemic, highlighting the areas that are most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the study's key findings contribute to the event-management literature on the impact of the cancellation of a cultural festival because of COVID-19.

5.5 Limitations of the study

This research study used a qualitative research design and the phenomenological approach was adopted with the aim to understand the human experience in the context. However, a qualitative study does have limitations in terms of sample size and it was the case for this study.

The study intended to conduct 20 interviews, but owing to COVID-19, the interviews had to be conducted virtually. The researcher conducted virtual interviews either telephonically or through Zoom or MS Teams. There were network issues that meant some interviews had to be cancelled.

5.6 Directions for future research

This current study followed a qualitative research design using a convenience sampling method where respondents were selected based on the fact that they are easily and conveniently available. Therefore, for future research, a quantitative study could be conducted as that will include a bigger sample size.

A post-COVID-19 study should be conducted and should be done during the festival since this will be an opportunity to include international tourists who attend the RRDC and also the maidens who are not below the age of 18.

The current study was based on the impact of the cancellation of a cultural festival in KwaNongoma, South Africa as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study could be expanded to conduct the same research at other cultural festivals in South Africa. Another study could focus on measuring the economic contribution that the RRDC makes to the tourism economy for KZN.

5.7 Conclusion

The aim of this research was to determine the consequences of the cancellation of a cultural festival in KwaNongoma, South Africa as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The outcome of the study confirms the importance of cultural festivals to the host community but, most importantly, how such festivals benefit the economy of the community. The results highlight that the effects of COVID-19 were felt by all of the different stakeholders of the RRDC.

Although the study had only 14 respondents, it was able to meet its objectives and to contribute to the event-management literature by attempting to analyse the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cancellation of a cultural festival. It also provided guidelines on how to deal with such pandemics in the future and help the sector to recover and to remain resilient.

Chapter One introduced the research aim and research problem for this study, while Chapter Two contains the academic literature that provided a theoretical development of this thesis. Chapter Three outlined the research design and methodology, and Chapter Four presented the results of the research, revealing that festivals contribute positively to the host community. However, owing to COVID-19, the tourism sector was affected negatively.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethics Certificate

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

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South Africa
Tel: +27 21 4603291
Email: fbmsethics@cput.ac.za

Office of the Chairperson Research Ethics Committee	FACULTY: BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

The Faculty's Research Ethics Committee (FREC) on 02 March 2021, ethics APPROVAL was granted to Zimasa Felicia Ndaba (215090624) for a research activity for **M Tech: Tourism and Hospitality Management** at Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Title of dissertation / thesis / project:	Covid-19 pandemic and cultural event(s) cancellation in South Africa: A case of KwaNongoma
	Lead Supervisor (s): Dr. H. Bama and Mrs. P. Ebrahim

Decision: APPROVED
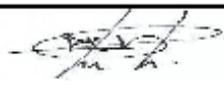
Signed: Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee	**2 MARCH 2021**
	Date

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the CPUT Policy on Research Ethics.

2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study requires that the researcher stops the study and immediately informs the chairperson of the relevant Faculty Ethics Committee.

3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing accompanied by a progress report.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, notably compliance with the Bill of Rights as provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (the Constitution) and where applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003 and/or other legislations that is relevant.

6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.

7. No field work activities may continue after two (2) years for Masters and Doctorate research project from the date of issue of the Ethics Certificate. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report (REC 6) will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Clearance Certificate No | 2021 FBMSREC 002

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Appendix B: Consent Letter

KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
ARTS AND CULTURE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DIRECTORATE:
Communication and IT

Heritage House
222 Jabu Ndlovu Street, Pietermaritzburg 3201
Tel: +27 (0) 33 264 3440 | Facebook/Twitter/Instagram: @artskzn

ENQUIRIES	N.P. MABOEA	CONTACT No.	033-2643440

Ms Ndaba

UMKHOSI WOMHLANGA (REED CELEBRATION) RESEARCH

1. Thank you again for your interest in doing your research about our project the Royal Reed Celebration

2. The Royal Reed Celebration normally takes place in the first weekend of September, but due to the CODID-19 pandemic and Lockdown regulations events have been put on hold this year.

3. You can however interview some of the role-players and maidens according to the requirements of your topic.

N.P. MABOEA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR: COMMUNICATION

20/07/2020
DATE

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Appendix C: Interview Questions

![Cape Peninsula University of Technology logo]

Title of The Study: The effects of the cancellation of a cultural festival in KwaNongoma, South Africa as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic

Royal Reed Dance ceremony interview

The purpose of this study is to determine the profile of the event participants, organisers and local residents, as well the consequences of the cancellation of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony in KwaNongoma as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. All information will be treated confidentially in accordance with the ethical standards of CPUT. Please answer all question clearly and thank you for your participation in the study.

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Section A: Demographic Profile

1.	What year were you born?
2.	Please specify your home language?
3.	Please indicate your highest level of education?
4.	Please indicate your current occupation status?
5.	Which province do you currently live in?
6.	What was your main role when participating in the Royal Reed Dance ceremony maiden (participants), organizer or local resident and or service provider)?

Section B: The effects of the cancellation of a cultural festival in KwaNongoma

Interview Questions for event participants (Maidens)

Question 1:	How often have you attended uMkhosi Womhlanga (Royal Reed Dance ceremony) in the last Five Years before 2020?
Question 2:	Are you interested in attending traditional events? If yes, what other traditional and ceremonial events have you attended?
Question 3:	What do you think is the purpose of celebrating the Royal Reed Dance ceremony?
Question 4	How did the cancellation of the 2020 event impact you?

Question 5	In your own opinion, how do you think the event organiser could better plan for the Royal Reed Dance ceremony in future as to ensure that the cultural festival doesn't get cancelled because of any pandemic?
Question 6:	Is the vaccination rollout the best option to avoid another cancellation of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony?
Question 7:	In addition to vaccines, what other measures might be better used to avoid another cancellation of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony?

Section B: The effects of the cancellation of a cultural festival in KwaNongoma

Interview Questions for event local resident and/ service provider

Question 1:	What do you think is the purpose of celebrating the Royal Reed Dance ceremony?
Question 2:	As a local, why do you attend the Royal Reed Dance ceremony? (business related reason, own decision or cultural experience)
	Based on your experiences about the Royal Reed Dance ceremony hosted in KwaNongoma, how would you rate the present level (pre-2020) of this cultural festival and the impacts on the community?
Question 3:	How did the cancellation of the 2020 event impact you?
Question 4:	In your own opinion, how do you think the event organiser could better plan for the Royal Reed Dance ceremony in future as to ensure that the cultural festival doesn't get cancelled because of any pandemic?
Question 5	What guidelines and protocols do you think the event organiser of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony should propose for safe cultural festivals in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic?
Question 6:	What measure can be put in place in order for the community of KwaNongoma to benefit from hosting the Royal Reed Dance ceremony in case the pandemic lasts even longer?
Question 7:	Is the vaccination rollout the best option to avoid another cancellation of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony?
Question 8:	In addition to vaccines, what other measures might be better used to avoid another cancellation of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony?

Section B: The effects of the cancellation of a cultural festival in KwaNongoma

Interview Questions for organiser

Question 1:	In your opinion as the event organiser, why is uMkhosi Womhlanga (Royal Reed Dance ceremony) important to KZN and to the local community for Nongoma?
Question 2:	How has the Royal Reed Dance ceremony impacted the local community of KwaNongoma?
Question 3:	How do you measure the success of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony? When do you know it is successful?
Question 4:	Based on your experiences about the Royal Reed Dance ceremony hosted in KwaNongoma, how would you rate the present level of this cultural festival success and the impacts on the community?
Question 5:	How did the cancellation of the 2020 Royal Reed Dance ceremony, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic impact you as the event organiser?
Question 6:	As the event organiser of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony, what are the lessons learned from the cancellation of this cultural festival because of the Covid-19 pandemic?
Question 7:	What guidelines and protocols do you as the event organiser propose for safe cultural festivals in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic?
Question 8:	What measure can be put in place in order for the community of KwaNongoma to benefit from hosting the Royal Reed Dance ceremony in case the pandemic lasts even longer?
Question 9:	Is the vaccination rollout the best option to avoid another cancellation of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony?
Question 10:	In addition to vaccines, what other measures might be better used to avoid another cancellation of the Royal Reed Dance ceremony?

Appendix D: Editing Certificate

Ricky Woods Academic Editing Services

Editing Certificate

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To Whom it May Concern

CPUT

**Editing of Master's dissertation**

I, Marietjie Alfreda Woods, hereby certify that I have completed the editing and correction of the dissertation: **COVID-19 pandemic and cultural events cancellation in South Africa: a case of KwaNongoma** by **Zimasa Felicia Ndaba** , submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree **Master of Technology in Tourism and Hospitality Management** in the **Faculty of Business and Management Science** at the **Cape Peninsula University of Technology**

I believe that the dissertation meets with the grammatical and linguistic requirements

for a document of this nature.

Name of Editor: Marietjie Alfreda (Ricky) Woods

Qualifications: BA (Hons) (Wits); Copy-editing and Proofreading (UCT); Editing

Principles and Practice (UP); Accredited Text Editor (English) (PEG)

6 November 2022
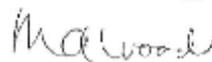
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