

# CHARACTERISTICS OF CYNOLOGICAL MANIFESTATIONS IN SERBIA

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**ABSTRACT:** *Cynological manifestations or dog competitions, in particular major international competitions, at the present are events that attract large numbers of visitors. Thus, they can be of great importance for certain destination. These are very specific events that last one at least and four days at the most, depending on their character (local, regional, national or international). There are many participants that travel long way to participate in this kind of events. According to conducted survey among Serbian cynologists, Germany and Great Britain organize the most attractive dog events. The aim of this paper is to show how respondents perceive the quality of Serbian dog competitions. The results showed that the touristic parameters are evaluated much better than those that refer to the organization and reputation of the dog events in Serbia.*

**Key words:** *Cynological events; Event tourism;*

## INTRODUCTION

Cynological manifestations or dog competitions, especially major international competitions, are events that attract large numbers of visitors. About the event, as a separate phenomenon, has been written by various authors who also gave different classifications of those events, depending on the size, significance, form and content of the event (Jago and Shaw, 1998; Allen et al., 2002; Getz, 2005; Van der Wagen, 2007; Bowdin et al., 2011), but so far, in the present literature has not much been written on the subject of cynological manifestations and especially not on the subject of their tourist aspects. It has been already underlined that the events represent very important motive for tourists moving, that well planned events have larger importance in raising the competitive advantage of a tourist destination (Getz, 2008). Many authors agree that events have significant tour-

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ist, social and cultural role for destination (Štetić, 2006; Getz, 2008; O'Sullivan et al, 2009) and contribute local and regional development (Getz, 1993; Formica, Uysal, 1998; Felsenstein, Fleischer, 2003; Gursoy et al. 2004; Getz, 2008; Jackson, 2008; O'Sullivan et al, 2009; Avgousti, 2012). According to those authors, events can be viewed as attraction by itself, and could influence the rise in tourist demand, and tourist season extension, that is rise in tourist business (turnover) out of the time of the main tourist season.

Cynological events are very specific events where dogs are evaluated and classified in exterior or a particular type of work, that follows a series of other uncompetitive activities, like the demonstration of different kinds of dog sports (dog dancing, agility, monitoring) to the presentation and sale of various products for dogs in the consumer exhibition (Matejević i sar., 2014). These competitions may have a local, regional, national or international character, the last two being the most interesting in the context of tourism movements and activities. European and World dogs exhibitions gather significant number of competitors and visitors, often by tens of thousands, as it was in World Dog Show 2008. in Sweden on which the number of entries in the Show and the accompanying contents reached 35.000 (from 53 countries) and the number of competitors and spectators reached 50.000 (FCI, 3/08). The World Dog Show and the accompanying dog contests in Paris, in 2010, reached a number of 35.354 registered dogs (Catalogue WDS, 2011).

Previous researches established that main pull factors of cynological events, that influence participants, are judges, more exactly fairness, expertise, experience, and reputation of the judges (Matejević i sar., 2014). In that research, factor analysis distinguished 4 factors of motivation of participants at canine events – "Socialization/Networking", "Judges", "Quality and prestige of the event" and "Touristic motives". The aim of paper is to show how cynological events in Serbia are evaluated by their participants. Authors, also, tried to give directive for advanced organization in order to reach certain quality of cynological manifestations. Only good planned and quality organized dog event could bring, besides other, important economic benefits for organizers and local community.

## METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of this study a questionnaire was formed by authors. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. As authors could not learn much about previous research from literature about canine events, they could not based on it in creating the questionnaire. Thus, before creating the questionnaire authors interviewed many cynologists and cynology judges, which opinions, as well as their personal experience, were taken as elementary relevant base when creating the questionnaire.

In the first part, the respondents declared on several of their socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, education, economic status), as well as on their behavior before and during the cynologic events.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of a scale of 41 questions related to various possible motives and needs of the dog show participants, and they could present the possible *pull* factors of cynologic events. The respondents, also, have chosen two

foreign countries that, according to their opinion, organize most attractive cynological events.

The third part of the questionnaire, that is significant for this paper, consisted of a scale of 29 questions related to various elements and characteristics of Serbian cynological manifestations. On a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = much worse in Serbia, 5 = much better in Serbia) respondents valued each of 29 element of Serbian cynological manifestations in regard to cynological events in countries that they previous state. Data from these scales were analyzed in SPSS 11.5.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At the end of research, there were 152 questionnaires, but a certain number of them was filled incorrect. Thus, the number of properly and fully completed questionnaires was 109. Basic socio-demographic and other characteristics can be seen in table 1.

Average Serbian competitor in cynologic events is male, in his thirties, with solid education. He likes to visit dog shows in his country, especially all-breed shows, even when he does not take his own dog to the competition. He attends with his friends or family and from time to time he makes sightseeing tours in the place of the event. Therefore those are dog and cynology lovers who developed their hobby into a business activity as source of additional profit. They spend their free time with their family and friends at cynological manifestation, if not to compete with their dogs then just to watch and enjoy dogs. They are actively informed about events on the Internet or by other competitors.

The largest number of respondents consider that cynological manifestations in Germany (32 respondents) and Great Britain (23 respondents) are the most attractive. One part of respondents labeled Hungarian (18 respondents), Austrian (17 respondents), Italian (15 respondents) and French (15 respondents) cynological events as the most interested.

Table 2 shows the results of descriptive statistics (Mean, SD) for all 29 items. Results show that cynological manifestations in Serbia are, generally, valued very bad by respondents. As the best valued characteristic respondents state „Hospitality of the organizers” and “Cordiality of the organizing team members”. These items are estimated as approximately equal as at foreign manifestations ( $M=2.88$ ;  $M=2.70$ ). Respondents gave advantage to touristic characteristics over other parameters, and estimated that cynological events have good tourist potential, approximately equal as the one in foreign cynological events. Thus, attractiveness of city/place of event ( $M=2.51$ ), distance from certain natural ( $M=2.79$ ) and other touristic attractions ( $M=2.76$ ), as well as cultural and historical heritage ( $M=2.76$ ), are estimated much better than parameters related to organization, reputation and importance of dog events in Serbia.

In regards to foreign cynological manifestations, dog events in Serbia are estimate as the worst for cynological culture of participants ( $M=1.78$ ) and number of applied dogs (entries) ( $M=1.83$ ). Quality of the judgelist ( $M=1.89$ ) and reputation of event ( $M=1.96$ ) are valued as very bad regarding those of foreign cynological events. This is undesirable result, having in mind that previous research indicate “Judges” as very important motivating factor (Matejević i sar., 2014).

**Table 1.** Sample characteristics

Variables and offered modality answers		Frequency	Percent
Sex	male	80	73.4
	female	29	26.6
Education	high school	53	48.6
	college	24	22.0
	university	29	26.6
How often do you visit cynological events in your country?	once a month or less	37	33.9
	2 times a month	35	32.1
	more than 2 times a month	37	33.9
Are You visit cynological events only when You compete with Your dog(s)?	yes	35	32.1
	no	74	67.9
Do You have Your registered kennel for some breed(s)?	yes	56	51.4
	no	53	48.6
With how many dogs do You usually compete in one cynological event?	one	54	49.5
	two	41	37.6
	more then 2	14	12.8
What kind of cynological events You prefer?	specialized exhibition for some breed(s)	33	30.3
	all breeds exhibition	64	58.7
	work competition	12	11.0
How often do You visit cynological events abroad?	not at all	50	45.9
	1-3 times a year	43	39.4
	4-6 times a year	16	14.7
You usually visit cynological events:	alone	8	7.3
	with family	47	43.1
	with friends	54	49.5
Do You go in sightseeing the city where the event took place?	yes	14	12.8
	no	16	14.7
	sometimes	79	72.5

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics for each parameter

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Hospitality of the organizers	94	2.88	1.125
Distance from certain natural attractions	94	2.79	.788
Vicinity of certain cultural and historical heritage	94	2.76	.900
Cordiality of the organizing team members	94	2.70	.814
Distance from certain tourist attractions	94	2.69	.790
Accessibility of facilities of the event	94	2.60	.965
Cynologic tradition	94	2.54	.863
Attractiveness of city/place of event	94	2.51	.852
Other events held at the same time	94	2.49	.925
Opportunity to meet owners of quality dogs for the sake of future dog's reproduction	94	2.45	1.054
The ability to acquire new knowledge and experiences in breeding of a certain breed	94	2.37	.973
Prestige of grades/titles which are given	94	2.31	1.006
Importance of won titles in a particular event	94	2.28	1.020
Spaciousness of the place of the event	94	2.27	.882
The ability to create a good image and famous name in the world of dog breeders	94	2.26	1.067
Cynologic knowledge and experience of the other contestants	94	2.21	.890
Profitability of event participation	94	2.18	1.047
Functionality of the place of the event	94	2.18	.915
Significance of the obtained rating on a particular event	94	2.18	1.077
Possibility of strong competition in the contest	94	2.16	1.040
Fairness in grading	94	2.09	1.064
Attractiveness of the judgelist	94	2.02	.880
Professionalism in organizing of a certain cynologic event	94	2.02	.842
Image of a certain cynologic event	94	2.01	.898
Accuracy of the time in the organization of the event	94	2.01	.898
Reputation of event	94	1.96	.775
Quality of the judgelist	94	1.89	.956
Expected number of applied dogs(contestants)	94	1.83	.851
Cynologic culture of the other contestants	94	1.78	.918
Valid N (listwise)	94		

## Factor Analysis

The factor analysis was conducted on the differences among characteristics of Serbian and foreign cynological events. The internal consistency of the instrument measurements (with 29 items) was confirmed by the resulting Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = .913$ ) and the adequacy of sampling declares the obtained KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling) which amount .827. Two factors of a higher level were distinguished and rotated with Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization. These two factors explain 52,76% variance.

**Table 3.**

Factors	Saturation	Expl.of Variance	$\alpha$
Factor 1: Organization and prestige of event		40.156	0,948
Significance of obtained rating in a particular event	.846		
Significance of obtained titles in a particular event	.846		
Professionalism in organizing of a certain cynologic event	.806		
Image of a certain cynologic event	.802		
Fairness in grading	.792		
Opportunity to meet owners of quality dogs for the sake of future dog's reproduction	.778		
The ability to create a good image and famous name in the world of dog breeders	.755		
Prestige of grades/titles which are given	.749		
Cynologic culture of the contestants	.734		
Opportunity to acquire new knowledge and experience in breeding of a certain breed of dogs	.724		
Functionality of the place of the event	.692		
Attractiveness of the list of judges	.682		
Reputation of cynological events	.663		
Accessibility of facilities of the event	.649		
Accuracy of the time in the organization of the event	.644		
Spaciousness of the place of the event	.637		
Quality of the list of judges	.600		
Hospitality of the organizers	.515		
Factor 2: Tourist aspects		12.590	0,834
Distance from certain natural attractions	.861		
Vicinity of certain tourist attractions	.819		
Vicinity of certain cultural and historical heritage	.735		
Attractiveness of city/place of event	.697		
Other events held at the same time	.608		
Profitability of event participation	.606		

**Table 4.** Descriptive statistics for each factor

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
F 2: Tourist aspects	94	1.00	4.67	2.5691	.65647
F 1: Organization and prestige of event	94	1.00	4.53	2.1564	.70718
Valid N (listwise)	94				

The first extracted factor of higher order refers to 17 items which tell about the organization, quality and prestige of the manifestation. This factor is named as “Organisation and prestige of the event” and includes image, reputation of event, importance and prestige of grades and titles, as well as other organisation’s aspects. The second extracted factor includes 6 items, and 5 of them relate directly to tourist characteristics. This factor is labeled as “Tourist aspects”.

Previous research (Matejević i sar., 2014) indicated that “Socialization” (M=4.0294), „Judges“ (M=4.0275) and „Quality and prestige of manifestation“ (M=4.0150) are very important pull factors. As it can be seen in table 4, these factors are estimated as very bad, and do not satisfy needs of dog lovers and potential participants of events. On the other side, factor “Tourist aspects”, that is, in previous research, described as the most unimportant motivator (M=2.5945), in this research is estimated as approximately equal to one in foreign manifestations.

## CONSLUSION

Dog events, as very specific events, attract a large number of visitors, and most of them are the competitors. The attractiveness of cynological manifestation basically depends on number of contestants which obligates organizers to attract as many participants as possible. Large number of competitors is attracted and even larger number of business organizations as exhibitors within the frame of accompanying consumer exhibitions, which is of importance for the organizers, as well as the destination. Dog events are, first of all, manifestations of competitive character, therefore, organizers should respect needs and wishes of participants in order to create good reputation of event. Organizers who want to attract as much as possible more participants /contestants should offer, above all, the best possible list of judges, and beside the safety and security of the visitors and dogs as well as a strong competition in the contest, they would get the opportunity for useful and pleasant social contacts to which contestants also stream. Results showed that Serbian cynological events are significantly less attractive and do not fulfill nor the one participant’s need. Cynological workers must advance organization of those events in order to attract more contestants.

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