

Chapter 6

The Agency of Children and Young People in Sustainability Transitions Eco-Spiritual Events on Hare Krishna Eco-Farms in Europe

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Abstract

The role of children and young people is not outlined in the sustainability transitions literature. The aim of this work is to illustrate the significance of young people's agency by showcasing Hare Krishna eco-farms organising cultural/eco-spiritual events. This work forms part of a wider sustainability study focussing on food in spiritual communities in Europe. Data were collected through observation and interviews on three Hare Krishna farms. The agency of children and youths and the significance of their presence at eco-events emerged as an unexpected theme. Findings show that Hare Krishna events in Europe are visited by a relatively high number of children and young people who learn about more sustainable practices through extracurricular activities. By describing the cognitive and experiential encounters, the authors draw attention to the significance of children's involvement in ecologically geared events in the context of sustainability transitions.

Keywords: Sustainability; eco-spiritual events; agency; children; Hare Krishna; religion

Introduction

Getz and Page (2016) position festivals and cultural programmes as one of the four main types of events in event tourism, often taking place in (religious) communities. Hare Krishna eco-farms in Europe offer a clear example of this category as they hold a wide range of cultural and eco-spiritual events to

community members and outsiders alike. The role of eco-spiritual communities is highlighted in the broad sustainability literature, suggesting that they are more successful in maintaining more sustainable practices than their secular counterparts (Lestar, 2020). More specifically for our purposes, the sustainability transitions literature has recently highlighted the agency of spirituality and religion in and for system-wide change (Köhrsen, 2018; Lestar, 2020).

In contrast, the agency of children provides a theme which has largely been missed in several areas of social scientific enquiries. The lack of investigations and conceptualisations concerning children was foregrounded only recently in tourism research, for example (Seraphin, Yallop, Seyfi, & Hall, 2022). In sustainability transitions, on the other hand, the focus of which often remains on technological innovations and regime-wide interventions, the agency of children has not been incorporated into the theoretical framework.

In short, sustainability transition frameworks are interested in system-wide change through the dislocation of the current socio-technical regime(s) and systems of provision (e.g. energy) (Geels & Schot, 2010). Emphasised in their vocabulary, one often finds words like innovation, technology, transport, food systems, systems of provision, business and policymaking, to name a few. While the importance of regime-level (*mezzo*) change is stressed, the micro players on the community level (termed as *niches*), and interconnections between all levels and players, are also recognised. This is evident, for example, in research investigating the energy transition, where the importance of community energy schemes is highlighted (Pellegrini-Masini, 2020; Pellegrini-Masini et al., 2020). These niches are perceived as experimental spaces where more sustainable practices can be ‘tested’ before their wider dissemination (Geels, 2004, 2005; Geels & Schot, 2010). Due to the wide range of exemplary practices in the community, the Hare Krishna movement offers a unique case for analysis in the context of sustainability transitions. A traditional transitions analysis would consider specific frameworks of the niche and its transitional role for systemic change (e.g. Pellegrini-Masini et al., 2021). However, the purpose of this current chapter is primarily to highlight some areas concerning children and pro-environmental events. This could later be developed further into a conceptualisation of children’s agency for sustainability transitions.

In what follows, we first provide a contextual section about two Hare Krishna eco-farms and their eco-spiritual events experienced by children. In particular, we will focus on school trips and the attendance of an annual fair that take place in two different Hare Krishna communities. While fairs are classified as event tourism opportunities (Getz & Page, 2016), school trips (or field trip) have a deliberate educational purpose that goes beyond the aim of entertaining and providing pleasurable experiences to participants, ‘in which students interact with the setting, displays, and exhibits to gain an experiential connection to the ideas, concepts, and subject matter’ (Behrendt & Franklin, 2014, p. 236).

The description of the cases is followed by a discussion in which key elements are presented in the context of sustainability transitions. Finally, a brief summary highlights the key insights while a call is made to consider and conceptualise children’s agency for sustainability transitions.

Hare Krishna Eco-Tourism

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The Hare Krishna community was the target of social and academic criticism in and around the 1980s (Rochford, 1991, pp. 115–138). Critics questioned the organisation's recruitment process and turned their works to theories of brain-washing, pathologising or new religious movements. The organisation's commitment to Indian cultures (cuisine, clothes, dress, music etc.) and perceived gender inequality have also prompted critical investigation (Rochford, 1991). Today, the community engages in philosophical debates and runs research institutions (such as the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies) and publishes interfaith statements to promote dialogue. With an increasing focus on charitable and eco-farm projects, the movement appears to have overcome the crises posed by internal and external conflicts and criticism. This chapter approaches International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) as a social innovation rather than a religious movement. The controversial issues mentioned above are beyond the scope of this article.

The following account forms part of a wider research looking into Hare Krishna practices with a focus on food and diet. The broad research was conducted in three European farm communities where the researcher spent altogether 10 weeks participating in daily activities and events while observing and interviewing believers and farm visitors. Findings were reported in several papers focussing on specific aspects of Hare Krishna ecology and spirituality (Lestar, 2017, 2018, 2020). The theme of children's agency emerged during the later stages of data collection. To repeat, this current account primarily focusses on children's involvement in ecological events. Several other aspects of the farms' achievements, however significant, are not considered here.

Bhaktivedanta Manor, Watford (London)

The Manor, as it is frequently called, was established near the town of Watford (16 miles northwest of London) in 1973. The property was donated to the ISKCON by George Harrison of the Beatles. Since its establishment, the Manor has become the UK centre of the ISKCON movement, listing some 250,000 visits a year.

Currently, there are about 50 employees, some 300 regular volunteers and about 1,800 Sunday congregation attendees. Two major ecological achievements in the community are the total eradication of fuel-based technology from food production (machinery or fertilisers) and an extensive daily food distribution programme that has been running for several decades. Environmental sustainability occupies a central place in the teachings and practices of the farm. The establishment attracts hundreds of visitors, tourists and friends weekly from London and across the country. Sundays are special occasions when followers of Krishna and other Hindu faiths meet to share in devotional and recreational activities. On these days, religious services may be attended, and time spent with family and community gatherings in the nearby fields that also offer dining facilities and a playground.

To help visitors, neat signposts give directions and information about expected behaviour regarding dress code, smoking and meat consumption. Next to the arrival area there is a contemplative garden dedicated to the theme of spirituality and vegetarianism. At the entrance, a poster advocates meat-free Mondays with Paul McCartney, a dedicated supporter of the community's food projects. Rock bands, soloists and actors are portrayed as either vegetarians or sympathisers in promoting equality in the world. On a separate poster, famous people such as Tolstoy, Einstein and Leonardo da Vinci are portrayed, together with their photographs, in support of the vegetarian ethos. Children can also take a lesson home by studying pictures displayed on the garden wall to explain non-violent practices on their level.

The spacious parks, ornamental gardens, ponds, footpaths and educational trails provide an elevating atmosphere for community members and visitors alike.

Children and the Bhaktivedanta Manor

Eco-tourism, which is under the educational department, is the main attraction for outsiders. Coaches carrying school children, elderly and disabled people visit the farm to learn about Krishna spirituality connected with sustainable farming and lifestyle practices, and to taste the special vegetarian food. Most visitors are secondary school students who visit as in compliance with the national curriculum for religious studies. In 2019, the farm was visited by 8,000 school children, accompanied by about 400 adults: teachers, helpers and parents. About 90% of school visits were made by primary children, 10% were sixth-form students. In addition to the primary and secondary school students, there are university students, researchers, disabled groups and diverse groups of adult and elderly people who also visit the farm for its ecological and spiritual attractions.

Apart from the school trips, an estimated 20,000–30,000 pupils visit the centre every year.

A close spiritual connection to land and nature, including animals, is demonstrated by visiting the stops on the eco-tour. An entire bundle of practices is thus introduced from the growing of plants and specific herbs through ploughing and milking to food preparation and sharing Krishna prasadam: food offered to the deities before consumption. Ox-cart tours are offered two–four days a week to demonstrate the various aspects of eco-farming such as ploughing, rearing, milking, milling and organic gardening.

Children can also find messages of compassion specifically addressed to them in pictures displayed on the garden wall. While the nature of these encounters is ephemeral as school trips only last for a few hours, it is likely that these rare experiences will remain with the children and youths for the rest of their lives (DeWitt & Storksdieck, 2008).

After visiting the centre, schoolteachers and students express their gratitude and appreciation on the community's website, where they can also post questions. At times children post their drawings to illustrate what they learnt. Below are some reflective comments made by a teacher:

- It was a wonderful day, the children learnt so much about diversity and religious education, so much more than from a book!

Other teachers wrote:

- It was a pleasure to hear the children of Bhaktivedanta Manor School singing and playing music at the end. It was a powerful experience for our children who don't often experience that kind of communal joy.
- The students and staff thoroughly enjoyed this.
- The students have all been very positive and thrilled in respect of the welcome that was extended to them. Thank you so very much.
- Students really appreciated the opportunity to purchase a reminder of their visit.
- Everyone was very warm, friendly and polite. We have never had such a super school trip. We were treated like special guests. Wonderful little gifts to take home.

One of the authors observed a few student groups around the goshala (cowshed), which is the first stop of the bullock tour. They enjoyed feeding the cows, seeing them milked and listening to the guide's words about Hindu cow protection. Cow protection in the Manor has five basic requirements. (1) No cow or bull is ever slaughtered. (2) Calves suckle from their mothers. (3) Oxen are engaged in work. (4) Cows are hand-milked. (5) Cows and bulls are fed appropriate, natural food. Cows in the stable are called by their first name. They have their name, photo and description displayed as follows: 'Cintamini 27/11/2014 Breed: Dairy Shorthorn. One of her horns is much shorter than the other, and her stomach fur is an unusual red-white colour'.

The ox-cart tour has several other stops where visitors learn about ploughing, farming and organic gardening. At the end of the tour, guides in the temple offer a spiritual journey into the faith, after which visitors taste Krishna food and dress in Krishna clothing.

Krishna Valley, Hungary

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Started in 1993 by a handful of devotees, the Krishna Valley has become a sizeable eco-village with 700 acres of land. The valley is a member of both international (GEN) and national (MEH) eco-village networks. The valley forms part of the mediaeval village of Somogyvamos which has a population of about 600 people, 120 of whom are gypsies who are mostly unemployed, and 220 Krishna believers. Arriving on the farm the researcher was impressed by its spacious yet orderly landscape, a bicycle rental scheme, the neat parking lots, the many trees and ornamental plants, and an appealing natural setting. The spatial arrangement is most inviting and favourable for gardening, appreciating nature, outdoor exercise, eating together, cultivating friendships, reading and communal activities. It was ISKCON founder's legacy to create farming communities to cultivate 'simple living and high thinking', and to demonstrate this philosophy in

practice to the outside world. As such, to 'live off the land' and 'off the cows', and in harmony with nature – on the basis of serving rather than exploitation – is of paramount value for the believer.

Regarding sustainability, selective waste collection, alternative energy (e.g. wind turbines and heating system), water management, food, land use, eco-tours, ecological reading groups and cow protection are all spatially set to stabilise pro-environmental attitudes and practices. Demand-side resource reduction is key in domestic practices, especially in the Krishna Valley where external electricity is ruled out of the space. Devotees juxtapose simplicity to materialist greed or associate it with health (e.g. simple food, cold water shower), contentment or a less carbon-intensive lifestyle. In Krishna Valley, personal boreholes and compost toilets are being introduced at the expense of the more comfortable but complicated use of centralised water supply and sewage management system. Labour, domestic or not, is purposefully made manual where machinery is avoidable. Drawing water from the well, doing the laundry or milking the cow are all done by hand.

During the 24 years of its existence, community members have planted 350,000 trees on the farm, roughly an average of 200 trees per person each year. More trees are left in place than felled, resulting in a designed regeneration of biodiversity on the land. Shifting from previous monocultural cultivations and reforestation resulted in the re-introduction of several species in the area, a project that has been highly successful. The established monoculture was completely changed into woodlands and small-scale and organic production. Biodiversity has greatly improved through polycultural methods and arrangements.

All people who were asked in the village knew about the valley and the Hare Krishna farm. In about a twenty-mile radius, the valley is signposted on the roadsides, and most people are aware of its existence (Table 1).

Children and the Krishna Valley

During the annual village fair – or rather, Valley Fair (each July) – all accommodation in the region is booked up in advance to host some 7,000 visitors. The farm's attractions include a guided tour of six stops where visitors learn about natural grey water filtering and reuse, wind and solar systems, Hare Krishna schooling, organic production, Krishna food and cow protection. Some forty-thousand people book the tour annually.

Guides are available in Hungarian and German languages. By observing and talking to visitors, the researcher found them to be thrilled about tasting prasadam (food offered to the deities before consumption) and having a ride on the ox-pulled cart. The two-hour trip may not lead to a direct life-changing experience for many, but ecological knowledge and experience may contribute to incremental changes in lifestyle practices (Gifford & Nilsson, 2014; Stern, 2000). The income raised through the eco-programme contributes towards the valley's maintenance.

Table 1. Visitors in Hungarian Krishna Valley.

Year	Individual Visitors			Other	Total
	Children	Elderly/Retired	Adult	Groups, Festivals	
2002	1,600	1,040	8,650	8,497	19,787
2003	2,286	3,120	8,790	15,359	29,555
2004	2,082	1,313	5,399	13,254	22,048
2005	1,612	1,038	8,657	8,616	19,923
2006	1,957	1,313	5,313	10,327	18,910
2007	1,967	1,438	5,584	13,923	22,912
2008	1,921	1,702	5,552	12,531	21,706
2009	1,813	1,757	5,471	10,889	19,930
2010	1,666	1,724	5,310	13,186	21,886
2011	1,471	1,771	5,240	9,275	17,757
2012	792	2,147	4,543	9,456	16,938
2013	777	1,757	4,273	10,701	17,508
2014	1,559	1,593	4,699	9,842	17,693
2015	1,565	1,382	4,526	10,560	18,033
2016	1,475	1,640	5,465	11,310	19,890
2017	2,163	1,997	6,205	10,703	21,068
2018	2,315	2,173	6,986	13,679	25,153
2019	2,164	2,116	8,010	11,842	24,132
2020	1,657	1,435	6,371	6,652	16,115

Source: The Authors.

Visitors to the valley arrive by cars, bicycles or coaches carrying groups of school children, company workers or holiday makers. Due to the close vicinity of the Lake Balaton, there are a considerable number of foreign visitors, especially from Germany. On passing through the main gate, visitors have the option to rent a bike or walk through the ecological trail across the farm. They can also opt for a bullock ride, a scheme resembling that of the Watford community. The trail has several stops where visitors can observe the activities described in the previous section. The work of the organisational units, such as gardens, primary school, temple, preservation cellar, is introduced by the tour guide. Alongside the path, billboards displaying photos and texts explain the ecological achievements and endeavours of the community. One of the eco-tour stops displays an air-shot photograph of what the flat monocrop-surrounding landscape looks like and how the patchwork valley is nested in it, showing an altogether different picture. There is a radical difference between the valley and the outside world.

To secure crop variety, members grow several types of cereal grains (spelt, millet, buckwheat, legumes and amaranth) and produce 10 times more than what the community consumes. As a general principle in food production, the focus is on prevention of disease rather than treatment. One of the main attractions to children, not unlike in Watford, is the goshala, the cowshed. A well-kept dirt road, on which workers walk or cycle back and forth, leads directly into the impressive and inviting building. Visitors are encouraged to cross through the large wooden gate and step into what feels like an Eastern palace rather than a cowshed. The site is memorable. As in Watford, ethical treatment of animals is emphasised. Training oxen and putting them under yoke is not against Krishna philosophy, as serving and exercise is deemed beneficial for humans and animals alike. Apart from the bullock rides, Krishna eco-farms use oxen for ploughing, grinding grains and other farm-related activities.

An accredited primary school in the Krishna Valley may also offer memorable experiences. As we pass by the building, we notice the small bicycles lining up in the front yard. Cycling and walking are the two main sources of travel here as car ownership is not allowed. Simple living appears to be a dominant project in the community.

Discussion

Studying Hare Krishna eco-farms is interesting for sustainable transitions because they offer pro-environmental alternatives to mainstream lifestyle practices. The aim of this chapter, however, is to explore children's agency for change through an understanding of their participation in eco-activities and learning offered by community events and more specifically 'sustainability focussed events', defined as 'community events...encouraging pro-environmental behaviour of attendees' (Mair & Laing, 2013, p. 1114). While sustainability transitions frameworks offer specific tools to analyse, among others, the effectiveness and feasibility of more sustainable niches from the aspect of its community members and in its entirety, this time the authors are interested in how children as visitors relate to potential change. What is important from this aspect is (1) what children learn/gain through these eco-events, (2) how many persons are impacted through this and (3) what event managers and policy intervention could do to bolster involvement. In what follows, we draw on concepts highlighted in the sustainability transitions literature as well as supporting literature(s) to showcase the significance of children's presence at eco-tourism events and their potential (and proposed) agency for future transitions.

Cognitive and Experiential Learning

From a transitions perspective, the existence and spread of second-order learning is a key indicator for successful niche management because this type of learning fosters potentials to maintain practices which are – in the initial phase of transitions – less conventional and more sustainable (Pellicer-Sifres, Belda-Miquel,

Cuesta-Fernandez, & Boni, 2018). Second-order learning, also second-order change, double-loop learning etc. is conceptualised by Sterling (2010) who used it in pedagogic literature to address theoretical and pragmatic issues in sustainability education. Following Bateson (1972), Sterling (2010) builds a model of transformative learning (also transformative change, epistemic learning) by ranking and differentiating several levels of learning. According to this model, first-order learning or change

...refers to doing 'more of the same', that is, change within particular boundaries and without examining or changing the assumptions or values that inform what you are doing or thinking. In this sort of learning, meaning is assumed or given and relates primarily to the external objective world. [...] Second-order learning is more challenging and involves the learner (or learning organisation) critically examining, and if necessary, changing, his/her/its beliefs, values and assumptions. Therefore, this learning experience can be said to be deeper. It is more difficult and often uncomfortable for the learner because it is challenging and, because it involves reflecting critically on learning and change that takes place at the first-order level, it generates an awareness and understanding that goes beyond that level.

(Sterling, 2010, p. 23)

Sterling then goes on to say that first-order change is often characterised by *doing things better* (efficiency) while second-order change is *doing better things* (efficiency in what areas?). Several scholars (e.g. Thomas, 2009) use the term transformative learning which equates with second-order learning in this model (Lestar, 2020). By application, children visiting Hare Krishna eco-farms encounter a wide range of practices that can be linked to second-order learning. According to the reference quoted above, a wide range of practices represented at Krishna eco-events can be perceived as transformative or 'deeper'. Taking vegetarianism as an example, children learn about this dietary option through cognitive (examples of famous vegetarians) as well as experiential lessons (tasting the food). In addition, gardening, farming, waste management, alternative energy and even dairy production in the community offer sustainable alternatives to the baseline practices of the outside world. The tours are arranged to educate children about the whole cycle of food production from ploughing without the use of fossil fuels through the use of conservation techniques to cooking, eating and sharing.

Another key point to consider in education is the importance of novel experiences (Ballarini et al., 2013) and learning outside the classroom (Dillon et al., 2016). We believe that vacation and being outside (evident characteristics of school trips) are among the most memorable experiences adults reminisce from early childhood, and previous research appear to confirm that childhood outdoor experience is a predictor of environmental concern (Gifford & Nilsson, 2014). Further, Earnst and Burack (2019) establish correlations between nature play,

creative thinking and resilience. While Chawla (1992, p. 76) argues that memories are more intense when children have freedom to 'explore and manipulate' the environment.

By implication, Krishna communities show that the activities and events children participate in are based on involvement and enjoyment, aspects that may support future retrieval and pro-environmental behaviour, as research on pro-environmental behaviours has shown (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007). Not only are these activities novel in that they are arranged outside the classroom and in a natural environment, but they offer practical alternatives unique to mainstream societal practices.

Social Network(ing)

Another key indicator for the scalability of niche practices is the extent and type of social network maintained by practitioners. For sustainability transitions, close social ties with key role players such as business owners and government representatives prove useful (Fischer & Newig, 2016). Besides liaising with these key players, the number of persons impacted by a pro-environmental community and its organised events is also crucial, as Mair and Laing (103, p. 1117) put it '... a sustainable event can provide a platform to raise awareness about environmental issues and provide information on which individual behaviour changes can be made, which is a form of consciousness raising'. Apart from becoming the innovators and policymakers of the next generation, we, among other scholars (Walker, 2016), believe that children's future behaviour plays a crucial role in enabling or disabling sustainability transitions.

As presented in the previous sections, the visited eco-farms host a substantial number of school children (8,000 in 2019 in the Watford centre alone) who arrive as family members or school trip participants. A unique scheme in the United Kingdom invites primary and secondary students to visit the farms as part of the curriculum. Interestingly, the original rationale does not target pro-environmental activities but focusses on religious and cultural visits. Yet, religiosity is combined with an exemplary lifestyle manifested in more sustainable behaviours and practices supported by religious beliefs (Narayanan, 2001). Something that has been recently discussed by scholars (Ives & Kidwell, 2019; Johnston, 2014).

Crucially, following their visit, children may disseminate their learning by sharing their experience with their peers, in the classroom, and in the family circle, as in other sustainability education contexts, even young children appear doing (Stuhmcke, 2012). Barbieri et al. (2019) point out the potential gains induced by intergenerational knowledge transfer. Applying this to Krishna eco-tourism, what is acquired through school trips and experiential encounters may, after sharing with parents, result in higher agricultural literacy for children and adults alike. After participating in the pro-environmental events, parents or schoolteachers may remind children of their learning experience, which helps to bolster more sustainable behaviours (Leichtman et al., 2017).

Bolstering Children's Participation in Pro-Environmental Events

Against the backdrop presented in the previous two sections, it appears to be beneficial to provide opportunities to an increasing number of children and youths to take part in events designed for ecological learning. Children appear suitable to benefit of environmental education through eco-tourism, as Seraphin et al. (2022) point out, children can be socially empowered through responsible tourism whose practice might contribute to the development of children's consciousness of sustainability and stimulate their pro-environmental actions. This appears confirmed by research on education for sustainable development (ESD), which (Percy-Smith & Burns, 2013; Walker, 2017) shows that children involved in educational programmes focussing on sustainable lifestyle could empower themselves to become active carriers of messages of change within their same families and communities.

In this context, the eco-tourism scheme developed in the Hare Krishna community might be a valuable contribution to ESD which promotes children's sustainable education and ultimately 'intergenerational co-learning' (Percy-Smith & Burns, 2013, p. 332) in children's families and communities. Therefore, sustainability transitions management could work on replicating similar practices in other sustainable communities as well as strengthening ties with the Hare Krishna farms themselves. Education policymaking and the public agencies could be informed, which in turn could potentially lead to an extension of the national curricula to include school trips to ecologically designed events.

Drawing on supporting literature and findings presented in Section 'Hare Krishna Eco-Tourism', practitioners could be made aware of the following extras to further improve the learning experience of children at pro-environmental events.

- (1) Provide souvenirs to remind children of their participation in eco-events. (Menzel Baker, Schultz Kleine, & Bowen, 2006)
- (2) Provide textual and visual aids to parents and teachers. (DeWitt & Storksdieck, 2008)
- (3) Encourage adults to capture children's experiences and activities on camera. (Kisiel, 2006)
- (4) Dedicate social media sites to children in eco-tourism. (For the importance of collective memory formation through social media, see: Groes, 2016)

Conclusion

In recent years the role of children in the general sustainability discourse has been increasingly highlighted (Walker, 2017), but it has not been conceptualised in the sustainability transitions literature. Apart from being the future innovators, the role of children's future behaviour in enabling or disabling sustainability transitions is crucial. Some research (Percy-Smith & Burns, 2013; Walker, 2017) is pointing at the potential of children to play a significant role in their immediate family and social circles, nevertheless the extent that this contribution might

influence the ecological transition is unclear, even though it is sensible to hypothesise that the contribution is significant, given their possibility as agents to effect the present and future development of their communities unequivocally longer than adults. Given that transitions appear to occur, thanks to bi-directional, i.e. top-down and bottom-up actions, and that the importance of niches of change in the latter dynamics (bottom-up) has been highlighted (Geels & Schot, 2010), it is worth stressing that at this micro level, actions targeting young generations not only have a place but appear to have the potential to bear the greatest effects. Hence, eco-events could contribute, among other bottom-up initiatives,¹ to support the ecological transition as an impactful element of current ESD of young citizens.

By turning to eco-spiritual events organised in Hare Krishna communities, the authors presented the nature of the experiences children and youths gain by partaking in these events. Children receive cognitive and experiential lessons about more sustainable practices that radically differ from ordinary practices. The extracurricular activities and learning offered by the eco-spiritual events are particularly conducive to confirming and instigating pro-environmental behaviour because they take place in nature and away from the children's everyday environment. The type of learning (second order) taking place and the number of children reached at these events (and other persons through them) suggest that the alternative set of practices disseminated by the community provides an interesting case for the study of children's agency for sustainability transitions.

Apart from studying niches in relation to children visiting sustainability events, the public sector could further enhance their effectiveness by implementing changes in the curricula or providing incentives and support for these school trips or family visits. Through strengthening the organisational ties between the various stakeholders (transitions scholars, public sector and practitioners), eco-event organisers could be made aware of the significance of children and young people visitors at their events, and exchange insights on how to further improve their learning experience. These activities could well be included within the range of educational practices that form an effective educational agenda for sustainable development educators. It has to be pointed out that ESD is recognised as a key element of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) towards the transition to sustainability by the United Nations (UN General Assembly, 2015).

This chapter presented Hare Krishna eco-events in the context of children's involvement and sustainability transitions. Besides doing this, the aim of the authors was to invite transitions scholars to conceptualise children's agency in the theory and practice of sustainability transitions.

Note

1. Currently researched for the potential to accelerate the ecological transition in Europe, see e.g. the H2020 project ACCTING (<https://accting.eu/>).

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Uncorrected Proof

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Queries and/or remarks

[Q1]	References “Rochford, 1991; 2020; Sterling”s (2010); Bateson (1972); Ballarini et al., 2013; Earnst and Burack (2019); Walker, 2016; Barbieri et al. (2019); Leichtman et al., 2017” are cited in the text but not provided in the reference list. Please provide them in the reference list or delete these citations from the text.
[Q2]	Please check and provide the expansion of "GEN" and "MEH" in the sentence "The valley is a member of both..."
[Q3]	Please provide the publisher name and location for References “Dillon et al., 2016, Groes, 2016, Johnston, 2014, Pellegrini-Masini, 2020, UN General Assembly, 2015”.
[Q4]	Uncited reference: Lestar and Böhm, 2020 is not cited in text; please indicate where a citation should appear or delete it from the reference list.

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