



Case study

A critical review of the motivational factors for festival attendance based on meta-analysis

Hae Yeong Maeng, Hyeong Yu Jang ^{*}, Jinxi Michelle Li

School of Business Administration, Gyeongsang National University, 600, Gaja Dong, Jinju 660-701, South Korea

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to trace the origin of major motivational factors for festival attendance used in previous studies. In addition, the study showed that these motivational factors are not suitable for use in festival planning or design, thereby highlighting the need for brand-new motivational factors for festival attendance to be developed in the future. A meta-analysis of 46 research articles was conducted and 70 motivational factors for festival attendance were extracted. These factors were divided into the following five categories: *socialization, escape, excitement, learning, and shopping*. However, since these motivators were taken from studies related to motivators for tourism, the authors argue that they are not suitable to be used in regards to festival attendance. The main contribution of this study is to provide clear-cut evidence of the need to conduct future students that focus exclusively on motivations for festival attendance.

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1. Introduction

Motivation for attending festivals or events has been a primary issue in studies on festivals. Studies on festival attendance have been conducted due to the fact that this issue is a key to designing festival events (Crompton & McKay, 1997). Numerous studies have examined the motivations for attending festivals and identified salient motivation dimensions in a variety of festival environments and a number of cultural groups, often suggesting different scale items in the motivation constructs. Some motivation dimensions appear to be specific to an event, its setting, or the characteristics of the attendees, while others are found repeatedly and randomly across various studies (Schofield & Thompson, 2007).

The first study to deal with people's motives for attending festivals or events was conducted by Ralston and Crompton (1988). This study, which examined the 1987 Dickens on the Strand in Galveston, Texas, U.S., extracted seven motivational domains: *stimulus seeking, family togetherness, social contact, meeting or observing new people, learning and discovery, escape from personal and social pressures, and nostalgia*. Following that, Uysal et al. (1991) studied motivational factors using the 1985 US Pleasure Travel Market data. They extracted five motivational domains: *excitement, external, family, socializing, and relaxation*. Their findings were not significantly different from Ralston and Crompton's (1988). In addition, Uysal et al. (1993), Mohr et al. (1993), Backman et al. (1995), Scott (1996), Schneider and Backman (1996), and Formica and Uysal (1996) also examined motivational domains. These studies also found similar results to previous studies.

Crompton and McKay (1997) initially used the unique domain of *culture explore* at Fiesta in San Antonio, Texas, U.S. Since then, the *culture explore* domain has appeared commonly throughout other studies, such as Formica and Murrmann (1998), Faulkner et al. (1999), and Lee (2000). Zyl and Botha (2004) initially extracted the factor of *self-esteem* and found that this factor was relevant to the marketing experience of the Aardklop National Arts Festival, South Africa. The *self-esteem* factor, nonetheless, was not thoroughly discussed in their follow-up studies. The marketing experience of their study consists of *food and beverages, wine, and taste*.

The first study on the motivations for festival attendance was conducted by Ralston and Crompton (1988). In Ralston & Crompton's study, which specifically dealt with event participants' motivation, forty-eight motive statements were developed and a five-point Likert-type scale was used to measure the importance of each item. As a result, no discreet market segment (i.e., groups with the same demographic background sharing similar motivation patterns) was found. Therefore, the researchers suggested that "motivation statement[s] were generic across all groups" (Ralston & Crompton, 1988, cited in Uysal et al., 1991). Since then, motivational factors have been unchanged and identified across different festivals and events on the assumption that these were commonly accepted factors (Li & Petrick, 2006). After Ralston and Crompton (1988), several researchers soon joined the discussions related to festival or event motivation, and interest in these issues has continued. In spite of continuous research, no new factors of motivation have been used for a long time. The majority of the festival and event motivation studies have been conducted under the theoretical framework of tourism motivation research (Li & Petrick, 2006).

Some researchers have demonstrated that the motivational factors for festival attendance were borrowed from tourism motivation.

^{*} Corresponding author.

E-mail address: jmg21@gnu.ac.kr (H.Y. Jang).

Backman et al. (1995), Getz (1991), Nicholson and Pearce (2001), and Scott (1996) admitted that their studies on festival attendance motivation adopted the framework of tourism motivation (Li & Petrick, 2006). Getz (1991), in an early study on festival attendance motivation, also perceived festivals as *alternative tourism* and studied the Dickens on the Strand festival based on tourism and leisure motivation. These two studies (Li & Petrick, 2006; Getz, 1991) provided evidence that festival attendance motivation has been studied from the perspective of tourism motivation.

A festival is an attractive resource of tourism, but it is also an inward-looking event for the local community, so festival attendance motivation should be studied inwardly. The entire festival consists of individual participation, but it is generated by local community needs (Getz, 1997, 2007). Festivals consist of community purposes, individual needs, social norms and cultural aspects. Therefore, studies on festival attendance motivation should consider the various social environments of an individual as well as festival diversity (Gnoth, 1997; Crompton & McKay, 1997). Likewise, social, psychological and anthropological characteristics are inherent in festival attendance motivation. These characteristics are distinct from those inherent in tourism motivation. Therefore, it is problematic that previous research has been limited to the scope of tourism motivation and has merely borrowed concepts from studies on tourism motivation. This practice can become an obstacle when it comes to accurately measuring sustainable festivals.

Some typical literature reviews about festival attendance motivation were conducted by Getz (2010) and Li and Petrick (2006). Getz (2010) evaluated 423 research articles using bibliometrics and came up with three discourses: 1) Discourse on the Roles, Meanings and Impacts of Festivals in Society and Culture, 2) Discourse on Festival Tourism, and 3) Discourse on Festival Management. Among the 423 research articles, fifty seven were about people's motives for attending festivals/events. Getz's study also investigated the following two questions: 1) why do people attend festivals or events?, and 2) how do they select a festival/event and make a decision? Most of the fifty seven research articles about the motives were empirical studies. Getz (2010) insisted that many researchers have employed market segmentation when conducting motivational studies; only a few have referred to theory on cultural needs or social identification. Getz's study concludes that within the event management and even tourism discourses the classical reasons for holding and attending festivals have all but been ignored, opening a great theoretical gap.

Li and Petrick (2006) classified sixteen research articles into the following four categories: 1) *Early Discoveries*: literature reviews about festival motivation in early studies such as Ralston and Crompton (1988, in Getz, 1991), Uysal et al. (1991), and Backman et al. (1995), 2) *Cross-culture Testing*: literature reviews about festival attendance motivation using a cross-cultural approach, 3) *Exploration of Generalizability*: literature reviews about the generalization of motivational factors for festival attendance, which concluded that there are no general motivational measurements for festival attendance; and 4) *Inputs From Sport Marketing Literature*: literature reviews which mentioned some important motivational factors in sport marketing to explore a new trend in developing motivational factors for festival attendance. These reviews also emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary research on sport marketing, psychology, and sociology.

Unlike Getz (2010) and Li and Petrick (2006), who reviewed the literature on festival attendance motivation, this study extracted the main factors based on Eigenvalues and Variances Explained (%) as well as by frequency analysis. On the basis of existing research papers, this study concentrates on forty six research articles that contain motivational factors and their measurement items. Unlike previous studies that reviewed the literature based on qualitative analysis, this study used quantitative analysis to objectify the research methodology.

The research objectives of this study are: 1) to trace the origin of motivational factors for festival attendance through meta-analysis, and 2) to lay the foundation for developing new and general motivational factors for festival attendance based on the essential concept of festivals.

These two objectives can help distinguish festival attendance motivation from tourism motivation and can highlight the necessity to develop new motivational factors for festival attendance.

2. Research methods

This study aims to demonstrate that motivational factors for festival attendance have been borrowed from tourism motivation through a meta-analysis of previous studies on festival attendance motivation. Frequency analysis on 70 motivational factors for festival attendance was conducted and five major categories were extracted. Meta-analysis has been summarized by Bokhari (2005) in the following manner:

Meta-analysis may be used to review such research to aid the comprehension and interpretation of diverse research findings. It provides a procedure for combining relevant information gathered from separate studies designed to answer essentially the same research question. Meta-analysis of previous research not only reveals the cumulative knowledge embedded within the research corpus, but also provides clear direction about future research needs by answering the original question based on many studies rather than just one (p. 217–218).

Meta-analysis integrates the results of previous studies and generalizes these research results based on the direction and magnitude of relevant variables. Meta-analysis has been used by many studies including "The Relationship between System Usage and User Satisfaction: a Meta-analysis" (Bokhari, 2005), "A Review of Festival and Event Motivation Studies" (Li & Petrick, 2006), "A Meta-analysis of Effect Sizes in International Marketing Experiments" (Wang & Yang, 2008), and "The Nature and Scope of Festival Studies" (Getz, 2010).

In order to improve the validity of the research methodology, motivational factors were ranked in order of frequency based on frequency analysis as well as in order of Eigenvalues and Variances Explained (%) in this study. Using a group of experts, The Delphi Technique was then employed to extract the main motivational factors, which were then divided into 5 categories.

Based on the methodology of meta-analysis, the forty six research articles were selected using on-line searches; all contained motivational factors and their own measurement items.

As Table 1 shows, the highest number of articles (a total of seventeen) were from Event Management journals (Festival Management & Event Tourism); the second-highest number of articles were from Tourism Management (a total of five). Looking at the table, it is evident that the articles about festival attendance motivation were all published in tourism journals. Although it was not possible to search for all related articles, a secondary search for references of important articles was

Table 1
Core source journals (100% coverage).

Journal titles	Number of articles from each journal
Event management (Festival Management & Event Tourism)	17
Tourism management	5
Tourism analysis	3
Journal of travel & tourism marketing	3
Annals of tourism research	2
International journal of tourism research	2
Journal of vacation marketing	2
Journal of travel research	2
Journal of conversation & event tourism	1
Tourism review international	1
Visitor studies	1
Managing leisure	1
Journal of leisure research	1
Tourism (Zagreb)	1
International journal of hospitality & tourism	1
Others (books)	3
Total	46

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