

Measuring Motives for Cultural Consumption: A Review of the Literature

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Abstract Motives are the driving force behind all human behaviors and act as an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates a person's activity. In the cultural consumption domain the crucial role of motivation in people's behavior has not been examined thoroughly. The present study reviews the research findings regarding the scales using to identify the main motives for cultural consumption and explores the theories used to explain cultural consumer motivations. The nature of cultural studies is examined by comparing and analyzing a large scale literature review of 94 research articles published in the English language scholarly press. The conclusions of this paper serve as a reference guide to current cultural motivation research. It is recommended that a universal scale for measuring consumer motivation be created with the adoption of quantitative and qualitative instruments. Methodological limitations and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Keywords: *cultural consumption, motivation theories, scale development*

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1. Introduction

Why do people act as they do and what energizes drives and maintains human's behavior? In the field of psychology, understanding the underlying causes or determinants of behavior is very crucial and a great number of theories have been proposed regarding human motivation [6,15].

According to basic motivation theory, a motive can be described as an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates a person's behaviour and activity. Also, motives are the starting points that trigger decision processes and have an impact on the selective direction of behaviour (the choice of one action over another), the energisation (the amount of the required energy or effort), and the persistence of the acts (their persistence in time). As a result, motives are the driving force behind all human behaviours. Alderfer [1] proposed that when a need, a want or a goal occurs, a dynamic process of internal psychological factors appears, that generates an uncomfortable level of tension within individuals' minds and bodies. These inner needs and the resulting tension lead to actions designed to release tension, by satisfying these needs [17].

Understanding the needs or the goals that people try to satisfy is crucial not only in the field of psychology, but also in other contexts, such as, school performance, sports engagement, work and organizational behavior, and patterns of consumption.

2. Motives and Cultural Consumption

Concerning cultural consumption, in the past couple of decades cultural organizations and industries (e.g. museums, theaters, art galleries, etc.) have become one of the fastest growing sectors of the leisure industry and have received an increasing attention by academic researchers. In addition to commonly targeted topics such as economic impact, marketing strategies of events, and festival management [8], there is a growing stream of research focusing on the motivations of attendees.

According to Crompton and McKay [4], there are three major reasons for identifying and understanding the cultural consumer motivation. First, motives play a major role in designing and offering suitable products for consumers, who seek to satisfy a variety of divergent needs. Second, motives are a way to monitor satisfaction and finally, identifying and prioritizing motives are a key element in understanding a consumer's decision process. Therefore, understanding the motives for cultural consumption enables policy makers as well as marketers to design more effective strategies.

Besides the most straightforward motivation question (e.g. why people attend events) at a more complicated level, some researchers have placed more emphasis on determining the generalizability of the research findings and the structure of the theoretical framework. Indeed, three theoretical approaches, based on leisure and event motivation theory, have been utilized in order to explain cultural consumer motivation: Maslow's [15] human need

hierarchy, Iso-Ahola's [10] escape-seeking dichotomy and Dann's [5] push and pull factors. For example, Uysal, Gahan, and Martin [22] using the seeking-escaping theory [14], investigated the motives for cultural consumption across different groups of individuals with respect to selected events and demographic variables. They identified five motivational factors, including: escape, excitement/thrills, event novelty, socialization and relaxation.

Until nowadays, based on the above mentioned theoretical approaches, most festival and event motivation studies generate about four to six dimensions after various factor analyses using a pool items that ranges from 19 to 34 items [7,12]. However, there is not an exhausted review on existing festival and event motivation studies, to analyze the scales used to identify the motives of cultural consumption or to describe the main statistic findings. In an attempt to provide a summary of the scales used to detect the cultural consumer's motivation, the current literature review has been focused on the following issues:

- What are the main motives for cultural consumption?
- What variables are used by researchers to classify these motives?

- What data collection methods have been applied to collect information from attendees?
- What data analysis methods are used to classify the motives for cultural consumption?

3. Method

With a view to describe and evaluate the scales utilized to identify the main motives for cultural consumption, we searched various electronic databases (e.g. scopus, EBSCO, Heal-link), specific academic journals, references and bibliographies for potentially relevant studies. Using combinations of a variety of keywords (e.g. audience motivation, cultural consumption, consumer behavior and motivational segmentation) the initial search produced about 150 citations of potential relevance and following examination of titles and abstracts, 94 full-text articles were retrieved for further consideration. However, after applying the inclusion-exclusion criteria, 41 academic articles remained in the set of relevant articles. Finally, information from articles was extracted and coded within the following categories: study design, type of study population, sample size, demographic characteristics, main outcomes, and summary of results (Table 1).

Table 1. Review of selected quantitative studies

Authors	Event	Dimensions items	Sample size	Data Analysis	Scale	Behavioral
Swanson, Davis, and Zhao [20]	Performing arts	1. Self-esteem enhancement (5, $\alpha=.94$) 2. Education (3, $\alpha=.96$) 3. Escape (3, $\alpha=.92$) 4. Recreation (3, $\alpha=.91$) 5. Aesthetics (3, $\alpha=.93$) 6. Social interaction (3, $\alpha=.87$)	442	Confirmatory Factor Analysis	7-point Likert Scale	Yes
Kruger, Saayman, and Ellis [11]	Klein Karoo National Arts Festival	1. Festival attributes (6, $\alpha=.77$) 2. Family togetherness (4, $\alpha=.63$) 3. Escape and socialization (4, $\alpha=.67$) 4. Festival shows/productions (4, $\alpha=.79$) 5. Exploration (3, $\alpha=.55$)	555	Exploratory Factor Analysis	5-point Likert Scale	Yes
Chang [3]	Cultural festivals	1. Equilibrium recovery (5, $\alpha=.86$) 2. Festival participation & learning (6, $\alpha=.80$) 3. Novelty Seeking (7, $\alpha=.76$) 4. Socialization (5, $\alpha=.72$) 5. Cultural exploration (3, $\alpha=.76$)	315	Exploratory Factor Analysis	5-point Likert Scale	No
Slater [19]	Art gallery	1. Social and family recreation (5, $\alpha=.92$) 2. Learning (6, $\alpha=.93$) 3. Escapism (7, $\alpha=.92$)	241	Exploratory Factor Analysis	6-point Likert Scale	No
McDowall [16]	Tenth-Month Merit-Making Festival	1. Family/friend (6, $\alpha=.83$) 2. Excitement (4, $\alpha=.75$) 3. Event novelty (8, $\alpha=.86$) 4. Escape (4, $\alpha=.82$)	323	Exploratory Factor Analysis	5-point Likert Scale	No
Yolal, Woo, Cetinel, and Uysal [25]	International festival	1. Socialization (6, $\alpha=.83$) 2. Excitement (4, $\alpha=.77$) 3. Event novelty (3, $\alpha=.74$) 4. Escape (3, $\alpha=.73$) 5. Family togetherness (2, $\alpha=.80$)	523	Exploratory Factor Analysis	5-point Likert Scale	No

3.1. Inclusion-Exclusion Criteria

We only included studies that test a motivational scale for cultural consumption. Cultural consumption was defined as the consumption of services that are cultural in

nature and usually protected by intellectual property rights. Thus, we excluded studies measuring motives for general consumption as well as studies including only demographic or social variables.

4. Results

Albeit, literature review revealed 94 published articles in the field of cultural consumption, forty one of them (43.6%) contained empirical data and thus, only these studies were analyzed. Thirty five of them (85.4%) used a quantitative approach to study motives for cultural consumption, whereas only six (14.6%) employed a qualitative approach. From these thirty five studies, the majority used a pool of items ranging from 19 to 34 motivational items, which were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (60%). Most authors (97.1%) used exploratory factor analysis to understand the underlying structure of their instruments. It is interesting to note that only one study, conducted by Swanson, Davis, and Zhao, used a more advanced statistical technique, namely confirmatory factor analysis [20].

In terms of internal consistency, overall, the emerged factors showed adequate Cronbach's alpha levels, above .70. However, in the study of Kruger, Saayman, and Ellis [11] the *exploration* factor yielded the lowest internal consistency ($\alpha=.55$) as well as in Hager and Winkler's study [9] the *escape* ($\alpha=.53$) and *recreation* ($\alpha=.53$) factors. Additionally, one limitation of the examined studies is that several factors were defined using less than three items [2,4,24], whereas in one study a factor was defined by only one item [9].

An important aspect for demonstrating the validity of an instrument is its association with external criteria and correlations with other valid measures. Only six out of thirty five studies (17.1%) attempted to examine the construct validity of the proposed instrument by comparing it with actual participants' purchase behavior (e.g. number of visits). For example, Swanson et al. [21] examined the relationship between attendee's motivations with attendance behaviors and found a significant correlation between these two factors. As a result, motives seemed to correlate positively with the number of visits to cultural organizations and thus, individuals with stronger motives are more likely to attend repeatedly a cultural event.

Concerning motives for cultural consumption, overall, 13 factors seem to capture participants' motives when attending cultural events. Their categorization and frequency of appearance is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Motives for Cultural Consumption

Motives	Frequency	Percentage
Socialization	35	58.4 %
Family togetherness	22	53.7 %
Escape	20	48.8 %
Novelty	18	43.9 %
Learning	12	29.3 %
Relaxation	12	29.3 %
Excitement	9	22.0 %
Entertainment	8	19.5 %
Festival attributes	8	19.5 %
Cultural exploration	7	17.1 %
Self-esteem enhancement	6	14.6 %
Aesthetic	3	7.3 %
Curiosity	2	4.9 %

From the above table, based on the findings of the analyzed studies, it is obvious that the most important and probably core motives are: socialization, family togetherness, escape and novelty. *Socialization*, probably the most important motive for cultural consumption, describes the attendees' need for interacting with other

people, meeting new people or be with their friends. *Family togetherness*, a major force for event motivation, characterizes people who want to enhance family relationships and bonds through cultural participation. For example, people are looking for recreation, fun and amusement in a safe environment with their family. *Escape*, describes the visitors need to have a change from their routine life, do something different and recover from their responsibilities. Finally, *novelty motivation* refers to peoples' expectation to attend a cultural organization for the variety of new things and to obtain unusual experiences not available in their routine life. Thus, these motives could be used to assess spectators' motives across various cultural events.

An important finding of the present study is that the majority of these studies were *atheoretical*, meaning that no theoretical framework was used to develop the instrument. Exceptions are the studies of Skoultzos and Tsartas [18], which employed the push and pull factors and hedonic consumption theory, Van Zyl and Botha [23], which used the push-pull factors theory and Crompton and McKay [4] which employed the escape seeking dichotomy and the push-pull factors conceptual frameworks. Finally, some studies used preexisting motivation scales to identify the motives for cultural consumption. For example, Swanson et al. [21], Yolal, Woo, Cetinel, and Uysal [25], Chang [3], and Yu and Yen [26], adopted Mael and Ashforth's [13], Uysal, Gahan, & Martin's [22] and Crompton and McKay's [4] motivation scales respectively.

5. Discussion

Understanding the internal factors that arouse, direct, and integrate a person's behavior, leads to effective marketing of cultural events, and better segmentation of attendees [4]. From this point of view it can be argued that motives play a major role in cultural consumption. However, although there are many academic papers in the event motivation literature seeking to explore or describe the main motives for cultural consumption, a systematic evaluation of the measurement scales used, has not been published so far.

This review provides a reference guide of previous research highlighting its advantages and shortcomings. Taking it into consideration, future studies can be designed and implemented leading to a more complete comprehension of consumers' motivation. For example, the vast majority of reviewed studies used exploratory factor analysis to understand the underlying structure of their instruments. Additional research might test specific hypotheses and implement more advanced statistical techniques to study the factorial validity of the instruments (e.g. confirmatory factor analysis). Another important aspect of an instrument's construct validity is its relation with anticipated behavioral outcomes. The present review showed that a limited number of studies attempted to examine the construct validity of the proposed instrument by comparing it with actual participants' purchase behavior (e.g. number of visits).

It is generally agreed that development of an instrument should be based on a solid theoretical framework. The present literature review showed that most studies have been conducted to build the theory rather than test it.

Although research has identified certain individual, internal motivational factors that may lead to the understanding of cultural consumer behavior, these motives do not seem to rely on a specific motivation theory. As a consequence, the conceptualization and operationalization of consumers' motives appears to be fragmented and incomplete [21]. Moreover, the factors influencing these motives have not been yet clearly identified and empirically verified.

Moreover, this review has also practical relevance for marketing managers who are confronted with the difficulty of creating and launching successful cultural goods. Attendees' motives are multiple and diverse and an individual may have several needs which he or she wants to satisfy through cultural consumption. Therefore, without identifying what motivates people to consume cultural goods, effective marketing is limited. The different motives, represented in Table 2, can provide an interesting line of reasoning for organizers and marketing executives. In addition, they can also be useful as a development tool for policy makers. The public of culture that is differently motivated could be targeted with effective marketing communications emphasizing and triggering specific motivations. For example, marketing communication targeting attendees motivated by the *escape* factor could focus on relaxation and the pleasure derived from escaping one's daily routine life. Segmenting the public and understanding its features based on motivations, are important for improving marketing strategies in the future.

6. Conclusion and Limitations

Most studies reviewed in this paper are still exploratory and descriptive in nature, without adopting a theoretical conceptualization. As a result, it seems that there is a gap between these research findings and systematic theory building. It is suggested that more efforts in theoretical frameworks are needed for further understanding festival and cultural event attendees' motivations. The employment of related theoretical approaches from diverse fields, such as psychology, sociology and marketing, may provide some useful insights on this issue. Thus, the involvement of more researchers from various backgrounds and theoretical approaches is strongly recommended.

Furthermore, it can be seen that current festival and event motivation research emphasizes more on quantitative methods and formal logic analysis, without using a robust theoretical background. In order to establish a more comprehensive theoretical foundation, more qualitative approaches are warranted, as they can generate more objective and comprehensive information concerning motives for cultural consumption. Overall, combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, may be helpful as qualitative methods are useful when attempting to generate new theories while quantitative methods when attempting to test these theories.

Up to now, in the field of cultural consumption, there has not been developed a motivational scale including a wide array of potential consumer motives with strong psychometric properties. Despite the fact that four core motives appear in the current literature review, it seems

that they cannot fully determine cultural consumers' motivation as they do not fully capture the reasons that people visit festivals and cultural events. In addition, research on the motivation including a wider range of sectors of cultural consumption still remains limited. Eventually, future efforts are needed to more fully clarify existing motives and ascertain other plausible motives, not identified in the studies presented. Probably, a combination of different motivation theories (e.g. cognitive or behavioral) and a hierarchic structure of cultural consumers' motivation should be encouraged in future studies.

Whilst this paper reviewed the research findings regarding the scales used to identify the main motives for cultural consumption, it should be noted that it is not free of limitations. The present study focused only on studies describing and measuring instruments for assessing the motivation of cultural consumption. We did not include studies examining the antecedents of consumers' motives or the effect of various demographic and background characteristics. In addition, although specific databases for relevant articles have been searched, other, inaccessible studies might exist such as, dissertations, theses, scientific reports, and conference proceedings dealing with cultural consumer motivation. Lastly, another limitation pertains to the fact that papers on leisure and event tourism motivation were not taken into account, as we focus only on cultural consumption motivation. Nevertheless, these studies might report useful findings on consumers' motivation in general.

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