

VISITORS' MOTIVATION FOR ATTENDING TRADITIONAL CULTURAL EVENTS AS THE BASIS FOR MARKET SEGMENTATION: EVIDENCE FROM SLOVAKIA

Vanda Maráková¹, Jaroslav Ďaďo², Janka Táborecká-Petrovičová², Tamara Rajic³

¹Department of Tourism and Hospitality, Faculty of Economics, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Tajovského 10, 975 90 Banská Bystrica, Slovak Republic

²Department of Corporate Economics and Management, Faculty of Economics, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Tajovského 10, 975 90 Banská Bystrica, Slovak Republic

³Economics Institute a.d. Belgrade, Kralja Milana 16, 11000 Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Abstract

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In an increasingly competitive festival market, identifying visitors' motivation has been recognized as a key prerequisite for satisfaction, which is expected to lead to positive referrals and future visitations of an event. The objective of this study is to identify the main factors which motivate visitors to attend traditional cultural events in Slovakia and to examine their viability as the basis for festival market segmentation. Building upon previous research on festival attendees' motivation, a set of potential drivers of visitors' behavior has been identified and by the application of exploratory factor analysis further refined into the following six domains of visitors' motivation: new and different experience, friends and family togetherness, reconnection with culture and tradition, socialization, recover equilibrium and change from everyday life. The application of k-means clustering on the basis of motivational domains indicated four clusters of festival visitors and provided evidence in support of suitability of visitors' motivation as the basis for festival market segmentation. Findings of the study have been discussed, limitations are noted and directions for future research are highlighted.

Keywords: visitors' motivation, market segmentation, traditional cultural events, factor analysis, cluster analysis, Slovakia

INTRODUCTION

Over previous two decades significant research attention has been directed towards more thorough understanding of consumer behavior in the context of festival tourism. A surge of interest in the topic has been spurred on by increasing number and diversity of festivals over previous years. Literature on festivals and events has frequently highlighted numerous benefits brought up to local communities by hosting festivals. Festivals are regarded as accelerators of economic development of local

communities (Lee and Hsu, 2011). Thematic festivals provide cost-effective platforms for promotion of start-up businesses and help raising awareness of new products and preferences for locally produced goods. Festivals generate opportunities for additional and part-time employment and as such are particularly welcomed in economically less developed communities (Axelsen and Swan, 2010). In addition to generating tax revenue to local communities, which can be further invested in a number of civic projects, festivals also leave a city with tangible benefits in terms of infrastructure

improvements such as new facilities and venues (Yolal *et al.*, 2009). Providing opportunities for entertainment and recreation for all generations of visitors festivals add to residents' perceptions of a local community as a good place for living and enhance community cohesion and residents' pride in being members of a host community (Kim and Uysal, 2003). In the context of intangible benefits of hosting festivals it has been frequently highlighted that festivals help preserve local culture and traditions (Lee and Hsu, 2011). Festivals and events play important roles in marketing of destinations, due to their potential to instill positive impressions in the minds of tourists who have never previously visited a hosting community and stimulate their interest and desire to visit the locality (Yolal *et al.*, 2009; Matheson *et al.*, 2014). Strategic placement of local festivals help mitigate seasonality of tourism demand (Lee and Beeler, 2009). Visitors' positive experience with festivals is likely to increase their personal satisfaction which is expected to contribute further to their overall quality of life and subjective well-being (Yolal *et al.*, 2016). In addition to socio-economic benefits it is also worth noting that festivals and events can generate social costs to host communities, such as increased level of noise, traffic congestion and higher prices of locally sold goods and services (Yolal *et al.*, 2009). However, as community benefits of hosting a festival are believed to outweigh potential social costs, festivals have been eagerly embraced by a number of communities. Rising competitive pressures in festival market have raised the issue of sustainability of a festivals. For future success of a festival It has become particularly important for festival organizers to identify not only those factors which attract new visitors, but also those factors which add to satisfaction and retention of existing visitors. Review of literature in Tourism and Marketing indicates positive impact of customer satisfaction on behavioral intentions, such as willingness to recommend and re-buy a preferred product or a service and in the context of tourism industry relevance of tourists' satisfaction for the competitiveness of tourism destinations (Žabkar *et al.*, 2010; Vajčnerová *et al.*, 2016). Understanding visitors' motivation has been early recognized as a key to designing offerings which would not only meet, but exceed their expectations and contribute to their positive perceptions of a festival and a desire to attend it again. Therefore, visitors' motivation has become one of the most examined topic in festival tourism. A number of studies of festival visitors' motivation have been conducted in a variety of festival settings in the USA (Mohr *et al.*, 1993; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Lee and Beeler, 2009), Taiwan (Lee and Hsu, 2011), South Korea (Lee *et al.*, 2004), Australia (Nicholson and Pearce, 2001; Axelsen and Swan, 2010).

Although some evidence exists of visitors' motivation in the context of European festivals (Matheson *et al.*, 2014; Cudny and Ogorek, 2014), literature review leads to the conclusion that

visitors' behavior in the context of European festival market has largely stayed under-studied. This especially pertains to Slovakia, which has become a fruitful festival venue, as indicated by the fact that even the smallest communities in Slovakia at least annually host traditional cultural festivals, as indicated by portals www.folklorfest.sk and www.ajdnes.sk. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this gap in festival tourism literature by examining what motivates Slovak festival visitors to attend traditional cultural festivals. More profound understanding of festival visitors' motivation would be particularly relevant for festival organizers in regard to segmentation of festival market. What motivates visitors to attend an event and what are the satisfying features of an event is important information for festival organizers tailoring marketing strategies oriented towards high level of satisfaction of target groups of visitors. Not only is this approach expected to lead to revisit intentions of highly satisfied attendees, but they are also expected to generate positive word-of-mouth regarding the event and influence other prospective visitors to attend the event in the future. In order to be managerially useful, segments of visitors should be measurable, actionable, substantial and accessible (Tkaczynski and Rundle-Thiele, 2011).

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. First, literature pertinent to festival visitors' motivation is reviewed, followed by the discussion of methodology which has been employed in this study. Results of the study are presented in the subsequent section, followed by the discussion of implications of the study, its limitations and directions for future research.

Literature review

According to Iso-Ahola (1982) motives can be defined as internal factors which arouse, integrate and direct human behavior. Majority of studies of visitors' motivation have been grounded on Iso-Ahola's (1982) escape-seeking dichotomy and push and pull motivational framework (Crompton and McKay, 1997). Escape-seeking dichotomy posits that people engage in leisure activities in order to escape from everyday environment, i.e. their personal or interpersonal world, and motivated by a desire to obtain intrinsic rewards in new environment, personal or/and interpersonal. According to push and pull conceptual framework tourist behavior is motivated by external factors, e.g. characteristics of a destination, which attract visitors and internal psychological factors, e.g. desire for socialization or relaxation, which impel tourist to engage in a leisure activity. Motives are regarded as a starting point which triggers visitors' decision-making process and directs their behavior to satisfy a need (Crompton and McKay, 1997). It should be noted that human behavior is rarely motivated by a single motive. Rather, it is the outcome of a multitude of mutually intertwined motives. However, in order to design effective

marketing activities and promotional program which would appeal to target markets, it is vital for festival organizers to discern key motivational domains which direct visitors' behavior and identify their relative importance from the perspective of target groups of visitors. According to Crompton and McKay (1997), attending a festival is likely to be directed by a desire for cultural enrichment, socialization, education and novelty. Studying visitors' motivation in the context of Fiesta San Antonio festival, focused on displaying and honoring Hispanic culture, building upon tourists' motivation literature the authors proposed seven motivational domains which are likely to direct visitors' behavior. These motivational domains are: novelty, i.e. a desire to experience something new, socialization, i.e. a desire to interact with other people, prestige/status, i.e. a desire to make impression on other people, rest and relaxation, i.e. a desire to refresh from the stress of everyday life, intellectual enrichment, i.e. a desire to broaden one's horizons, family togetherness, i.e. a desire to enhance relationships with family members and regression, i.e. a desire to engage in activities which would remind them of good old days. Following Churchill's (1979) iterative procedure for the development of measurement instruments of marketing constructs, initial 62 motivation items yielded six-dimensional measurement instrument consisting of motivational domains to a great extent similar to initial conceptualization, yet renamed to reflect the changes which occurred in the distribution of items as a consequence of subjecting the initial set of items to the iterative procedure for the development of measurement instruments. Motivational domains which emerged from the study were labelled as follows: novelty/regression, cultural exploration, recover equilibrium, known-group socialization, external interaction/socialization and gregariousness. In one of the earliest studies on festival visitors' motivation Mohr *et al.* (1993) in the context of a hot air balloon festival, held annually in South Carolina, factor analyzed 23 motivational items which yielded five-dimensional instrument for measuring visitors' motivation comprising socialization, family togetherness, excitement/unique, escape and event novelty. Their study further provided evidence of differences in importance of motivation domains among different type of visitors, in terms of their previous visitation of festivals in general and the hot air balloon festival. Nicholson and Pearce (2001) conducted a study of visitors' motivation in two food and wine festivals, an air show and a country music festival held in New Zealand. Findings of their study in the context of Marlborough Wine and Food Festival revealed four dimensions of motivation, those being event socialization, event novelty and uniqueness, escape and family togetherness. Five dimensions of motivation were revealed in the context of Hokita Wildfood Festival, such as event socialization, event novelty/uniqueness,

entertainment/excitement/people, escape and family togetherness. Five dimensions of motivation resulted from the context of an air show Warbirds over Wanaka, those being novelty/uniqueness, socialization, specifics, escape and family togetherness. The New Zealand Gold Guitar Awards study resulted in six dimensions of motivation, such as specifics/entertainment, escape, variety, novelty/uniqueness, family togetherness and socialization. Although some similarities across the studies were found, Nicholson and Pearce (2001) concluded that the importance of motivational domains differed across various contexts. Lee and Hsu (2011) in the context of two aboriginal festivals in Taiwan factor analyzed 13 motivation statements which resulted in the following three domains of motivation: cultural experiences, leisure and psychology and self-expression. Park *et al.* (2014) examined what motivated first-time visitors to attend a wine and food festival in Florida. Their study indicated seven factors of visitors' motivation, such as a desire to taste wine and food, enjoy festival setting and atmosphere, enhance social status, make a change in comparison to everyday life, meet new people, spend time with family and meet celebrity chefs and exchange ideas with wine and food experts. McDowall's (2010) study in the context of religious festival held on Thailand indicated four dimensions of visitors' motivation, such as family/friend, excitement, event novelty and escape, and further supported significant impact of event novelty and escape on residents' satisfaction, whereas event novelty emerged as a significant predictor of non-residents' satisfaction with the event. The author further concluded that residents and non-residents differed to a certain extent in terms of information sources, motivation, performance evaluation and satisfaction, which should be taken into consideration by festival organizers in planning festival program and its promotion to potential visitors. Lee *et al.* (2004) in the context of South Korean Kyongju World Culture Expo factor analyzed 34 motivation items which yielded six-dimensional structure of festival visitors' motivation consisting of cultural exploration, family togetherness, novelty, escape, event attractions and socialization. Some evidence of visitors' motivation also exists from the context of Central Europe. Cudny and Ogorek (2014) conducted a study addressing visitors' motivation in the setting of Mediaschool Film Festival held in Lodz, Poland, and their research indicated six motivational domains, whereas the most important domain was related to culture and art, followed by social contacts, originality/novelty, event attractiveness, escape from everyday routine and family life. Previous studies have indicated differences in importance of motivation domains based on festival setting, previous visitation, visitors' residential status and national culture (Mohr *et al.*, 1993, Lee *et al.*, 2004, McDowall, 2010, Park *et al.*, 2014). On the basis of previous discussion the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Visitors' motivation to attend traditional cultural festivals in Slovakia is a multi-dimensional construct;

H2: There are significant differences in motivational factors among different segments of visitors.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study has been performed in the context of traditional cultural festivals (Originally "jarmoky a trhy") in Slovakia. These events have long history in Slovakia and there has been a significant rise in their number over previous years. Social media provide evidence of organization of this events in even the smallest communities in Slovakia. These events honor and display local culture, customs and crafts. They are admission free and held in public space. Usually they last from one to three days and during this time festival venue is equipped with booths where handicrafts, traditional delicacies and various handmade goods can be bought. Apart from their commercial side, these events, as indicated by group discussions with visitors, are regarded as favorable opportunities to meet friends and see other people enjoying the event. In order to enrich their content local communities usually organize folklore performances and various sorts of entertainment which appeal to different generations of visitors. Majority of these events have local character and they are particularly welcomed by local inhabitants as a source of disruption from everyday life and its activities.

The study has been performed on a convenience sample of festival visitors, by means of structured questionnaire. Due to unfavorable weather conditions at the end of November, when the data collection started, instead of on-site intercept survey, the preference was given to the recruitment of respondents, persons with recent experience in attending a cultural event, at their homes. The process of data collection has been performed by students who were previously instructed on data collection and who fulfilled the task in exchange for certain classroom activity points. A total of 349 usable questionnaires were collected during the field research, which lasted from the end of November till the mid of December 2016.

Initial set of motivation items was generated from a review of previous studies on festival visitors' motivation and group discussions with festival visitors. Measurement items were adapted to the context of traditional events in Slovakia and their comprehensiveness and clarity were further tested on a sample of students attending Marketing and Tourism-related courses. Motivation items were rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1-not important at all to 7-the most important.

Twenty-six motivational items were factor analyzed by the application of principal component analysis, with varimax rotation, in order to delineate underlying domains of motivation.

The choice of method of factor analysis was motivated by the intention to obtain as simple and interpretable factor solution as possible, although some overlapping among motivational items was expected. Items loading lower than 0.40 and those loading higher than 0.40 on more than one factor were excluded from further iterative procedure. Extraction and retention of factors was based on Kaiser's criterion of eigenvalues higher than 1 (Hair *et al.*, 2009). Factorability of the data was indicated by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO = 0.844) and statistical significance of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett's test = 3666.373, df = 253, Sign. < .001). Reliability of resulting factors was assessed by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficient. K-means cluster analysis was applied for segmenting festival visitors on the basis of importance of resulting motivational domains. Data analyses were performed using SPSS v.17.

RESULTS

Principal component analysis with varimax rotation indicated a six-dimensional composition of visitors' motivation, which cumulatively explained 65.78% of the variance in the data, as presented in Tab. I. These findings provided support for hypothesis H1. Three items with cross-loadings higher than 0.40 on two factors were excluded in the iterative procedure, one at a time. The first dimension, which was labeled as 'new and different experience' explained 14.15% of the total variance. The second dimension, which was labeled as 'friends and family togetherness' explained 11.92% of the total variance. The following dimension, labeled as 'reconnection with culture and tradition' explained 11.42% of the total variance, followed by the dimension labeled as 'socialization' which explained 9.72% of the total variance. The fifth dimension, labeled as 'recover equilibrium' explained 9.64% of the total variance, whereas sixth dimension labeled as 'a change from everyday life' explained 8.93% of the total variance. Evidence in support of reliability of resulting domains of motivation was provided by Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, which for each dimension of motivation were higher than the lower threshold of 0.70, as presented in Tab. I. In the case of a two-item dimension 'change from everyday life' reliability was indicated by the calculation of Spearman-Brown coefficient. General conclusion stemming from this analysis is that resulting factor structure to a great extent resembled previous empirical findings.

In order to group respondents on the basis of importance they attach to motivation domains, in a way that respondents in the same group are more similar to one another in comparison to their similarity with respondents belonging to other groups, k-means clustering was applied. The domains of motivation were entered into cluster analysis as composite indicators, calculated

I: Rotated component matrix

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>New and different experience</i>						
Experience new things	.800					
Variety of things to see and do	.756					
Experience a unique event	.663					
Satisfy curiosity	.577					
Experience different things	.520					
Enjoy the festival crowd	.486					
Experience something stimulating and exciting	.482					
<i>Friends and family togetherness</i>						
Opportunity for all family members to do something together		.799				
Opportunity for entire family to enjoy the festival		.787				
To have a nice time out with friends		.593				
Enjoy festive and celebratory ambience of a festival		.570				
Opportunity to enjoy a day out		.483				
<i>Reconnection with culture and tradition</i>						
Reconnect with local culture			.878			
Reconnect with local customs and tradition			.877			
To enjoy traditional food and handicrafts			.700			
<i>Socialization</i>						
To be with people of similar interest				.869		
To be with people who enjoy the same things I do				.834		
To observe other people who are attending the festival				.607		
<i>Recover equilibrium</i>						
Opportunity to reduce built-up tension, anxieties, and frustrations					.778	
Opportunity to relieve boredom					.700	
Opportunity to recover from a hectic pace of life					.694	
<i>Change from everyday life</i>						
To change a pace of my everyday life						.876
To have a change from my daily routine						.832
Eigenvalues	3.26	2.74	2.63	2.24	2.22	2.05
% of Variance	14.15	11.92	11.42	9.72	9.64	8.93
Cumulative %	14.15	26.07	37.50	47.22	56.86	65.78
Cronbach's Alpha (*Spearman-Brown Coeff.)	0.807	0.765	0.842	0.747	0.748	0.889*

Source: authors'

as average values of items referring to each of motivational domains. Significant F statistics from the one-way ANOVA test indicate statistically significant differences between the four clusters on each of six domains of motivation, providing support for hypothesis H2. Variables with highest F values, change from everyday life, recover equilibrium and new and different experience, contributed the most to the following four-segment solution of cluster analysis, as presented in Tab. II. Post hoc Scheffe test was applied to examine the differences among clusters of visitors according to dimensions of motivation. As majority of differences were statistically significant, this finding

generally provides support for resulting cluster solution. The resulting clusters of festival visitors and their description are as follows:

Cluster I: Reconnection seekers. This cluster emerged as the smallest cluster, containing 45 visitors. Among the domains of motivation its highest mean score was related to reconnection with culture, however It did not have any outstanding mean score among the clusters on any of six motivation dimensions. Its mean scores were the smallest among the clusters. It is therefore possible that there are some other motives which are the main drivers of behaviour of this cluster, but which were not included in this study. In terms of

II: Results of cluster analysis for visitors' motivation

	Cluster 1 (n = 45)	Cluster 2 (n = 75)	Cluster 3 (n = 132)	Cluster 4 (n = 97)	F-value	Scheffe multiple range test					
						I-II	I-III	I-IV	II-III	II-IV	III-IV
New and different experience	2.81	4.24	5.05	3.85	100.65***	***	***	***	***	**	***
Friends and family togetherness	3.91	5.36	6.10	5.27	76.99***	***	***	***	***	ns	***
Reconnection with culture	4.30	4.68	5.83	4.95	23.55***	ns	***	**	***	ns	***
Socialization	2.70	4.67	4.86	3.27	66.77***	***	***	ns	ns	***	***
Recover equilibrium	2.36	4.08	5.40	3.53	124.30***	***	***	***	***	**	***
Change from everyday life	2.40	3.33	5.95	5.66	265.63***	***	***	***	***	***	ns

Note: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.05$, ns – not significant

Source: authors'

demographic characteristics, this cluster comprised mainly women (73.3%). The most frequent age group of this segment is 60+ (24.4%). Respondents belonging to this segment mainly have secondary education (48.9%) and in general visit cultural festivals once per year (48.9%).

Cluster 2: Experience and equilibrium seekers. This cluster comprised 75 respondents. It had the second highest mean score among the clusters on two domains of motivation, new and different experience and recover equilibrium. Women were slightly more represented in this cluster (53.3%). The dominant age of this cluster was 20–39 (42.7%). Majority of respondents constituting this cluster visit cultural festivals two or three times per year (34.7%) or at least once per year (33.3%). They mainly visit festivals accompanied by three to four persons (42.7%) or in groups of five and more people (28%).

Cluster 3: Multi-purpose seekers. This cluster emerged as the biggest, comprising 132 visitors. It had the highest mean score on new and different experience, friends and family togetherness, reconnection with culture and recover equilibrium. Therefore, it was labelled as multi-purpose seekers. With mean score of 6.10, on a 7-point scale, this group especially esteemed friends and family togetherness. Majority of respondents belonging to this group were women (60.6%). However, it should be noted that female respondents were overrepresented in the sample, as it consisted of 62.5% female respondents. Dominant age groups in this cluster were age groups 20–29 and 40–49 (22%), followed by respondents in the age group 60+ (17.4%). Majority of respondents in this cluster had university education (49.2%). These respondents visit cultural festivals at least once or up to three times per year (71%) and can be defined as the most experienced visitors, as majority of them have visited cultural festivals more than 15 times (52.3%).

Cluster 4: Change and togetherness seekers. This cluster comprised 97 visitors who had the highest regard for the change from everyday life, followed

by the friends and family togetherness. Majority of respondents belonging to this cluster are women (67%). The dominant age group of this cluster is 60+ (24.7%), followed by the age group 30–39 (22.7%). Equal number of visitors belonging to this cluster had secondary and tertiary education (46.4%). Most of them visit cultural festivals once per year (35.1%), accompanied with three to four persons (41.2%).

Findings of this study indicate that in general friends and family togetherness and reconnection with culture had the highest mean scores across the clusters, supporting the findings of factor analysis that these two domains are important dimensions of visitors' motivation for attending traditional cultural events. The largest segment of the market, as indicated by the cluster analysis, is the segment of multi-purpose seekers, which accounted for 37.8% of the sample. This segment of visitors had consistently high scores on each of the domains of motivation, however particularly highly valued friends and family togetherness, reconnection with culture, experiencing new and different things, change from everyday life and recovering equilibrium.

These findings suggest the potential of dividing a broad group of festival visitors into measurable sub-groups of visitors, internally as homogeneous as possible and externally heterogeneous, whose further examination in terms of expected benefits and behavioural characteristics would lead to effective segmentation of festival market.

DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to examine the construct of visitors' motivation and its viability as the basis for festival market segmentation in the context of cultural events in Slovakia. By addressing a topic of contemporary interest, such as the underlying forces of festival visitors' behavior, in thus far scarcely examined context of cultural events in Slovakia, findings of this study add to

the growing body of literature in Festival tourism and Marketing. Results of this study also bear managerial relevance, indicating the possibility to segment event market on the basis of importance of motivational domains, which would provide valuable directions for festival and event organizers related to tailoring event programs and activities taking into consideration visitor segments' interests and behavioral characteristics.

The application of factor analysis indicated six domains of visitors' motivation, such as new and different experience, friends and family togetherness, reconnection with culture and tradition, socialization, equilibrium recovery and change from everyday. Findings of this study which indicate a multi-dimensional nature of event attendees' motivation and the before mentioned domains of motivation as the main drivers of visitors' decision to attend a traditional cultural event, are largely in compliance with previous research (Mohr *et al.*, 1993; Lee *et al.*, 2004; McDowall, 2010; Park *et al.*, 2014). Taking into consideration the domains of motivation which emerged from previous research and the ordering of the dimensions of attendees' motivation stemming from this study, from the perspective of explained variance in visitors' motivation, results of this study are in accordance with Nicholson and Pearce's (2001) findings that visitors' behavior is directed by largely similar internal factors, however, motivational domains differ in terms of their importance across various event settings. Cluster analysis indicated the suitability of dividing a broad group of festival visitors into internally homogeneous and externally heterogeneous sub-groups of visitors based on the importance they attached to various domains of motivation. Four different clusters of visitors, i.e. market segments, emerged from this study, such as: reconnection seekers, experience and equilibrium seekers, multi-purpose seekers and change and togetherness seekers. Indicating the existence of various segments of attendees of traditional cultural events in Slovakia, results of this study correspond to previous research (Lee *et al.*, 2004).

These segments have been further described on the basis of demographic characteristics of member visitors. However, festival organizers are highly advised not to rely solely on demographic profile of visitors in tailoring their marketing programs and strategies, as people with very similar demographic characteristics might lead opposing lifestyles and have high esteem for different benefits of festival visitation. However, in addition

to visitors' motivation future studies on festival market segmentation should also take into account some other shared characteristics of visitors, such as similar lifestyles or behavioral characteristics. Information of visitors' interests together with lifestyles would be useful for identifying those segments that are the most profitable, or have high growth potential. These segments should be further targeted by tailoring festival marketing programs according to visitors' preferences. Further efforts of festival organizers should be also directed into positioning of festival offerings in the minds of most attractive segments in a way superior in comparison with the offerings of competing festivals. In this regard, festival organizers are also highly advised to supplement quantitative research of the drivers of visitors' behavior with qualitative research focused on festival venue features and program activities which would provide the best context for attendees to satisfy highly esteemed goals of festival visitation.

Despite the positives, this study also has several limitations. As cluster analysis is descriptive and no inferential, conclusions about segments of festival visitors cannot be generalized to the whole population of attendees of traditional cultural events in Slovakia. Cluster analysis is also believed to be as good as the representativeness of the sample (Hair *et al.*, 2009), which has not been the case in this study, as it has been performed on a sample of 349 visitors, primarily from the region of Banská Bystrica and as such not representative of the population of attendees of traditional cultural events in Slovakia. It should be also noted that the study has been conducted in the context of cultural events in general, whereas respondents' ratings have been related to the event they have visited most recently. As such, this study does not provide a ready-made solution for organizers of any particular cultural event, however, its intention has been to examine the main drivers of festival visitors' behavior and shed light on the application of this knowledge for effective market segmentation. Whereas the focus of this study was on the importance perspective of visitors' motivation, an avenue worthy of further examination would be visitors' perceptions of how successful an event was in providing conditions for the fulfillment of their needs. Further research on festival tourism would also benefit from the examination of the impact of visitors' perceptions on satisfaction and attendees' intention to revisit a festival and spread positive word-of-mouth.

CONCLUSIONS

Results of this study indicate the existence of six domains of visitors' motivation in the context of traditional cultural events in Slovakia. The application of principal component analysis on the pool of twenty-six motivational items indicated that festival and event visitors are motivated by the desire to experience something new and different, to be with friends and family, reconnect with culture and tradition, to be with people of similar interest and the need to recover equilibrium and experience change from everyday life. Understanding what motivates event attendance is essential for the development of attractive event offerings.

Taking into consideration the importance visitors attach to various dimensions of motivation, the application of cluster analysis yielded four segments of visitors, such as reconnection seekers, experience and equilibrium seekers, multi-purpose seekers and change and togetherness seekers. More thorough knowledge of the characteristics of visitor segments, based on motivational domains, would enable event managers to develop effective promotional strategies and achieve better positioning of an event, from the perspective of target visitor segments, in comparison with competing events.

In addition to enhancing our understanding of what motivates Slovak visitors to attend traditional cultural events, findings of this study are also managerially relevant. Results of the study provide directions to event organizers how to segment heterogeneous event market. Gaining deeper knowledge of what visitors seek to achieve by attending an event would help festival and event organizers to tailor event programme and activities to better meet visitors' needs and therewith promote future attendance of an event and its sustainability.

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Contact information

Vanda Maráková: vanda.marakova@umb.sk
Jaroslav Ďaďo: jaroslav.dado@umb.sk
Janka Táborecká-Petrovičová: janka.taborecka@umb.sk
Tamara Rajic: tamara.rajic@ecinst.org.rs