

HITTING THE RIGHT (MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE) NOTES: A TYPOLOGY OF PERFORMERS AT THE WORLD CHOIR GAMES

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Tourism destinations actively pursue hosting a portfolio of events regularly, aiming to establish themselves as distinct host destinations. All of these events take place in unique contexts, offering diverse experiences to participant groups. Music festivals and concerts have attracted the interest of researchers given the diversity of musical styles and target audiences. However, although being a globally popular musical style, choir events are underrepresented. This article describes participant segments of the World Choir Games held in South Africa; a first for the African continent. A postevent online survey was used to collect data from 384 performers. Psychographic variables were used to segment the groups (perceived event experiences, motivations, level of involvement and attachment, host city perceptions). Exploratory factor analysis identified two involvement, four motivational, and five event experience dimensions. Hierarchical cluster analysis distinguished between three groups labeled as *Choristers*, *Exploring aficionados*, and *Followers*. Across all segments, hedonia (enjoyment) remained the main motivator for participation. The first two segments had the same levels of involvement and attachment, as well as the desire to experience triumph and prestige associated with this world-class competition. However, participants who had a greater interest in enjoyment, destination exploration, mastery, and *communitas*, reported greater perceived experiences across all dimensions, and more positive host city perceptions. The third segment displayed significantly lower levels of motivation, experiences, and host city perceptions. The results highlight experience dimensions that warrant further investigation in the context of performers as opposed to audiences. This knowledge assists event organizers to adapt event marketing and program content for similar events.

Key words: World Choir Games; Choir performer; Market segmentation; Event experience; Involvement; Attachment; Host destination

Introduction

Events may act as powerful brand elements where the event image is transferred to destination image (Caroli & Valentino, 2017; Richards, 2015). The ideal is to focus on events of high value based on their economic impacts, image effects, and establishing relationships with event owners (Andersson et al., 2020; Richards, 2015). The ultimate aim for a host destination will be to establish itself as an event hub, with recurring events as part of a calendar to ensure sustainability and competitiveness beyond the hosting of a major event (after Caroli & Valentino, 2016). Cultural events provide a means of improving the image of cities (Richards, 2015) and hosting music festivals and concerts are not only a growing occurrence (Getz & Page, 2016) but also a substantial part of events research (Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2020). These events create an increasing demand for culture and diversified musical styles and provide extra opportunities for leisure and holidays (Dowd et al., 2004; Gibson & Connell, 2012). Because music events are structured around a central music genre, they attract particular audiences based on the nature of the event, setting, music genre(s), location, as well as composition of the program (Kulczynski et al., 2016; Pegg & Patterson, 2010; Willis & Snowball, 2009). Furthermore, they will not only attract different types of consumers, but there will also be different subsegments within these consumer groups (Kruger & Saayman, 2012, 2015, 2016; Manners, Kruger, & Saayman, 2015).

Tourism (and event) offerings are fundamentally experiences that aim to fulfil individuals' aspirations and expectations; with every individual holding subjective perceptions through a whole series of personal characteristics (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013). Recreation involvement tends to be positively related to motivation (Kyle et al., 2006). Individuals' motivations to attend an event, in turn, are linked to their expectations, thus also levels of satisfaction as an outcome of what they have experienced (Benur & Bramwell, 2015; Knobloch et al., 2014; Mathis et al., 2016). Product or services attributes and performance work along these individual experiences to contribute to overall evaluations of the offering (Assaf & Josiassen, 2012). The more the various subdimensions of memorable

experiences are met, the greater the chance of an overall positive experience (Knobloch et al., 2014). Marketing benefits derived from events depend on this combination of event quality and participants' characteristics (Manners, Saayman, & Kruger, 2015). Market segmentation defines the relationship between these characteristics of events and identifies the relevant criteria for profiling segment members (Nickerson & Grau, 2015; Thompson & Schofield, 2009). This is crucial because analyzing visitors and identifying their specific needs and behaviors enable music event organizers to develop efficient marketing strategies and, ultimately, ensure long-term economic viability. Although segmentation studies of event attendees are frequent, the inclusion of psychographic variables has only recently gained interest (Getz & Page, 2016; Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2020).

Physical event attendance not only supersedes other options such as online or virtual versions in many respects (Wreford et al., 2019) but also increases marketing benefits (Arnegger & Herz, 2016). Therefore, event attendee behavior and motivations remain an important research theme in event studies. Recent reviews by Park and Park (2017) and Getz and Page (2016) indicated increasing research attention given to antecedents and outcomes of event experiences but conclude that not all of the experience dimensions have fully been considered and warrant further investigation. General motivational research is well-established and especially popular in segmentation studies (Getz, 2013; Mair & Whitford, 2013; Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2020). Kinnunen et al. (2019) indicated motivations as the most used segmentation basis for music festival attendees. However, Getz and Page (2016) suggested that special-interest motivations as well as the level of involvement, need further exploration. In a recent review by Tkaczynski and Rundle-Thiele (2020), a summary of 90 articles indicated that level of involvement has been the least researched variable in event studies. Of these 90 studies, only 13 were music events. No studies could be found that specifically look at choir events from a tourism perspective, nor on the performers as opposed to audiences. This research intends to fill this gap in the literature.

The following research questions guided this enquiry:

- RQ1:** How are choir event participants distinct according to their level of involvement and attachment to choir activities?
- RQ2:** What are the unique attendance motivations for a competitive international event and are there differences in importance between choir event participant groups?
- RQ3:** What are the notable perceived competitive choir event experiences and are there differences between choir event participant groups?
- RQ4:** What are the characteristics of choir event participants that relate to positive host destination perceptions?

The literature review starts with an overview of segmentation studies in music event literature. It then focuses on event experience dimensions as the ultimate desired outcome. This is followed by level of involvement and attachment, as well as attendance motivations as preexisting characteristics that influence expectations. Throughout the discussion, the interplay between these factors become evident.

Literature Review

Several segmentation studies have been undertaken on music event tourists. In general, it is good practice to include multiple segmentation bases (Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2020). The aim is to identify segments where firstly, group members have similar characteristics, and secondly, where members of different groups are as different as possible. In some instances, the borders between segments may not be that clear (Ernst & Dolnicar, 2018). Many studies in tourism involve common sense or a priori segmentation where categories are known or determined upfront. However, it is not always known in advance if a data set contains market segments or not and then data-driven or a posteriori segmentation is suitable. Lastly, a combination of the two can be used (Dolničar, 2004). A posteriori is increasing in popularity, especially different forms of cluster analysis (Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2020), and was also applied in this study.

Table 1 provides a summary of recent studies (since 2013), indicating the type of music, location, variables included, and participant groups

identified. Only three studies used a priori segmentation. All the studies used cluster analysis except Croes and Lee (2015) (multiple regression), Fonseca and Ramos (2014) (latent segment modeling), and Kruger and Saayman (2013) (chi-square and ANOVA). Similar to previous findings, the main psychographic variable remains to be motivation. Other popular variables include demographics, musical preferences, trip characteristics, behavioral intentions, perceptions about event quality/satisfaction, and event attributes (as identified in Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2020). Kinnunen et al. (2019) used a novel introduction of personal values, while Saragih and Amelia (2020) took the perspective of well-being (eudaimonia, hedonia, and life satisfaction). Kruger and Saayman (2017b) investigated a unique postevent outcome of increased music appreciation. Considering the recent review by Tkaczynski and Rundle-Thiele (2020), as well as the one undertaken by the authors (Table 1), no studies could be found on choir participants. As indicated, the studies also focus on audiences as opposed to performers as participants. Furthermore, level of involvement and attachment and other experience dimensions have also not been explored. Lastly, the studies did not look at host destination perceptions.

Memorable Event Experience Dimensions

Experiences are not only affected by tangible products and experienced services but also by the degree to which they are unique, extraordinary, and memorable (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013). Kim et al.'s (2012) widely applied memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) scale includes seven psychographic experience dimensions (hedonism, novelty, social interaction and local culture, involvement, knowledge, meaningfulness, and refreshment). The more the various subdimensions of MTEs are met, the greater the chance of an overall MTE (Knobloch et al., 2014). Emotions (positive or negative) play a significant role in the formation of memory (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Hosany et al., 2020). When consuming tourism experiences (unlike other products or activities), individuals primarily seek enjoyment; with emotions such as happiness, excitement, enjoyment, and surprise often featuring as part of tourist experiences (Knobloch et al.,

Table 1
Music Event Segmentation Studies

Authors	Music Event and Target Population	Target Population	Variables Included	Summary
Croes and Lee (2015)	Jazz (Caribbean)	Audience	Gender <i>Motivation, satisfaction, loyalty</i>	Female and male (a priori)
Fonseca and Ramos (2014)	Rock/pop (Portugal)	Audience	Demographics, trip characteristics, future intentions, risk perceptions, constraints <i>Motivations, preferences, associations</i>	Music lovers; Networkers; Tourists
Kinnunen et al. (2019)	Hip-hop, pop/rock, electronic dance music/urban, jazz/blues, heavy metal (Finland)	Audience	Sociodemographics, music style <i>Personal values</i>	Hedonistic dance crowd; Loyal heavy tribe; Highly-educated omnivores
Kruger and Saayman (2013)	Jazz (South Africa)	Audience	First time versus repeat; Sociodemographics; Trip characteristics <i>Satisfaction, motivations</i>	First time and repeat visitors (a priori)
Kruger and Saayman (2015)	Classical, jazz, pop, R&B and rock (South Africa)	Audience	Sociodemographics; Trip characteristics; Preferred style <i>Motivations</i>	Enthusiasts; Sentimentalists; Novices
Kruger and Saayman (2016)	Electronic dance music (South Africa)	Audience	Sociodemographics <i>Motivations</i>	Enthusiasts; Energizers; Electros
Kruger and Saayman (2017a)	Musical theater (South Africa)	Audience	Sociodemographics; Purchasing characteristics <i>Motivations</i>	Phantom lite; Phantom deluxe
Kruger and Saayman (2017b)	Jazz (South Africa)	Audience	Sociodemographics; Trip characteristics; Postfestival behavior (music appreciation) <i>Eventscape, motivations</i>	High bassists; Moderate brasses; Low balancers
Pérez-Gálvez et al. (2017)	Guitar music (Spain)	Audience	Trip characteristics; Sociodemographics; Future intention; Preferred style <i>Motivations, satisfaction, loyalty</i>	Rock; Classic; Guitar lovers
Saayman and Saayman (2016)	Classical music (South Africa)	Audience	Sociodemographics <i>Motivations</i>	Modern enthusiasts; Vintage females; Vintage males;
Saragih and Amelia (2020)	Unknown music festival Indonesia	Audience	<i>Eudaimonia, hedonia, life satisfaction</i>	Pleasure seekers; Playful learners; Transcendentalists
Tkaczynski and Rundle-Thiele (2013)	Religious music (Australia)	Audience	Sociodemographics; Trip characteristics <i>Motivations, religion</i>	Working family visitors; Local young students; Working active campers; Youth group campers
Vinnicombe and Sou (2017)	Classical music (China)	Audience	Origin (local vs. nonlocal)	Local and nonlocal (a priori)

2014). These types of emotions facilitate hedonism as one of the key components of MTEs. Events, in general, are experiences often associated with heightened emotions (Moss et al., 2020), but even more so in the case of musical events (Grebenaer, 2020); therefore, ideal platforms through which to reach visitors' emotional affiliations with a destination (Hosany et al., 2020).

Novelty seeking, the need and desire to experience something new or "other" (Pearce, 1987), is a core part of travel experiences and is often derived through dimensions of culture (e.g., food, language, way of life) (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013). Choir festivals offer distinct travel opportunities meeting the need for novelty, especially in the case of rotating events (Ackerley, 2010). Local culture, in turn, is another component of MTEs through social interaction and includes local hospitality (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013). It also provides opportunities for gaining knowledge, with intellectual development being a significant component of MTEs (Park & Santos, 2017; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Most choir festivals include opportunities to engage in rehearsals and master classes, offering opportunities for learning (Ackerley, 2010). This "cocreation" and attendees' involvement contributes to the overall experience (Mathis et al., 2016; Rust, 2020). Social interaction not only applies to local communities but also the connection to/engagement with other visitors (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Knobloch et al., 2014). The physical presence of, and engagement with other event participants, is a key component of event experiences (Wreford et al., 2019). Studies on music events have indicated that it makes up the "social festivalscape" where interaction enhances the entertainment value and contributes to the atmosphere as well as a sense of community (Grebenaer, 2020; Moss et al., 2020; Sun et al., 2019).

Choir singing is strongly associated with a "sense of community," belonging, and shared (cocreated) music making (Jacob et al., 2009; Southcott & Dawn, 2013; Tonneijck et al., 2008). Choir festivals offer the opportunity to associate with other choirs, make international connections, and develop friendships (Ackerley, 2010). People remember experiences better when they are highly involved in an activity as it makes it personally relevant and meaningful (Kim et al., 2012). If experiences offer

the opportunity for changed perspectives, they could become "experiences of a lifetime" (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). This meaningfulness links to personal growth, self-development, and reaching one's potential, which facilitates "eudaimonia" as a driver of overall well-being (Sirgy, 2019). Fulfilling this desire for meaning through leisure activities has received increasing research interest (Sirgy, 2019; Uysal et al., 2016) and has recently proven to be a significant distinguisher between event attendee segments (see Saragih & Amelia, 2020). Music events also contribute to subjective well-being through improved relationships with the "self" and others (Ballantyne et al., 2014), as well as spiritual fulfilment (Grebenaer, 2020). Choir signing has proven to provide meaning by offering a challenge or accomplishment as well as overall emotional upliftment (Jacob et al., 2009; Tonneijck et al., 2008).

Participation Motivations

Motivations and experiences are inherently linked, with individual motivations being a precursor to the aspects of the event that will make it an exceptional experience from individuals' distinct perceptions. Motivations are intrapersonal factors that direct and integrate an individual's behavior (Iso-Ahola, 1982). Importantly, a single motive is rarely identified as the main reason for travel. A number of generic motivations appear across events including entertainment, escape, and socializing (Getz & Page, 2016). Reviews of event attendance motivations often include the music genre/artist/program; socialization/family/group togetherness (also known as *communitas*); escape/relaxation/excitement/thrills/entertainment/enjoyment/fun; cultural exploration; knowledge/education; and auxiliary experiences (destination offerings) (see reviews by Kruger & Saayman, 2016; Maeng et al., 2016). In the case of individual artists, affiliation (one's favorite artist/band) also becomes an important motivator (Kruger & Saayman, 2012; Pérez-Gálvez et al., 2017). Researchers have recently turned their attention from general motivational to special-interest benefits and event-specific motives (Getz & Page, 2016). With this study focusing on performers rather than audiences, motivations would arguably deviate from these standard

dimensions. One may refer to the literature provided in competitive sport studies, where aspects such as vicarious achievement (feeling a sense of achievement because of others' achievement); appreciation of, and developing skills; competitiveness and a desire to win; as well as sharing a special interest with similar people become important (see Smith & Stewart, 2007; Trail & James, 2001; Weed & Bull, 2004). Choir singing offers this effort toward a common goal as well as a challenge (Jacob et al., 2009; Tonnejck et al., 2008). Choir festivals speak to the needs of singers for prestige through performances in sought-after venues, as well as achievement through participation in competitions with various award categories (Ackerley, 2010).

Level of Involvement and Attachment

The link between involvement and commitment to a leisure pursuit is increasingly explored in the events literature (Getz & Page, 2016) while being a well-researched construct in the broader recreation literature (Lee, 2011), and especially sport among fans and athletes (see Bosnjak et al., 2016; Kaplanidou & Havitz, 2010; Weed & Bull, 2004). It represents the degree to which an individual engages in a particular activity and relates to how much resources one is willing to allocate to activities (time, money, effort, etc.) (Lee, 2011; Stebbins, 1992; Stone, 1984). Higher levels of involvement or commitment equate to a more stringent evaluation of an activity's attributes and influences assessment of the overall experience. As such, it holds significant implications for event organizers, linking to the commitment to the service provider (owner and/or organizer) as well as loyalty toward the host destination where the event is offered (Kyle et al., 2006; Lee, 2011).

Related to such commitment and loyalty, place attachment is defined as any positive or negative relationship that a person has with the location or the specific event, creating an emotional bond with that place or event (adapted from Kyle et al., 2006). The experiential value of an event is influenced by its reputation as well as the host location (Rust, 2020). Affect (feelings) toward an event can act as a precursor to image formation and the perceived fit between the event and host city image; ultimately leading to positive future intentions

(Oshimi & Harada, 2016). Attachment is increasingly recognized as key in understanding the relationship between event attendees and the host destination (Lee et al., 2012). Connection to the space and place also helps shape attendees' overall experiences (Moss et al., 2020). It contributes to the success and sustainability of events, making it important to determine whether the attachment is toward the event itself or the activity being performed as this will result in different attitudes (Hinch & Holt, 2017). For this study, the concept of attachment was applied to the event (World Choir Games) specifically given that it is a rotating event not linked to one specific destination.

Case Study

The biannual World Choir Games is a major international event, attracting on average 21,000 participants from 76 nations since its inception in 2000. The 2018 host, City of Tshwane, is a metropolitan city and the administrative capital of South Africa. As a capital city, it has to manage contrasting images and perceptions of being uninteresting or associated with unpopular political leadership (Du Preez, 2018). After hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup, events were identified as a platform to achieve this, and the City started focusing on hosting significant once-off, but also establishing annual events (Gibson et al., 2014; Kruger & Heath, 2013). Hosting the 2018 World Choir Games presented a rare opportunity to showcase the city's rich history and position it as a historical and cultural hub of South Africa. It was the first international music event of this scope not only in South Africa but the continent. The event owner, Interkultur, introduced the City as the "modern capital of South Africa" and promised unique and memorable experiences and encounters with the rich African culture. Choirs could participate in five categories (champions competition, open competition, noncompetitive evaluation, friendship concerts, the festival stage choir) and 27 subcategories. The 10th Games had unique aspects including a large number of friendship concerts in public spaces (free of charge) and workshops, seminars, and open rehearsal sessions hosted across the City. Local choirs had the freedom to make their own travel arrangements as opposed to standard packages. The 2018 event saw the

lowest number of participating nations (46, compared to the average of 76), as well as participants (16,000, compared to the average of 21,000). This may be due to long traveling distances, as well as perceptions about safety and organizational capacity as is often the case with emerging or unfamiliar destinations (Arnegger & Herz, 2016). Although the cultural success of the event would depend on the participating choirs, sustainability of an economic legacy would be strengthened by ensuring optimal event experiences along with exposure to the city's wider tourism offering toward an enhanced tourism image.

Research Methodology

This exploratory study was approached from the regulatory ontological stance, neopositivism, and used a quantitative research method in the form of a structured postevent online questionnaire sent to both international and local participants. The event owner, Interkultur, initially facilitated an online data collection process by sending out the survey link to the target populations using their databases (both local and international participants aged 18 years and older). In addition, the survey link was distributed to personal contacts and individual choir members. This process depended on individuals' willingness to participate and resend the link. Thus, both instances applied nonprobability sampling based on available cases (survey) and snowball sampling (personal contacts and referrals) with no obligation to participate. The data collection period was from July 15 to August 6, 2018 (the event ended July 14). A total of 156 international participant and 187 local participant responses were obtained. The data were pooled and resulted in a total of 343 respondents. A total of 298 choirs and individuals from 46 nationalities attended, adding up to just more than 16,000 participants. Based on a population (N) of 20,000, a sample of 377 respondents can be considered as representative and allows for advanced statistical analyses (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). The authors acknowledge the limited sample; however, because this is exploratory research, the results are nonetheless considered useful to identify trends.

Each target population (local and international participants) received a modified version of the

standard questionnaire. The questionnaire started with demographics (gender, age, country/place of origin), role in the event (membership, categories participated in), and event participation (previous participation, which sections). Level of involvement was measured using five statements (adapted from Lee, 2011; Stone, 1984) along with aspects of event attachment using four statements (adapted from Kyle et al., 2006) on a 5-point Likert scale of agreement. Motivations for attending focused on psychographic aspects representing different experience dimensions that could be desired of participation in any choir event; ranging from the general event motivations (Maeng et al., 2016) to special-interest and event-specific motivations (from Smith & Stewart, 2007; Trail & James, 2001). Fifteen statements were measured on a 5-point Likert scale of importance ("Please indicate the importance of the following aspects for you personally when attending"). Event experiences were tested by combining aspects of MTEs as well as more of the tangible event-specific elements (from Manners, Saayman, & Kruger, 2015). Twenty-one statements were measured on a 5-point Likert scale of agreement ("Please indicate the extent to which you experienced the following"). It was not framed in terms of satisfaction, but rather whether the respondents perceived to have experienced these aspects.

The data were analyzed by using IBM SPSS Version 26 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The multivariate analysis started with a descriptive analysis in profiling the respondents. Secondly, scale dimensions were determined through exploratory factor analyses using principal-component factor extraction. Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (recommended value of >0.7), and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($p < 0.05$) confirmed factorability of the data. Factors with eigenvalues ≥ 1 were retained. Though standardized loadings are ideally >0.70 , values above 0.40 were considered (Nusair & Hua, 2010). Internal consistency for each of the scales was examined using Cronbach's alpha (reliability coefficient) and the average interitem correlations. All factors with a reliability coefficient above 0.6 were considered acceptable in this study (Kline, 2011). The average interitem correlations were also computed as another measure of reliability: these, according to Cohen (1988), should lie between 0.15 and 0.55.

Thirdly, hierarchical cluster analysis, using Ward's method of Squared-Euclidean distances was used to segment the respondents. ANOVAs were used to indicate any statistically significant differences between the identified market segments ($p < 0.05$). Composite scores were created for each of the identified factors, based on the mean of the items that had their primary loadings on each factor.

Results

Profile of the Respondents

Table 2 summarizes the profile of the respondents. More than half of the respondents were local participants (55%) with a larger representation of female respondents (58%) and between the ages of 25 to 34 years (23%) and 35 to 44 years (19%). Most of the respondents were choir members (87%), followed by choir conductors (23%), and parents of choir members (joining as chaperones or "supporting") (18%) and the 2018 event was the first time attending (70%). The World Choir website (73%) and associated social media accounts (56%) were the main sources of information about the event while word-of-mouth referrals (43%) also played a role.

Results of the Factor Analyses

Four exploratory factor analyses (EFAs) using a principal-component factor extraction were performed to identify the participants' level of involvement in, and attachment toward choir activities;

their motives for attending; their level of experience with the event; as well as their perception of the host city, Tshwane. These factors were the psychographic segmentation bases in the research.

Two factors related to participants' involvement in choir activities were extracted (Table 3). Based on the mean values (\bar{X}), *choir activity investment* ($\bar{X} = 3.81$) was regarded as the most important involvement factor followed by *choir event following* ($\bar{X} = 3.47$).

Regarding the motives to attend, four factors were extracted (Table 4). *Event enjoyment* ($\bar{X} = 4.51$) was regarded as the most important motive followed by *triumph and prestige* ($\bar{X} = 4.39$) and *mastery and communitas* ($\bar{X} = 4.20$). *Destination exploration* ($\bar{X} = 3.79$) was regarded as a lesser important motive.

Five perceived event experiences were revealed (Table 5). Two items ["Safety arrangements for myself and my belongings during the Games" and "Ease of access to support services (e.g., banking, medical facilities), or assistance when needed"] were eliminated, because they did not contribute to a simple factor structure and failed to meet the minimum criteria of having a primary factor loading of 0.4 or above. Respondents had particularly positive experiences of the *performance and scheduling* conditions ($\bar{X} = 4.00$) and *organization and execution* ($\bar{X} = 3.72$). This was followed by *socializing and learning opportunities* ($\bar{X} = 3.56$) and *amenities* ($\bar{X} = 3.45$). Respondents were less satisfied with or aware of the *tourist opportunities* ($\bar{X} = 3.29$).

One factor representing the perception of the host city (Tshwane) was extracted (Table 6). Based on the mean value, respondents had a neutral

Table 2
Profile of the Respondents

Profile Variables	Percentage(s)
Country of origin	International (45%); Local (55%)
Gender	Male (42%); Female (58%)
Age	18–24 years (13%); 25–34 years (23%); 35–44 years (19%); 45–54 years (17%); 55–64 years (14%); 65–74 years (11%); 75–84 years (2%); 85+ years (1%)
Main role(s) ^a	Choir member (87%); Choir conductor (23%); Manager (13%); Parent of a choir member (18%); Artistic director (5%); Cultural head (3%)
Number of previous attendances	First attendance (70%); Once (11%); Twice (11%); Three times (6%); Four + times (2%)
Media sources ^a	World Choir Games' website (73%); World Choir Games' social media accounts (56%); Friends and relatives (43%); A search engine (e.g., Google, Yahoo, etc.) (38%); Traditional media (television, radio, and newspaper) (26%); The City of Tshwane's social media accounts (18%); The City of Tshwane's website (16%)

Note. ^aRespondents could select all that apply. Therefore, percentages do not calculate up to 100%.

Table 3
EFA Results Regarding the Involvement in Choir Activities

Please Indicate Your Involvement in Choir Activities:	Choir Event Following	Choir Activity Investment
I follow all World Choir Games activities in the media	0.82	
I spend a lot of time following choir related news in the media	0.81	
I attend as many World Choir Games as possible	0.62	
I attend as many choir events as possible throughout the year	0.58	
Attending this event is more important to me than attending any other choir event	0.53	
I have a special connection to the World Choir Games	0.48	
I often travel away from home to participate in choir-related activities		0.79
I dedicate my free time to participate in choir-related activities		0.74
I spend a substantial amount of money on choir-related activities		0.69
Reliability coefficient	0.78	0.66
Average interitem correlation	0.36	0.39
Mean value	3.47	3.81

Note. 5-point Likert scale: 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.81; Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant [$\chi^2(36) = 596.961, p < 0.05$]; variance explained was 52%.

perception regarding the host city ($\bar{X} = 3.01$), indicating that actions are required to change the participants’ perception of the host city.

Identifying the Market Segments of Choir Participants Through Cluster Analysis

A hierarchical cluster analysis was used to explore the natural structure of the data by using

Ward’s method with squared Euclidean distances. This method was applied because it generates a series of models with cluster solutions ranging from 1 (all variables in one cluster) to n (each variable as an individual cluster). The cluster analysis was performed on the scores of the identified factors (Tables 3–6). The cluster analysis could only be performed on the responses that fully completed all sections. Incomplete responses were removed to

Table 4
EFA Results on the Motives to Attend

Indicate the Importance of the Following Aspects for you When Attending	Destination Exploration	Triumph and Prestige	Mastery and Communitas	Event Enjoyment
Learn about the local culture	0.89			
Experience the excitement of visiting a new place	0.86			
Explore the host destination	0.85			
Share a feeling of accomplishment with my choir members		0.77		
Achieve success in the competition		0.76		
Have the opportunity to display my skills/expertise		0.68		
Spend time socially with my choir members		0.54		
Enjoy the status of attending an international event		0.46		
Learn more about the art of choral singing			0.74	
Appreciate the skills of choirs (other than my own)			0.72	
Meet other people with similar interests as myself			0.63	
Support other favorite choirs (apart from my own)			0.61	
Spend time with my accompanying friends/relatives				0.77
Enjoy the event atmosphere				0.68
Experience the excitement of the event competition				0.55
Reliability coefficient	0.89	0.72	0.68	0.60
Average interitem correlation	0.73	0.36	0.37	0.34
Mean value	3.79	4.39	4.20	4.51

Note. 5-point Likert scale: 1 = *not important at all* to 5 = *extremely important*. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.78; Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant [$\chi^2(105) = 1294.661, p < 0.05$]; variance explained was 62%.

Table 5
EFA Results on Perceived Event Experiences

Aspects Experienced	Touristic Opportunities	Socializing and Learning	Organization and Execution	Performance and Scheduling	Amenities
Excursions to local attractions and sites	0.73				
Informed about local cultures	0.69				
Opportunities arranged to travel in South Africa before and/or after the Games	0.68				
Key ceremonies (Opening, Closing, Awards)	0.65				
Opportunities to enjoy local entertainment	0.56				
Opportunities to engage with local community members	0.51				
Able to engage socially with other choir members and conductors	0.75				
Sufficient opportunities to participate in workshops during the Games	0.67				
Program that combined competition and social activities	0.56				
Strict adherence the program schedule			0.77		
Professional organization of the event			0.76		
Quality of technical support at the venues			0.68		
Ease of movement of choirs between venues and activities			0.46		
Number of spectators supporting the performances				0.75	
Quality of the competition venues				0.58	
Enough free time to explore on my own				0.44	
Being matched with similar choirs to compete fairly				0.44	
Quality of accommodation and catering					0.77
Ability to communicate at all times (e.g., Wi-Fi in venues)	0.80	0.68	0.75	0.60	0.56
Reliability coefficient	0.43	0.42	0.43	0.23	0.31
Average inter-item correlation	3.29	3.56	3.72	4.00	3.45
Mean value					

Note. 5-point Likert scale: 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.88; Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant [$\chi^2(210) = 1303.68, p < 0.05$], variance explained was 55%.

Table 6
EFA Results on the Perception of the Host City

I View the Host City as a Place . . .	Host City Perception
Where you can enjoy many leisure activities	0.87
That offers world class visitor facilities	0.84
With a great variety of interesting attractions	0.83
That is a home for cultural events	0.82
That welcomes visitors	0.72
Where I can feel safe	0.68
Reliability coefficient	0.88
Average interitem correlation	0.56
Mean value	3.01

Note. 5-point Likert scale: 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.82; Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant [$\chi^2(15) = 216.69, p < 0.05$]; variance explained was 63%.

avoid artificial groupings (Ernst & Dolnicar, 2018). This resulted in 221 respondents. A three-cluster (segment) solution was selected as being the most discriminatory. The results of the analysis of variance (ANOVAs) were used to identify the three segments and to indicate any significant differences between them ($p < 0.05$). As presented in Table 7, the ANOVAs indicated that all factors contributed to the differentiation between the three segments ($p < 0.05$). Table 7 demonstrates that there were generally large effect size differences between the segments. Cross-tabulations and chi-square tests were performed on the categorical variables to identify any statistically significant differences between the segments. Cohen (1988) gave the following criteria to interpret phi-values: 0.1 for a small effect, 0.3 for a medium effect, and 0.5 for a large effect. This was done to create a detailed profile of the different choir participant segments. The analysis did not reveal many differences; however, the variables that were statistically significant (based on a 5% and 10% level of significance) (country of origin, $\phi = 0.151, p = 0.081$; attending in the capacity of a parent of a choir member, $\phi = 0.342, p = 0.006$; and age, $\phi = 0.323; p = 0.032$), are included in the discussion of the segment characteristics. When interpreting the level of significance and the phi-values (ϕ), there were small- to medium-effect differences between the segments. The segments were labeled appropriately to resemble each segment’s characteristics based on their rating of the factors to create a typology of choir participants.

Segment 1 is the second largest segment with 46 respondents and had the highest mean values across all the factors apart from *choir activity investment*, which was rated higher by Segment 3. In terms of their involvement in choir activities, both *choir event following* and *choir activity investment* were equally important. Confirming the results of the EFA, *event enjoyment* was their primary motive for attending, followed by *triumph and prestige*. For this segment, *destination exploration* was also an important motive to participate. They furthermore had the highest rating for all the experience factors indicating an overall positive experience with the event. Compared to the other two segments, they also had the most favorable perception of the host city. Although not statistically significant, along with Segment 3, they also had the most previous experience and participation in the event (first time attending = 70%; once before = 13%; $\phi = 0.280, p = 0.150$). In terms of their sociodemographic profile, this segment had the highest percentage of international respondents (37%) within the lowest age categories [18–24 (39%) and 25–34 (20%)] compared to the other two segments. Based on their high ratings of the factors, this segment appeared to be the keenest about both the activity and the entire experience associated with the event and was therefore labeled *Exploring aficionados*.

Segment 2 was the smallest segment with 39 respondents. Compared to the other two segments, they had the lowest rating for all the factors, had the fewest number of previous attendances (first time attending = 95%), and had less favorable perceptions of the host city. The cross-tabulations and chi-square tests revealed that this segment was mostly locals (85%), parents of a choir member (parents that accompanied younger choir members) (63%), within higher age categories [35–44 years (36%); 25–34 and 45–54 years (18%, respectively)]. It appears that this segment represents members who do not have a clear expectation of the event or substantial involvement with choir activities because they are participating in a supporting capacity. Based on these characteristics, this segment was labeled *Followers*.

The third segment was the largest segment, with 136 respondents. *Choir activity investment* is rated higher compared to the other two segments, indicating high levels of commitment to the activity.

Table 7
Choir Segment Characteristics

Variables	Segment 1: Exploring Aficionados (N = 46)	Segment 2: Followers (N = 39)	Segment 3: Choristers (N = 136)	F-Ratio	Sig. Level	Effect Sizes		
						1&2	1&3	2&3
Involvement in choir activities								
Choir event following	3.67 ^a	2.63 ^b	3.60 ^a	29.358	0.001*	1.07	0.07	1.43
Choir activity investment	3.97 ^a	2.70 ^b	4.07 ^a	50.392	0.001*	1.35	0.10	1.66
Motives for attending								
Destination exploration	4.43 ^a	2.76 ^b	3.78 ^c	46.174	0.001*	2.03	0.76	1.20
Triumph and prestige	4.68 ^a	3.62 ^b	4.49 ^a	57.697	0.001*	1.37	0.46	1.12
Learning and communitas	4.52 ^a	3.58 ^b	4.23 ^c	29.375	0.001*	1.25	0.52	0.87
Event enjoyment	4.79 ^a	3.94 ^b	4.62 ^c	39.184	0.001*	1.16	0.40	0.92
Perceived event experiences								
Touristic opportunities	4.12 ^a	2.88 ^b	3.08 ^b	58.795	0.001*	1.78	1.49	0.32
Socializing and learning	4.43 ^a	3.14 ^b	3.38 ^b	46.116	0.001*	1.90	1.05	0.06
Organization and execution	4.51 ^a	3.45 ^b	3.51 ^b	24.649	0.001*	1.25	1.05	0.06
Performance and scheduling	4.61 ^a	3.59 ^b	3.90 ^c	41.208	0.001*	1.25	1.05	0.06
Amenities	4.42 ^a	3.08 ^b	3.24 ^b	51.443	0.001*	1.74	1.19	0.52
Perception of the host city								
Host city perception	3.40 ^a	2.78 ^b	2.91 ^b	11.994	0.001*	2.26	1.45	0.19

Note. Effect sizes: Below 0.30 can be considered weak. Values from 0.31 to 0.49 moderate, and values of 0.50 and strong. *Group differs significantly from type (in a row) where ^b or ^c is indicated.

Furthermore, this segment had the most previous participations in the event (twice before = 16%). Although they rated the motives similar to the *Exploring aficionados*, *destination exploration* was less important to them. They were less satisfied with the event management factors and rated the factors significantly lower than the *Exploring aficionados*. Furthermore, they had a less favorable perception of the host city compared the *Exploring aficionados* but not as low compared to the *Followers*. The cross-tabulations and chi-square tests indicated that this segment had the second largest percentage of international respondents (30%) but still a significant representation of local participants (70%). This segment was represented by the most diverse age groups [18–24 years (25%), 25–34 years (24%), 35–44 years (20%), 45–54 years (17%), 55–64 years (14%)]. This segment appeared to represent the general choir member and was therefore labeled *Choristers*.

Discussion

As indicated in the results, there were three segments with similarities that can be harnessed by event owners, but also differences that need to be managed to increase positive overall experiences of participants. The discussion starts with host city perceptions as an indication of the possible image effect of the event. This is followed by an integration of the findings on the overall sample with that of the segments to debate the link between motivations with specific experience dimensions.

Host City Perceptions

Overall, performers had neutral perceptions (\bar{X} = 3.01), with *Exploring aficionados* (more international participants) expressing slightly more positive perceptions than the locals (the majority of both *Choristers* and *Followers*). The measurement of the construct focused on destination attributes/pull factors. Not only was *destination exploration* the lowest motivation, but *tourist opportunities* were also the least experienced across all groups compared to other factors. The findings are somewhat in contradiction to the belief that travel opportunities associated with rotating events are a significant benefit (Ackerley, 2010). This could explain the

low rating; raising the question whether this event had the desired economic impact and image effects for the destination. However, the most important motivational factor bringing distinction between *Exploring aficionados* and the two other groups was the motive *destination exploration*. These mostly younger, international participants experienced more and held more positive perceptions that could lead to positive word-of-mouth (after Caroli & Valentino, 2017). As this group also had the most previous participation, they have also come to associate the event with travel opportunities. It could be that the novelty of the new destination contributed to making it memorable (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013) even if they experienced it to a limited extent. Touristic opportunities are far less of a drawing card for locals, even if they are from other regions; making international visitors the more attractive market to derive marketing benefits for a lesser-known long-haul destination (Arnegger & Herz, 2016). This presents a challenge to event organizers who wish to establish regular and small-scale events with sustained benefits (Shipway & Kirkup, 2012) as the scope of the event would be a major consideration. The majority of the sample participated in the Choir Games for the first time. For them, novelty could be more about the possibility of meeting a global choir community, gaining knowledge and skills, and enjoying the quality and excitement of a world-class competition than experiencing a new destination. These aspects are covered in the rest of the discussion section.

Level of Involvement and Attachment

In the EFA, level of involvement and attachment are represented by two factors: *choir activity investment* (substantial time, effort, and resources spent on choir activities); and *choir event following*. *Choir involvement* consists of participation continuously, as well as participating in specific events. These two are linked as preparation for competitions and festivals is a significant part of choral singing (Ackerley, 2010). Although *Choristers* (more locals, most previous attendance of the Choir Games) had slightly higher levels of activity investment than *Exploring aficionados* (highest percentage international respondents, younger), the two groups displayed the same levels of involvement.

To the contrary, *Followers* (locals, choir accompaniment such as chaperones/parents) had low levels of involvement. Even though the two previous active performer groups seemed similar, *Choristers* reported the same lower levels of perceived experiences as *Followers*, across all but one of the dimensions. This deviation based on involvement can be explained from two perspectives. For *Choristers*, their high involvement equates to a more stringent evaluation of the service offering as evident in the low experience scores (corroborating Kyle et al., 2006; Lee, 2011). They also had the most previous participations in the event. This market is best served by understanding their expectations of high-quality event attributes within the organizer's control (Manners, Saayman, & Kruger, 2015). On the other hand, *Followers'* low involvement lead to less favorable motivations and experiences as they do not have a "vested interest" in the activity (after Kyle et al., 2006; Mathis et al., 2016). Their opinions may be closely linked to the perceptions shared by the choir members that they support. The challenge for event owners is to ensure an overall enjoyable experience so that they may be willing to attend similar events without necessarily knowing any participants. Overall, level of involvement in choir singing as a serious leisure activity will spill over into festival participation, increasing the potential for an MTE (after Kim et al., 2012).

All four of the event attachment items loaded onto *choir event following*, along with two linked to participation in choir events in general (attend as many as possible, follow in the news). The Choir Games is seen as a significant event on the calendar, and there is a desire to attend, alongside an overall interest in other choir events. Based on the lower item loadings, this interest does not appear to be as much an affective attachment (more important than others, special connection). It will not likely represent a "dependence" attachment, where the event offers the ideal opportunity to participate in an important activity as other events are seen as part of the same construct. It could instead be "identity" attachment where the event links to performers' self-identity and the degree to which the activity is central to the participant's life (after Gross et al., 2008; Hosany et al., 2020). The latter links back to level of involvement. Importantly, and giving that the case study was a rotating event,

it appears that attachment is more toward the activity being performed than to the event itself. Event destinations could benefit from this by hosting major recognized choir events due to such psychological benefits, but also followed by smaller regular events. Should the destination continue to deliver quality, these experiences may facilitate place attachment that leads to motivations to visit (Budruk & Stanis, 2013). Thus, the destination becomes a "lifestyle" destination (Gross et al., 2008), or in this case, cultural hub, that will retain the *Chorister* and *Follower* markets who are not really interested in exploring and more critical of the event offering.

Motivations and Event Experiences

Fulfilling experiences are derived from both tangible and intangible components (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013), with some of these within the event organizer's control (Manners, Saayman, & Kruger, 2015). The first three aspects that were experienced positively across the overall sample included aspects that can be regarded as the "core business" of the organizer: *performance and scheduling (most positive)*, *organization and execution*, and *mastery and communitas*. Amenities are provided by the host destination, while tourist opportunities are built-in as an enhancer and usually up to participants' own undertaking. Motivations and experiences are inherently linked, with individual motivations being a precursor to the aspects of the event that will make it an exceptional experience from individuals' distinct perceptions. *Enjoyment (hedonia)* was the main motivator across all the segments (even though at different levels); reflecting some of the main motivations of event audiences in general (after Getz & Page, 2016). The accompanying emotions evoke hedonism as an important dimension of MTEs (Hosany et al., 2020; Knobloch et al., 2014). This enjoyment could be facilitated through different means for each segment. The question is, how can it be linked to the different perceived experiences and also other motivations?

The most positive experience was *performance and scheduling* across all the segments (the "moments of truth"—venue quality, size of the audience, fair competition, preparation time). This would be perceived differently by each group's

motivations. *Enjoyment* represented family/group togetherness/socialization; the event atmosphere; and excitement of the competition. For all three groups, togetherness could be experienced as many of the choir members' accompanying friends were other choir members, and where supporting members joined at the venue. Spectators further added to this part of the "social festivalscape"; enhancing the entertainment value and atmosphere (after Grebenar, 2020; Moss et al., 2020; Sun et al., 2019).

Exploring aficionados' and *Choristers'* need for *triumph and prestige* were also captured at this moment by achieving success, sharing accomplishment, displaying their skills, enjoying the status, and spending time with choir members. For activities to be meaningful they should present the individual with a challenge and opportunity to display skills (Bosnjak et al., 2016; Mathis et al., 2016; Stebbins, 1992). Choir singing offers this effort and challenge (Jacob et al., 2009; Tonneijck et al., 2008) while also speaking to the needs for prestige and achievement through different participation possibilities (as stated by Ackerley, 2010). These outcomes are also collectively attained as the performers perceived time with choir members as part of the triumph and prestige setting. It links to social interaction, involvement, and meaningfulness as MTE dimensions (Kim et al., 2012). For *Followers* this could be from the perspective of "vicarious" achievement, where they experience triumph and prestige through seeing their respective choirs performing (after Trail & James, 2001). Thus, these intangible aspects of the "moment of truth" are a key space at the "heart" of the event. Features that could have contributed for the 2018 Games included the various opportunities to perform in public spaces in interesting locations and large crowds. There were also various categories that choirs could compete in—either competitive or noncompetitive, providing relevant opportunities.

Leading up to a "moment of truth" is the second dimension that was experienced positively: *organization and execution* (time scheduling, professionalism, technical support, logistics). This dimension provides structure to the entire core experience and will detract from both *enjoyment* as well as *triumph and prestige* (hampering performance and damaging event reputation) if not in place. This aspect of the eventscape is within the event organizer's

control (Kruger & Saayman, 2017a; Manners, Saayman, & Kruger, 2015) and this dimension is linked to the perception of the destination as a competent host (Du Preez, 2018).

The third experience dimension, *mastery and communitas*, distinguished *Exploring aficionados* from the other two segments. Where socializing and learning was the third most important motivator for the sample, this group was significantly more interested in gaining knowledge and especially doing so through engagement with other members of the choir community (appreciate their skills, supporting and socializing around interests). Such knowledge and involvement are key components of an MTE and building such opportunities into the program will enhance the enjoyment for these highly involved performers (Park & Santos, 2017; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Most choir festivals include opportunities to engage in rehearsals and master classes (Ackerley, 2010); ringing true to the "sense of community," belonging, and shared (cocreated) music-making associated with choir singing (from Jacob et al., 2009; Southcott & Dawn, 2013; Tonneijck et al., 2008). These "cocreation" opportunities are part of the "socialscape" and key to event experiences (Rust, 2020; Wreford et al., 2019).

Conclusion and Recommendations

A review of the literature indicated that studies on both performers and choir events, respectively, are underrepresented event tourism topics. This study described the profile of performers of a competitive choir event based on their levels of involvement and attachment, the importance of different motivations, perceived event experiences, and host destination perceptions. Three segments emerged, namely *Choristers*, *Exploring aficionados*, and *Followers*. Findings indicate the value of the chosen psychographic variables to distinguish nuanced differences between performers. It not only contributes to the lacking research on choir events, but also the perspective of performers as opposed to audiences. Performers mostly seem to have the same levels of involvement, with attachment being more toward the activity of choir event singing than the specific event (i.e., Choir Games). Although hedonism remained a key part of the experience, the meaning thereof differs in

the context of performers. The “moment of truth” was the main experience—when they step onto the stage, display their skills before an audience, achieve success, share this accomplishment with their fellow choir members, and enjoy the prestigious event. Along with *hedonism*, *meaningfulness* especially comes to the fore as antecedents of a memorable choir competition. *Novelty* may not primarily be achieved through destination exploration, especially for first-time participants and locals, as tourist opportunities are not a strong motivator. However, it can be perceived through meeting a global choir community, gaining knowledge and skills, and enjoying the quality and excitement of a world-class competition not experienced before. *Socialization* as part of the choir community or experiencing “communitas” is linked to *meaningfulness* and *knowledge*, especially through cocreation opportunities such as workshops and rehearsals, engaging with other choirs socially but also by learning from them. The event “socialscape” stands central to various dimensions of MTEs. In the sample, local community (learning about them, enjoying local entertainment, engaging with them) did not feature strongly as part of making the event memorable, but rather the choir community and companions to the event.



Though suitable, the study is limited by the sample size. Introduction of new privacy of information legislation took place in Europe at precisely the time of data collection, limiting respondents. The questionnaire was in English, and this could limit the generalization to the broader choir community. However, this is a potential avenue for future research as cultural background can create distinctive event participation motivations and experiences (after Li & Wood, 2016). Meaningfulness is a significant part of competitive event participation and warrants further investigation (as also found among audiences; Saragih & Amelia, 2020). There seems to be an evident interplay between meaning created by the individual toward the self and meaning created through *communitas* that warrants further investigation. Further research would benefit from exploring the means to generate attachment toward a lifestyle destination among local choirs. Similar research can be conducted to compare the performers of different types of music genres and event scopes as every event attracts a

distinct market. A repeat study of the same event across different years can also shed light on the event-host destination image and attachment.

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