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DANCE AND CULTURAL TOURISM: THE EFFECT OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ON FOREIGNERS' PARTICIPATION IN TRADITIONAL GREEK DANCING COURSES

Key words: leisure, folklore, traditional dancing, cultural tourism.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate whether demographic characteristics could constitute differentiating factors in subjects' attendance motives. 451 foreigners over 18 years of age took part in the study. A questionnaire was constructed for data collection with a total of 35 variables which consisted of three parts. A factor and reliability analysis, Mann Whitney U test and one-way ANOVA were carried out. The statistical analysis revealed that traditional dancing was a motive in cultural tourism, and that the most significant attendance motives were Greek culture, boredom rejection, social relations and improvement of dancing skills. From the demographic characteristics, age and years of attendance, constitute a differential factor of attendance motives. More specifically, age affected the "skills improvement", "challenge" and "new experience" factors, whereas the aspect of years of attendance had an impact on the "new experience" motive.

INTRODUCTION

It is widely acceptable that culture constitutes a lever of tourism development not only in Western Europe but also worldwide [5, 19]. Studies have been carried out by travel agencies [23], university departments of tourism management [19, 26, 31] or individual researchers [18, 32] that aimed to investigate those cultural elements which prompt and simultaneously urge people to travel in order to visit and get to know new places better. However, while archaeological sites, museums and performing arts such as music and modern dancing are considered cultural elements and they have been frequently investigated as motives in cultural tourism, traditional dancing has

remained largely outside researchers' interests.

Traditional dancing is indispensably connected with Greek society, basically, a farming society. This society experienced significant transformations in the 1950s due to external and internal emigration and industrialization of means of production [12]. These transformations resulted in a rupture of the traditional way of life [27]. Under the new circumstances traditional dancing lost a substantial part of its functionality and acquired a more recreational and commercial character. Teaching dancing at schools and dancing associations has greatly contributed to this transformation. Moreover, a new type of dance has emerged, taught in dancing associations' classes [36], which is gradually replacing traditional

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dancing not only in daily practice of present-day Greeks, but also in their awareness [13].

The creation of dancing associations and teaching traditional dancing courses to foreign visitors in Greece and abroad is a result of the use of traditional dancing by the folk movement.

Cultural tourism: Definitions and terms

Even though many studies have been carried out in the area of cultural tourism, it has not been possible yet to provide a definition of cultural tourism acceptable by all [1]. This is probably due to the multidimensional and diverse character of the term. This diversity constitutes a state of confusion which prevents the formulation of a uniform definition [19].

Originally, visiting places, monuments and events of cultural value was defined as cultural tourism. According to the European Centre for Traditional and Regional Cultures [11] these venues were archaeological museums and archaeological sites, buildings, places and areas of architectural interest and shows of traditional, classical or modern art.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics [2] defines as cultural tourist a person who has spent at least one night in a place which is more than forty kilometres from his place of permanent residence and who has visited a place of culture. Places of culture are defined as various art galleries, museums, animal and sea parks, libraries, concerts, theatre plays, dancing performances and finally the cinema [15].

The tourist organization LORD [23] defines cultural tourism as “Visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, and scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution” [32]; whereas for Ruiz-Baudrihaye [29] cultural tourism is “an intellectual, quality form of activity which inspires respect for local cultures and regions”.

To sum up, cultural tourism can be referred to as an activity through which a visitor intends to meet, know, understand and esteem the value of a place and its culture as an entirety encompassing its social, economic, and political structure, people and modus vivendi, history and archaeology, arts and architecture, food, wine and local produce, region morphology, and various festivals and events.

Tourism in this form ceases to be mass tourism. It acquires a social and cultural dimension

and, most importantly, seeks experience, communication and quality in traveling [3].

But what drives people to travel to far away countries? Who are these people, what are their motives and what power urges them to travel to those specific places?

Motivation and profile of the cultural tourist

The keyword that has been used to this day by researchers for the definition of the concept of “motive” is the word *force*. Force is a motive for everyone. For some it is an internal force; for some it comes exclusively from the outside environment. Finally, for some it is both an internal and external force that urges man to act. A definition that seems to be acceptable by most researchers could be: motive is an internal human condition which brings into action, activates or moves and directs one’s behaviour in order to achieve specific goals. Motive is the driving force to excellence. Therefore, if one wishes to do something, he or she should draw inspiration from somewhere.

Motives are parameters explaining human behaviour. Motives of tourists are considered important by researchers since they constitute on the one hand the driving forces and on the other the restraining forces that direct human behaviour [8, 20]. For this reason, motives constitute a field of study for many researchers and consequently several theories of motivation have been developed. One of theories of tourist motives is the theory of factors of attraction and drive [6, 8, 9, 34]. According to this theory, human beings are driven and attracted by some forces. The driving forces explain how individuals are motivated to travel, while the forces of attraction explain why individuals are attracted to a specific destination.

Driving motives explain why and how people wish to travel to destinations that are often far away from their permanent place of residence; for what reasons they wish to be somewhere else. However, the driving motives do not specify the destination. This is achieved by the motives of attraction which explain why one chooses a specific destination [4].

Driving factors are sociological and psychological characteristics which urge people to travel. They are travellers’ inherent wishes and they are used to explain the need of going on holidays. Such wishes are man’s desire for a change of surroundings, relaxation and rest from daily stress, adventure and for rejuvenation of old or creation of new social relationships [34]. Motives of attraction

are used to explain how one chooses a destination. Factors of attraction are responsible for attracting individuals to a specific destination since they have taken the decision to travel. The positive attraction of a place will influence the traveller to choose a specific place. Beaches, historical and archaeological sites, recreational services as well as traveller's expectations of the specific destination will have even a greater influence on his choice [34].

Iso-Ahola [20] opposes this social model of motives [7, 9, 30] and claims that motives constitute mostly a psychological parameter, and proposes a psychological model of motive analysis. According to his model the driving forces for tourism are people's: a) desire to leave behind their everyday surroundings, and b) desire to obtain psychological (internal) reward from travelling to a different environment. To decide which of these is the most important and consequently constituting a motive for travelling, one should have to face one's personal and interpersonal choices. Perhaps one wishes to escape from his or her personal and interpersonal surroundings, or is after personal and interpersonal rewards.

Individuals are prompted to participate in activities which they consider important. However, what is important is not the same to everyone. What is important to someone is not equally important to someone else and vice versa. Age, sex, education and other social factors influence the choice of the type of activities to be undertaken.

Before the 1990s there were few empirical studies which investigated the motives and the profile of the cultural tourist. The situation changed after the 1990s when various festivals became more popular and a number of researchers began to contribute to the recognition and comprehension of motives that urge tourists to attend festivals [17].

At this point it is important to mention the difference between tourists who travel exclusively to participate in cultural events and those who simply include visits to places of culture during their stay. Many tourist agents claim that in reality cultural tourism does not exist, since only a low percentage of international tourists would be induced to join a trip with the only motive being their participation in cultural events. On the contrary, leisure cultural tourism, including cultural activities, is more widespread. Moreover, they claim that international tourists are prompted to travel by the total of proposed activities which may

include cultural activities. Many researchers agree partly with the above observations [23, 26, 32] and in their attempts to categorize tourists and prospective cultural tourists they suggest five categories:

1. Individuals who are *very motivated* by culture. They represent 15% of tourists and will visit a place exclusively for its museums and various musical, dancing, cinema or theatrical festivals;
2. Individuals *partly motivated* by culture. They represent 30% of tourists. These tourists are engaged in numerous activities. They combine in one trip visiting places of culture, friends and relatives as well as seaside or winter resorts;
3. 20% of tourists will visit a place motivated not by cultural but by other motives such as nice seaside. Their cultural activities are usually carried out at night and they are not many in number;
4. *Random cultural tourists* constitute another 20% of the tourist market. They do not schedule any cultural activities on a single trip but they attend cultural events because of a friend or a relative, or because it is carried out at their place of residence;
5. Tourists who never undertake any cultural activities. These people constitute the 15% of the total number of the tourists.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities [33], a larger percentage of women take part in cultural activities than men. This can be explained by the fact that the position of women has improved in recent decades, both in the workplace and in family. Thus, it is natural for women to decide about the family's vacations, regarding both their duration and destination.

Cultural tourists are usually 45-65 years old. At these ages the tourist has a stable professional career, good income and time to spend on cultural travel activities. Lastly, the educational level turns to be a significant factor for participating in cultural tourism. The higher the educational level, the greater participation in cultural tourism is. This is probably related to the fact that in the last decades people's educational level has improved significantly. In the 1990s American college graduates amounted to 30% of the total population, while in previous decades they were 15% [23].

Kim, Cheng, and O'Leary [21] in their research studied the profile of cultural tourists. On

the basis of some earlier studies they concluded that the bigger number of cultural tourists belonged to the *higher social class*. They carried out a study of a sample of 29 different types of tourist destinations and the effect of tourists' social, economic and demographic characteristics on their choice of holiday destination. The results of the study showed that the attendance motives in different cultural events were defined in view of participants' socio-economic and demographic characteristics as well as distance from their permanent places of residence.

Therefore, we could say that the profile of cultural tourists in relation to the profile of those who prefer mass tourism feature the following characteristics: age bracket between 45 to 64 years, mostly women, post-secondary education, higher income, spending 10-15% more for each day of the trip and spending more on consumer goods such as souvenirs, handmade articles, clothing, etc.

The aim of the present study was to examine the demographic characteristics as differentiating factors of motivation of foreigners' participating in taught seminars of Greek traditional dancing organized in Greece. These seminars were organized by individuals and taught by Greek dancing teachers. The main research assumption was that dancing constituted an equally powerful motive for cultural tourism for all.

METHODS

The sample

Four hundred fifty one individuals, over 18 years of age, from all over the world composed the sample. They all attended seminars of Greek traditional dancing organized in various regions of Greece, e.g. Florina, Thasos, Chalkidiki, Arithea, Anthros, Limnos, Paros and Chania.

The Germans and French composed the majority of the participants, followed by the Swiss, Belgians, Austrians, and Spaniards. Even though their participation percentage was low, the numbers of Americans, Canadians, Australians and Japanese who attended the seminars should not go unnoticed (Table 1).

Women of older age and of higher educational level composed the majority of the sample. The younger participants did not seem to be interested in learning Greek traditional dances as

the majority of the sample is over fifty years old (Table 2).

Table 1. Participants' nationality

Country of origin (% of participants)			
Germany	35.7	The Netherlands	2.7
France	16.4	Norway	2.7
Switzerland	10.0	UK	2.2
Belgium	6.4	Serbia	2.2
Austria	4.4	USA	2.0
Spain	2.9	Canada	2.0
Sweden	2.7	Australia	1.6
Czech Republic	2.7	Japan	1.6
Total	100		

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of the sample

Sex (%)		Age group (%)		Education (%)	
Male	Female				
27.1	72.9	-25	2.2	Primary School	3.3
		26-35	6.2	Junior Sec. School	12.9
		36-45	13.1	Vocational School	16.4
		46-55	24.1	Secondary School	28.4
		56-65	36.3	University graduate studies	36.4
		65+	18.0	Ph.D.	2.7

The majority of subjects attended the Greek traditional dancing classes for a long time, which is an indication of the attractiveness of this particular activity. This fact is intensified by the duration of dance lessons, which for the most part lasted for many days. The participants fulfilled to the utmost the folklore goals, since a large number of them learned, besides Greek dancing, other national dances, mostly from the Balkans. The majority of the sample would extend their stay in Greece to visit and get to know other places (Table 3).

Collection and processing of data

The method of self-completed questionnaire was chosen for the investigation of participation motives. The questionnaire was constructed on the basis of professional literature [4, 10, 21, 24, 25, 34] as well as opinions of other researchers and experts who were professional teachers of Greek traditional dancing to both Greeks and foreigners.

Table 3. Participation in Greek traditional dancing classes and duration of stay in Greece

Years of attendance (%)	Duration of class days (%)	Learning other folk dances (%)		Extension of holiday stay in Greece (%)			
		Yes	No	Yes	No		
1-5	48.6	>5	9.5	68.7	31.3	58.3	41.7
6-20	43.9	6-10	38.1				
<20	7.5	11-15	29.7				
		16-20	10.9				
		<20	11.8				

The questionnaire's construction was carried out in three phases. First of all, 50 foreigners were asked to report the reasons for which they took part in the taught seminars. In this manner a first group of variables was created and completed after the review of bibliography and suggestions of other researchers and experts.

Afterwards, the questionnaire was given to 40 more foreigners who participated in the Greek traditional dancing seminars and they were asked to describe their own observations and express their own opinions. Thus, a second group of 40 variables was created. Following statistical analysis five variables were dropped, while some others were reformulated.

The questionnaire in its final form consisted of three parts including 35 variables. The first part (4 variables) examined the participants' demographic characteristics. The second part (4 variables) included information on their stay duration in Greece and their connections with traditional dancing. The third part included questions about their attendance motives, e.g. *I participate in the lessons because.....* It consisted of 27 variables grouped according to the following seven factors: boredom rejection, social relationships, culture, skills improvement, fitness, challenge, and new experience.

Each variable was measured by on a five-point Likert scale from *not significant* (1) to *very significant* (5).

Procedure

The majority of the questionnaires were filled in the researchers' presence. Only a small number was sent by post. The questionnaire was anonymous and the researchers assured the participants that their answers would be used exclusively for the study's purpose.

RESULTS

Questionnaire validity and reliability

In order to control the validity of the questionnaire, a factor analysis was conducted. From the analysis results, as they were presented at a recent international congress, [15] seven factors were identified. The first factor (boredom rejection) is related to feeling well and relaxed from the anxieties of everyday life through participation in cultural activities. The second factor (social relationships) shows a desire to spend time with other people with whom participants share common interests. The third factor (culture) is related to their contact with Greek culture through traditional dance. The fourth factor (skills improvement) portrays the willingness of the participants to improve their dancing abilities and skills by learning new dances. The fifth factor (fitness) shows that traditional dancing is also viewed as a means of physical exercise. The sixth factor (challenge) signifies that the respondents consider the fact that they take part in such activities as a kind of challenge, as well as an opportunity to gain new experience (seventh factor).

A reliability analysis was performed in order to examine the reliability of the items constituting the seven factors under study. The reliability test was based on Cronbach's alpha calculation. Its results pertaining to the aforementioned factors are showed in Table 4. The analysis showed that the factors had a satisfactory reliability score ($\alpha > 0.60$).

Seven new variables were created which represent the seven factors of motivation to participate in traditional Greek dancing seminars. The new variables derived from the added score of the questions for each factor divided by the number of question items in each factor (Table 4).

Table 4. Reliability analysis of the factors, means and standard deviation

Factors	Cronbach's alpha	Mean	SD
Boredom rejection	0.874	2.97	0.63
Social relations	0.918	2.89	0.82
Culture	0.849	3.14	0.75
Skills improvement	0.886	2.74	0.87
Fitness	0.773	2.58	0.90
Challenge	0.753	2.52	0.93
New experience	0.701	2.07	1.00

The factors *culture* and *boredom rejection* were experienced by our sample with the greatest intensity. The factors *social relationships* and *skills improvement* presented the next higher rates. Slightly lower rates presented the factors of *fitness* and *challenge*, while the lowest rate, and consequently the lowest percentage of preference, presented the *new experience* factor.

Seven Man Whitney U tests for independent samples were conducted to examine any statistically significant differences in attendance factors in view of participants' sex. The results showed that sex did not constitute a differential factor.

Seven variance analyses (one-way ANOVA) were conducted, to examine whether there are any statistically significant differences as to the participation factors owing to the participants' age. The variance analyses for independent samples as far as the seven participation factors are concerned, revealed a statistically significant effect of the factor *age* on the factors *skills improvement* with $F_{(5,450)} = 9.62$ $p < 0.05$, *challenge* with $F_{(5,450)} = 11.69$ $p < 0.05$ and *new experience* with $F_{(5,448)} = 36.01$ $p < 0.005$. Scheffe's method test revealed significant differences for all three factors between subjects aged > 25 and subjects aged 36-45, 46-55, 56-65 and < 65 years old, and on the other hand, between subjects aged 26-35 and those aged 36-45, 46-55, 56-65 and < 65 years old (Table 5).

The analysis of arithmetic means shows that for the factor *skills improvement* the age groups > 25 and 26-35 seem to take part in the seminars aspiring to improve their dancing skills to a lower degree than the age groups of 36-45, 46-55, 56-65 and < 65 years. On the contrary, for factors *challenge* and *new experience* the age groups > 25 and 26-35 seem to participate and perceive their attendance as a challenge to discover new experiences to a greater

degree than the age groups 36-45, 46-55, 56-65 and < 65 years.

Table 5. Mean and standard deviation of three participation factors by age group

Age	Skills improvement	Challenge	New experience
>25 Mean	1.8	3.60	3.75
SD	0.36	0.31	0.63
26-35 Mean	1.88	3.55	3.84
SD	0.52	0.58	0.78
36-45 Mean	2.77	2.53	1.79
SD	1.01	0.94	0.80
46-55 Mean	2.75	2.42	1.81
SD	0.89	0.94	0.78
56-65 Mean	2.87	2.43	1.94
SD	0.75	0.89	0.85
<65 Mean	2.84	2.37	2.01
SD	0.86	0.86	1.01

Seven variance analyses (one-way ANOVA) were conducted, to examine whether there are any statistically significant differences as to the participation factors owing to the participants' education. No statistically significant differences owing to the educational level were found for any of the studied factors.

Seven variance analyses (one-way ANOVA) were conducted to examine whether there are any statistically significant differences as to the factors owing to the participants' professional career. No statistically significant differences owing to participants' career were found for any of the studied factors.

Seven variance analyses (one-way ANOVA) were conducted, to examine whether there are any statistically significant differences as to the factors owing to the years of attendance. A statistically significant effect of the factor *years of attendance* on the factor *new experience* was found with $F_{(3,054)} = 3.054$ $p < 0.05$. Scheffe's multiple comparisons test revealed statistically significant differences only between subjects attending seminars for 1-5 years and those attending them for more than 20 years. The means comparison revealed that those who attended for more than 20 years participated in the seminars to a lower degree ($M = 1.60$ & $SD = 0.61$) than those who attended for 1-5 years ($M = 2.17$ & $SD = 1.07$), if their motive was to gain new experiences.

DISCUSSION

There is no doubt that folk dancing is, as a social practice, a means of expression of culture if we assume culture is everything in peoples' everyday life. The folklore movement has brought to the surface lost aspects of the traditional way of life as well as aspects of urban people's occupation with various expressions of traditional culture. Folklore has been a reason to travel and get acquainted with foreign cultures, traditional dances and folklore music. The movement of ethnic music is one of products of folklore.

Greece and Greek traditional culture have been a destination since the emergence of folklore, both for anthropologists but folklorists. For thousands of foreigners Greek dancing has been and still is a means of keeping in touch with Greek traditions. The first taught seminars of Greek dancing addressed to foreigners, were organized in the mid-1970s in Rhodes and in Astros Kinourias. Today, private seminars exclusively for foreigners are organized throughout the year in which Greek traditional dancing is taught by Greek dancing teachers. These seminars are attended by approximately 10,000 participants [22].

The results of our study show that Europeans constitute the overwhelming majority of the sample. Most European participants come from Germany, France and Switzerland. Though much smaller, the participation of individuals from the United States of America, Canada, Japan and Australia should not go unnoticed either. Especially the participation of the Japanese is encouraging since it gives hope for an increase in their number given that the tourist motives of the Japanese are mostly cultural [3]. However, the number of Australian participants is not satisfactory since we would expect it to be larger due to the numerous Greek community in Australia.

The study results as far as the demographic characteristics of the sample are concerned correspond with results of other studies [10, 21, 25, 33], and they offer the opportunity to claim that the profile of the sample fully matches the profile of the cultural tourist as provided by the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities [33].

In our study college educated middle-aged women composed the majority of the sample. The large attendance of women in cultural and artistic activities might be due to the improvement of

women's position in the last decades [33]. Perhaps it is due to the western view that dancing is an activity which is more related to female rather than male nature.

It is commonly accepted that folklore experiences difficulties in attracting the interest of young people. Therefore, it is only natural that individuals who participate in such activities are of middle or older age. This is also shown by the results of the present study as the sample consisted mainly of older individuals. It appears that traditional dancing is not a particularly attractive activity for young people, who demonstrate preferences for more intense and energetic activities.

Traditional dancing is an activity which offers itself to the whole family since the majority of the sample consists of family people and attracts individuals of high educational standards. The study results also show that participants' sound financial status is a necessary prerequisite for seminar participation due to high travel and course tuition costs.

Three findings of the study are of immediate interest to those involved in tourist activity: the majority of the sample being long-term participants, the duration of lessons, and extension of stay for recreational tourism. These findings indicate that the participants constitute a stable customer basis and that these seminars can be utilized by tourist agencies to attract more tourists.

Greek traditional dancing is an activity which can be approached in different ways and it offers multiple benefits to anyone who chooses to delve into it. Dancing represents an opportunity for people to get together and meet new cultures (culture) and also improves their dancing skills by learning new dances (skills improvement). People take part in the seminars because they expect to relax and relieve themselves from the anxiety and stress of daily life (boredom rejection) or to be with other people who share the same interests with them (social relationships). In recent years researchers have studied the effects of traditional dancing practice on human health [16, 28]. Choosing traditional dancing as a pastime provides an opportunity to preserve or improve good health (fitness). Finally, the participation in this specific activity is both a challenge and opportunity to gain new experiences.

According to the results of our study and the Lunberg motives model [24], dancing is an

educational motive for taking part in tourist activities. Moreover, it constitutes a motive for relaxation and pleasure seeking as well as for getting acquainted with new places and cultures.

The results of our study correspond with the results of Usual and Hagan [34] and Bansal and Eiselt [4]. According to those authors people travel to escape from daily routine and to live new experiences, while the local culture and history are the factors which attract them to choose a specific place. The participants under study took part in the seminars expecting to escape from their daily routine and hoping to gain new experiences by means of acquaintance with new cultures and history.

Also the obtained results are similar to those by Donnât [10] both in terms of participation motives as well as their evaluation. Both studies revealed that people took part in such activities mostly with the conviction that they kept stress and every day tensions at bay by having fun, and that they would have fun with friends and individuals with whom they shared common interests in learning to dance.

Similar study results were also attained by McCleary, Weaver and Meng [25]. According to that study the motive factors are *learning dancing – improvement of dancing dexterities, originality and challenge, sociability – group and excitement – new experience*. The concurrence of the results might be due to the resemblance of the samples (similar percentages of men and women, same ages and all subjects traveling to take part in dancing activities). The different evaluation of the factors might be due to the different content of activities in McCleary, Weaver and Meng (social dance).

Participants' age was the only demographic characteristic determining to a great extent the reasons for participation in the seminars. Thus, the younger participants (under 25 and 26-35 years old) take part in the seminars aspiring to improve their dancing skills to a smaller degree than the older do. This means that the younger are not motivated to attend the dance seminars by their desire to improve themselves in dancing and other attendance motives should be sought. According to Yuan and McDonald [35] escape and pursuit of novelty are sufficient reasons for someone to travel. These are the exact reasons for which the age groups under 25 and 26-35 years old travelled to Greece in order to participate in Greek traditional dancing seminars. The aforementioned age groups

perceive their attendance at the seminars as a challenge and opportunity to enjoy new experiences to a greater degree than the older age groups. On the contrary, participants' sex, educational level and profession do not seem to be decisive differentiating factors of attendance motives.

The initial hypothesis of the study is acceptable and Greek traditional dancing can be considered a strong motive for cultural tourism.

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