

Cultural Tourism Behaviour and Preferences among the Live-performing Arts Audience: an Application of the Univorous–Omnivorous Framework

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ABSTRACT

This study uses the omnivorous–univorous theoretical framework of the arts marketing studies to identify relationships between the live-performing arts and cultural tourism behaviours and preferences. Patrons of a major performing arts centre were segmented in three groups — *sporadic*, *univores* and *omnivores* — and examined regarding their cultural tourism behaviours and preferences. Statistical analysis revealed significant differences among groups in terms of demographic characteristics, art and culture consumption and cultural tourism behaviour and preferences. Study results add to the body of knowledge of tourism, suggesting that the culture omnivorous consumption behaviour reported in art marketing studies is also relevant to cultural tourism. Results suggest the existence of omnivorous cultural tourists seeking a wide variety of cultural products and experiences. The identification of a group of individuals with little interest and consumption of culture, including cultural travel destinations, also emerges from this study. Copyright © 2009 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism and arts have become important industries as their products have been standardised and adapted to the masses (Adorno and Rabinback, 1975). Studies suggest that relationships between arts and tourism organisations, in terms of implementing common marketing strategies (e.g. activities, priorities and objectives), can reciprocally benefit both industries (Tighe, 1986; Hughes, 2000; Hughes, 2002; Smith 2003; McKercher *et al.*, 2005). For example, tourists drawn to art/cultural venues can augment their market size, sales and sponsorship appeal (Smith, 2003). In turn, including the arts as part of the tourism offer can sharpen the destination image and extend the tourism season (Tighe, 1986; Hughes, 2000; Zeppel and Hal, 2001).

To design and implement common marketing strategies is necessary to start finding relationships between art consumers and cultural tourists. This is especially important for the cultural tourism market as current marketing strategies 'may be more based on relatively limited data and more on guesswork than fact', mainly because the market size and the tourists motivations are uncertain (Hughes and Allen, 2005, p. 176). Some studies have identified similar socio-economic structures (i.e. education and income) and motivational drivers (i.e. emotional, social and intellectual influences) between art consumers and cultural tourists (Tighe, 1986; Dolnicar, 2002;

Bunting, 2005). Other studies identify a group of tourists highly attracted by a wide range of cultural experiences (Formica and Uysal, 1998; Dolnicar, 2002; McKercher, 2002; McKercher and Du Crois, 2003; Guzman *et al.*, 2006; Kim *et al.*, 2007). However, a deep understanding of the cultural tourism market and the relationships between art consumers and cultural tourists is still needed (Hughes, 2000; Dolnicar, 2002; Hargrove, 2002; McKercher, 2002; Smith, 2003), especially in terms of consumer behaviour and preferences.

This study examines the live-performing arts consumers to identify relationships between their art and tourism behaviours and preferences. Specifically, this study uses the omnivorous-univorous framework to segment consumers of a major live-performing arts venue and examines whether attributes of this framework is also reflected on their cultural tourism indicators (i.e. behaviours and preferences). The omnivorous-univorous consumption framework postulates that individuals in higher socio-economic strata have a greater and wider taste in the events they attend (Peterson, 1992; Peterson and Kern, 1996; Holbrook *et al.*, 2002; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez 2004).

Understanding whether cultural omnivoreness is also reflected in cultural tourism is important as further exploration of the omnivore-univore framework is needed in other domains of cultural consumption (Alderson *et al.*, 2007; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). This is especially critical as different behavioural patterns and segments have been identified in certain forms of cultural representations, such as the visual arts (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). Further, the recent emergence of a third group of 'non-consumers' of visual arts (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007), live performances, museums/galleries, literary events and cinema/theatre (Alderson *et al.*, 2007) urges to examine whether such little cultural interest is also reflected towards cultural travel destinations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The live-performing arts audience and the omnivorous-univorous argument

The performing arts include live and non-live venues of 'high', 'popular' and 'folk' music,

opera, theatre and dance (McCarthy *et al.*, 2001). Three research lines have been used to examine the live-performing arts audience. The first one examines patterns of consumption in terms of number of consumers, consumption frequency and audience preferences to measure and profile the market. According to these studies, the performing arts are a well-liked leisure-time activity in the USA (Mitchel, 1984; McCarthy *et al.*, 2001). A second line of research focuses on identifying socio-economic attributes influencing consumption of live performing arts. It is widely recognised, for example, that art consumers represent upper-middle and upper socio-economic persons (Tighe, 1986; Hughes, 2000; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2004). Education, after controlling for income, appears a strong influencer of consumption of certain types of arts, such as live performances (McCarthy *et al.*, 2001). However, Chan and Goldthorpe (2005) found that education affects music consumption, but not cinema or theatre. Even though some studies suggest that intrinsic attributes are likely not the basis for different patterns of art consumption (Bunting, 2005; Bernstein, 2007), gender seems to influence consumption of performing arts with more female attending these types of events (López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2004; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2005). Art education and early exposure to the arts during childhood also increases consumption because previous experience provides consumers with the comfort of knowing what to expect and how to behave in artistic contexts (Hughes, 2000). It is also suggested that those who are single, divorced or separated, or those in their middle stage of life are more likely to attend performing arts events (Mitchel, 1984).

The third line of research focuses on developing market segments based on the frequency or variety of live performing arts consumption. For example, McCarthy *et al.* (2001) and Mitchel (1984) segmented consumers based on frequency of consumption, identifying those that never attend performing arts, the casual attendees and the aficionados or enthusiasts. Then, these authors examined differences in their motivations, genre preferences, and art awareness and knowledge. More recent research has developed a segmentation based on the variety of art consumption, introducing the omnivorous-

univorous framework. This argument suggests that individuals in higher socio-economic strata — *omnivores* — have a wider taste regarding cultural consumption than persons comprising lower socio-economic strata — *univores* — (Holbrook *et al.*, 2002; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2004). Thus, *omnivores* attend more classical music and opera as well as popular music than *univores* who have a more exclusive taste for traditional and folk art events (Peterson, 1992; Peterson and Kern, 1996; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez 2004).

Omnivorous behaviour appears to be a response to a contemporary globalised, socially mobile and multicultural society where cultural expressions are highly valued and rewarded compared with the previous dominant *snobbism* (Van Eijck, 2000; Coulangeon and Lemel, 2007). Being female and amount of education have also been positive associated with omnivorous–univorous consumption (Van Eijck, 2000). Although women are likely to attend more often and a wider variety of live-performing arts (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2005), differences between genders vanish with higher education levels (López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2004) and with certain types of cultural representations, such as the visual arts (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). Alderson *et al.* (2007) found that social status, defined by the occupation of married/cohabiting couples, influence omnivorous cultural consumption in the USA. Omnivore–univore differences are also found in different types of live performances. Regarding theatre, dance and the visual arts, Chan and Goldthorpe (2005, 2007) found that the chances of being *omnivore* increases with economic status, educational qualifications and the family life-cycle. This study found that families with children younger than five years old have lower consumption than families in other life-stages, suggesting that the effects of age previously found should be interpreted with caution. Living with small children reduces leisure time and increases the cost of attending performing arts (López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2004).

However, the omnivorous–univorous framework is not exempt to critique, especially because recent studies suggest that other types of consumers need to be recognised. The omnivorous–univorous dichotomy was chal-

lenged when Alderson *et al.* (2007) identified a group of individuals (i.e. ‘inactives’) who are neither *omnivores* nor *univores*, and show a very low engagement in any cultural activity, including popular ones. Similarly, Chan and Goldthorpe (2007) were unable to replicate their previous findings on theatre, cinema and dance within the visual arts. While they found *omnivores*, the largest identified group within the visual arts was ‘inactives’. In addition, Chan and Goldthorpe (2007) identified the ‘paucivores’, who although cultural consumers, do not fit as either *omnivores* or *univores*. Tampubolon (2008) has also questioned this framework, suggesting that there is more than one group of *omnivores* and that there has been a misconceptualisation of the *univores*. He argues that individuals in the latter group do not have a strong preference for a limited number of items, but rather a strong dislike for many items. It is important to note that these critiques are not intended to demerit the omnivorous–univorous framework, but to encourage a deeper look into their constructs (Tampubolon, 2008) and to test its applicability in different forms of cultural manifestations (Alderson *et al.*, 2007; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007).

Cultural tourism and cultural tourists

The ambiguity and continuing evolution of the term *culture* has resulted in many definitions of cultural tourism. A contemporary understanding of culture, as the appreciation of people’s way of living, classifies numerous activities under the heading of cultural tourism (Smith, 2003), including those that are either tangible (e.g. historic town) or intangible (e.g. appreciation of way of living) in nature (Richards, 1996). Examples of cultural tourism include visitation of museums, aquariums, performing arts centres, archaeological and historical sites, and religious centres and zoos, comprising a unique combination of features focusing on historic, cultural and/or heritage elements (Bonn *et al.*, 2007). This study views cultural tourism as visitation to appreciate any form of social, artistic or intellectual activity, including visiting indigenous communities, heritage and religious sites and attending performing arts, festivals and special events and gastronomic centres.

Cultural tourism is still in its infancy (McKercher, 2002), and most studies have focused on understanding three areas: the pull factor of different cultural attractions, the composition attributes of the cultural tourist and the identification of different segments of cultural tourists. Regarding the pull capability of cultural attractions, it is generally recognised that art museums and galleries are big draws for tourists, especially in large cities (Smith, 2003). However, the pull effect of performing arts venues is controversial. Smith (2003) argues that these venues have little effect in attracting non-local clientele because of the rotational nature of performances among cities. In contrast, Hughes has consistently reported that theatres have a significant role in attracting tourists (Hughes, 1998, 2000, 2002). However, this difference may be due in part to certain locations, such as New York and London, which are recognised as important theatre cities. Also, its significance as a tourism attraction may be not as notorious because of its relatively diminutive size compared with other forms of cultural attractions, such as heritage sites or because its development as a tourism destination requires more 'westernised' and uniformity efforts (Hughes and Allen, 2005). Other cultural attractions, especially festivals, are also widely recognised for drawing large number of tourists (Anwar and Sohail, 2004; Richards and Ryan, 2004; Kim *et al.*, 2007; Getz, 2008).

Research also examined the composition attributes of cultural tourists, concluding that age, education and income are positively associated with participation in cultural tourism (Hughes, 2000; Kim *et al.*, 2007). Higher levels of formal education, cultural competence and increased incomes are common attributes among heritage tourists and art tourists (Hargrove, 2002; Smith, 2003). As a result, cultural tourists are often viewed as a very attractive market because they tend to spend more money during their visits and are also less constrained by tourism seasonality (Dolnicar, 2002; Hargrove, 2002). Socio-economic characteristics also explain visiting behaviour in different cultural attractions (Hargrove, 2002). For example, female and middle-aged people are the most frequent attendees to festivals and events, while high and middle income groups

are more likely to attend musical attractions (Kim *et al.*, 2007). As a result, many destinations interested in developing the cultural niche tourism market have a desire to attract middle-aged or older, wealthy and highly educated tourists (Hughes and Allen, 2005).

Several studies have pursued different segmentations to identify and profile the various types of cultural tourists. For example, Dolnicar (2002) identified nine types of cultural tourists based on their participation in cultural activities: standard culture tour participant; super active culture freak; inactive culture tourist; organised excursion lover; event-focused; individual culture explorers; super lean culture tour participant; theatre, musical and opera lovers and the organised culture tourists. From her nine types, two are especially relevant for this study: (1) the *event focused* tourists, interested in local or regional events and (2) the *theatre, musical and opera lovers* who tend to attend live performances at least once during their tourism stays. In turn, McKercher (2002) and McKercher and Du Crois (2003) developed another classification combining visit motivations with depth of engagement resulting in five types of cultural tourists. From their typology, the *purposeful* cultural tourists are applicable to this study as they are by far the greatest consumer of intellectually challenging experience, with preferences for museums, art galleries and the fine arts. Van der Ark and Richards (2006) combined levels of participation with enjoyment in cultural activities to identify three types of cultural tourists: The '*low participation and high attractiveness*' type had a relatively infrequent participation but high enjoyment in cultural attractions; the '*high participation and high attractiveness*' highly participated and were very attracted in cultural activities and the '*high participation and low attractiveness*' who although participate in cultural activities, do not find them very attractive.

Finally, another set of studies have also developed motivation-based segments of cultural tourists. Given the uncertainty of overall cultural tourism motivations (Hughes and Allen, 2005), these efforts are circumscribed to specific cultural activities, mainly pertaining festivals and events (e.g. Formica and Uysal, 1998; Chang, 2006). In the Spoleto festival,

Formica and Uysal (1998) differentiated the *enthusiasts* who were eager for cultural experiences from the *moderates* who were less culture motivated. Similarly, Guzman *et al.* (2006) identified the *binding* and *blazing* tourists who participate in cultural activities and unique festivals when travelling.

The arts and cultural tourism link: need for further exploration

Suggestions to foster relationships between the arts and tourism industries are not recent. An early approach to this linkage was based on market compatibility and opportunities for joint marketing. Studies suggest that the socio-economic structure of arts consumers and cultural tourists, with both groups largely composed of well-educated and high-income people, is an appealing market for the travel and tourism industry (Tighe, 1986; Dolnicar, 2002). A more recent motivational approach maintains that link based on the emotional, social and intellectual influences of leisure participation that concurrently drive arts/cultural participation and cultural tourism (Bunting, 2005).

Smith (2003) summarises the positive contributions that the arts–tourism link can create for both industries. Tourism can increase revenues from ticket sales and entrance fees that can sustain the arts and cultural venues. Tourism can also expand and augment the arts market and increase sponsorship appeal. Reciprocally, the tourism industry may receive benefits because arts can enhance the destination image, revitalise tourism destinations and add to the facility and service line available to tourists. Including the arts as part of the tourism offering can sharpen and strengthen the destination appeal (Hughes, 2000; Zeppel and Hal, 2001). In addition, Tighe (1986) suggests that the arts offer an opportunity to extend tourism seasons and create new shoulder seasons.

Relatively little has been done to better understand the art/culture–tourism relationship and even less to design and implement co-operative marketing (Hughes, 2000). In a study conducted among state arts agencies and travel offices, Tighe (1986) discovered that although there was interest among arts and

tourism agencies in co-operating, little was done to develop strategic marketing and management partnerships. More recently, McKercher *et al.* (2005) identified seven types of relationship styles that could exist between tourism and cultural heritage sectors in urban tourism destinations. Although in such study, partnerships emerged as an option to foster sustainability and reciprocal benefits for the tourism and cultural sectors, participants preferred parallel management practices with little interaction between sectors.

Similarly, little has been done to shorten the distance between the art/culture and tourism disciplines in terms of applicability of constructs and frameworks. For example, the prevalence of the omnivore–univore framework in the tourism field has been little explored. Toivonen (n.d.) conducted a notable study with tourists from 21 countries, finding that some tourists (*omnivores*) attend more cultural attractions and events. His study also found that foreign tourists are often more omnivorous than local visitors. Although not explicitly addressed as a tourism activity, Chan and Goldthorpe (2007) included visiting cultural festivals when examining cultural consumption of the visual arts in England, concluding that the omnivore–univore framework was partially rejected for the consumption of this form of culture. The absence of *univores* and the emergence of a dominant group of people (‘inactives’) with very little cultural engagement suggested that further examination is needed to assess the validity of the omnivore–univore framework in different forms of culture. Hence, these recent findings urge for an examination of the omnivore–univore framework within cultural tourism and to examine whether a group of individuals with little or no interest on this form of tourism exist.

STUDY METHODS

This study surveyed patrons of the Wharton Center for Performing Arts (Wharton Center) to identify their arts consumption levels at-home and cultural tourism preferences. The Wharton Center is a non-profit facility situated on the campus of Michigan State University (USA). With over 25 years in existence, it offers

more than 50 attractions each year, including Broadway shows, rock concerts, classical music and student productions. The sample for this study included the members of the Wharton E-club, an electronic database comprising the email addresses and other information of each ticket purchaser since 2000. At the time of this study, there were 39684 Wharton E-club members. Although the Wharton Center is the largest live-performing arts centre in Michigan, the generalisability of the study cannot be presumed.

Research instrument and data collection

Based on the existing literature, a survey draft was developed in consultation with various Wharton Center staff and then was distributed for review among university faculty. The survey content was modified based on those reviews, then pre-tested for readability and content validity. The survey questioned e-club members about their lifestyles and their consumption and participation of arts, culture and tourism. Specifically, the survey collected information regarding attendance and ticket purchases to live performances; participation in arts and culture-related activities or disciplines; purchase of arts and cultural products and employment of artists, performers and culture-related professionals; motivations and activities embarked during recent pleasure trips; contributions to art, culture and heritage causes; sources of information concerning cultural events and general media habits; artistic and cultural experiences of respondent during childhood; artistic and cultural experiences of children living at home; and socio-economic and household characteristics. Given the availability of the E-club list, a Web-based survey was selected as the best option.

During January 2007, the survey was announced in the Wharton Center's electronic newsletter sent to 39684 Wharton E-club members. The newsletter described the survey purposes, incentive and instructions. A relatively small percentage of the email addresses (673) were undeliverable; 39011 were valid. About a third of the Wharton E-club members (13503) opened — clicked — this electronic newsletter. Once they clicked on the survey link, the participants accessed a main page

where the purpose of the study, the incentive and the confidentiality procedures were explained. A survey reminder was included in a subsequent E-newsletter on 29 January 2007. The survey remained opened for 10 days and produced 4744 respondents.

Development of study segments

This study deemed important to develop a segmentation comprising frequency (casuals versus aficionados) and variety (*univores* versus *omnivores*) of art consumption as they have been the basis of performing arts market segmentations, as well as recent findings in this area. Hence, this study segments the respondents based on the frequency and variety of live performances attended at-home in the last 12 months. In an effort to develop a segmentation that characterises current live-performing consumers, the small proportion (6.5%) of respondents who did not attend any live performance during the previous 12 months was excluded from the analysis.

Frequency of live-performance attendance in the last 12 months was measured using a scale variable (Table 1). Variety was measured using 17 dichotomous variables representing a wide range of live performances categories, such as opera, ballet, ethnic dance, jazz concert and symphony among others.¹ A *variety index* (ranging from 1 to 17) was calculated. This index was then used to construct a frequency/variety (f/v) ratio. The first segment of respondents (34.3%; $n = 1445$), named *sporadic*, was constructed by those who attended one or two live performances during the last 12 months. Those who attended at least three live performances in the last 12 months ($n = 2767$) were segmented in two groups (*univore* and *omnivore*) based on the logical break points of the f/v ratio. *Univore* is the smallest segment (29.9%; $n = 1261$) and is composed of respondents who attended at least three live

¹The 17 categories queried in the survey and its occurrence were: Play (55.0%), Musical (78.8%), Opera (7.2%), Ballet (8.8%), Modern dance (5.8%), Ethnic dance (3.4%), Folk dance (1.9%), Folk and ethnic concert (10.0%), Jazz concert (15.2%), Blues concert (9.5%), Symphony (17.2%), Country concert (10.6%), New and experimental concert (2.6%), Rock concert (23.9%), Hip hop concert (1.6%), World concert (2.9%) and Other (24.1%).

Table 1. Number and percentages of the live performance frequency and variety indicators used to develop the study segments.

	N	Per cent
Number of performances attended ($n = 4212$)		
One	598	14.2 ^a
Two	847	20.1 ^a
Three	597	14.2
Four-five	909	21.6
Six to nine	726	17.2
Ten or more	535	12.7
Variety index ($n = 4150$)		
1 category	1023	24.7
2 categories	1216	29.3
3 categories	841	20.3
4 categories	577	13.9
5 categories	305	7.3
6 or more categories	188	4.5
f/v ratio ($n = 2767$) ^{b,c}		
Less than 0.75	1261	45.6
0.75 or greater	1506	54.4
Study segments ($n = 4212$)		
Sporadic (1–2 performances attended)	1445	34.3
Univores (3+ performances and <0.75 f/v ratio)	1261	29.9
Omnivores (3+ performances with ≥ 0.75 f/v ratio)	1506	35.8

^aThese respondents become the first — *sporadic* — study segment.

^bOnly includes those respondents having attended at least three performances in the last 12 months.

^cThese respondents were used to develop the second and third study segments (*univores* and *omnivores*).
f/v, frequency/variety.

performances but within a limited variety ($f/v < 0.75$). *Omnivore* is composed by respondents who (35.8%; $n = 1506$) attended at least three live performances representing a wide variety of categories ($f/v \geq 0.75$). This segmentation does not infer any *a priori* association between the level of attendance to live entertainment and any other respondents' characteristics, such as income level, type of event preferred or main tourism motivator.

Analysis

Chi-square and analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were performed to determine if any significant differences exist among the three segments (i.e. *sporadic*, *univore* and *omnivore*). Pairwise comparisons and Tukey-B *post hoc* tests were performed on any statistically significant chi-

square or ANOVA. Independent variables used in these tests included demographics (i.e. age, gender, education and income), and family life-cycle (i.e. whether there are children living at home and retirement status). These variables were considered potential determinants of demand behaviours as previous research has determined these influence omnivorous cultural consumption. Retirees, for example, may have both more disposable income and more flexible free time to attend live performance events compared with parents raising young children. The characteristics of the live performances attended (e.g. types and location of events attended) was also analysed.

Then, differences in tourism behaviour and preferences were analysed across the three segments to identify associations between attending live-performing arts and cultural

tourism. Tourism behaviour indicators included number of pleasure trips during the last 12 months, and primary trip purposes and activities. To accurately reflect current tourism behaviour, only those respondents who took a pleasure trip in the last 12 months to destinations at least 50 miles away from home were included for this analysis. Tourism preferences were measured through the importance of 10 types of cultural attractions in choosing destinations. A principal factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to reduce these attractions to a smaller number of dimensions (i.e. factors). Then differences in factor regression scores were examined across segments. A listwise method was used to handle missing values. Eigenvalues over one and loadings over 0.50 were used as a threshold in the factor analysis. Cronbach's reliability analysis was performed to test internal consistency of the variables comprising the factors identified.

RESULTS

The majority of survey respondents (73.5%) were female. The large gender gap may be explained by the dominant role of women as participants and decision-makers of attendance for live-performance events (Kotler and Bernstein, 1997). The majority of respondents (57.6%) were baby-boomers, at least 45 years old. They were highly educated and also had relatively high household incomes. Over two thirds (66.2%) had at least a four-year college degree and over a quarter (28.6%) had a post-graduate degree. Less than a quarter (21.5%) had family incomes below \$50,000. The majority of the respondents were either single (23.1%) or married (36.7%) with no children living at home. Almost two thirds (64.9%) were employed full-time and only a small proportion was either retirees (12.4%) or students (8.6%).

Comparing the *sporadic*, *univores* and *omnivores* consumers of live-performing arts

Few statistically significant demographic differences exist across the *sporadic*, *univore* and *omnivore* segments. The *sporadics* are significantly younger ($\chi^2 = 87.123$, $p < 0.001$) and have lower family incomes ($\chi^2 = 28.180$, $p < 0.001$) than the other consumers of live-performing

arts, indicating that age and income are related to consumption frequency (Table 2). The *omnivorous* are highly educated, having significantly more members with college and post-graduate degrees ($\chi^2 = 122.680$, $p < 0.001$), confirming previous research (Van Eijck, 2000; Holbrook *et al.*, 2002; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2004). Conversely, *sporadic* have significantly less years of formal education than either of the two other segments. Significant family life-cycle differences exist across the three segments ($\chi^2 = 42.150$, $p < 0.001$). As was expected, the *sporadic* have a higher proportion (46.1%) of individuals with children living at home suggesting less free leisure time (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2005) and possibly not as much unallocated disposable income. The *sporadic* also have the lowest proportion of retired persons (9.0%) and the largest proportion of members who are employed full-time (67.5%). Conversely, *univores* have the highest proportion of members without children living at home (64.6%), the lowest percentage of persons employed full-time (60.5%) and the highest proportion of retired individuals (16.1%). No significant differences were found in the gender and percentage of student members across the three segments. As found among Spaniards (López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2004), gender differences tend to vanish with higher levels of education.

As expected, the three groups have significantly different behaviour and preferences regarding the live-performance events attended at-home during the last 12 months. Musicals, plays and rock concerts are the most popular events attended across all three segments (Table 3). A significant larger proportion of *omnivores* attend these three events compared with the other two segments again demonstrating their more eclectic taste in cultural activities ($p < 0.001$). They also attend more live-performance events outside their state of residence ($\chi^2 = 42.150$, $p < 0.001$) suggesting an interesting implication for tourism purposes. *Sporadic* consumers, possibly because of income and family life-cycle (i.e. children) constraints, are less likely to attend cultural events in states other than where they reside. *Omnivores* attend significantly more free live performances than the other two groups ($\chi^2 = 434.79$, $p < 0.001$) and paid less on average for their live-entertainment

Table 2. Socio-economic characteristics among the *sporadic*, *univores* and *omnivores*.

	Sporadic (34.3%)	Univores (29.9%)	Omnivores (35.8%)	Significance
Age ($n = 4192$)				
Less than 35 years	26.5	19.0	19.5	$\chi^2 = 87.1, p < 0.001^a$
35–44	24.6	18.4	18.4	
45–54	27.5	28.5	32.4	
55 or older	21.4	34.1	29.7	
Education ($n = 4198$)				
Some school	6.1	3.5	1.9	$\chi^2 = 122.7, p < 0.001^b$
Some college	36.5	29.1	24.8	
Four-year college degree	37.0	36.4	38.8	
Post-graduate degree	20.4	31.0	34.4	
Household income (3756)				
Less than \$50 000	25.1	19.3	19.4	$\chi^2 = 28.2, p < 0.001^a$
\$50 000–\$99 999	43.6	42.8	40.8	
\$100 000 or more	31.4	37.9	39.7	
Family life-cycle ($n = 4212$)				
Single without children at home	21.2	23.7	23.7	$\chi^2 = 42.2, p < 0.001^b$
Single with children at home	4.8	4.0	5.8	
Married without children at home	32.7	40.9	37.3	
Married with children at home	41.3	31.4	33.2	
Occupational status ($n = 4196$) ^c				
Full-time employee	67.5	60.5	66.0	$\chi^2 = 15.6, p < 0.001^d$
Retired	9.0	16.1	12.5	$\chi^2 = 30.7, p < 0.001^b$

^aPairwise comparisons show differences only between the *sporadic* and the other groups.

^bPairwise comparisons show differences between all groups.

^cPercentages do not add to 100 because these occupation status were asked as dummy variables.

^dPairwise comparisons show difference only between *univores* and other groups.

tickets ($F = 50.737, p < 0.001$). Greater involvement with the arts of this segment, for example in terms of networks and memberships, could explain their greater capacity to obtain reduced price or even free tickets for live performances. In sum, the *omnivores* attend a wider variety of live performances and they attend more of these events outside their state of residence. They are avid attendees of free (e.g. music in parks, school performances) as well as for-a-fee events, adding further confirmatory evidence to the omnivorous art/culture consumption argument.

The role of arts and cultural attractions in selecting tourism destinations across *sporadic*, *univores* and *omnivores*

Respondents to the survey were asked to indicate the importance, on a Likert-type scale

ranging from not important (1) to extremely important (5), of 10 types of tourism attractions in their selection of tourism destinations. The average importance scores showed that historical attractions, sites or districts (4.09); gardens, zoos and aquariums (4.06); and cultural fairs, festivals and events (3.81) are most important when selecting destinations to visit as tourists (Table 4). A principal component factor analysis was performed on the importance ratings to more efficiently compare the role of these attractions across the three segments. The varimax-rotated factor matrix produced three activity dimensions accounting for 60.1% of the variance. These dimensions were named based on the attractions that loaded on them: (D1) art and cultural attractions; (D2) heritage attractions and (D3) natural attractions. Table 5 shows the three dimensions, the attractions that loaded on each dimension

Table 3. Attendance behaviour to live-performance events during the last 12 months.

	Sporadic (34.3%)	Univores (29.9%)	Omnivores (35.8%)	Significance ^a
Event categories attended (<i>n</i> = 4212)				
Musical	67.9	82.2	86.5	$\chi^2 = 164.8, p < 0.001$
Play	30.5	57.2	75.0	$\chi^2 = 592.9, p < 0.001$
Rock concert	11.8	19.2	39.2	$\chi^2 = 326.6, p < 0.001$
Location of performances attended (<i>n</i> = 4194)				
Only in State of residence	87.0	68.6	62.4	$\chi^2 = 238.4, p < 0.001$
Out of State of residence	13.0	31.4	37.6	
Attendance to free events (<i>n</i> = 4211)				
Attended free performances	4.8	17.3	34.9	$\chi^2 = 434.8, p < 0.001$
Did not attend free performances	95.2	82.7	65.1	
Live-entertainment ticket price (<i>n</i> = 4044)				
Average ticket price (\$)	52.7	50.7	45.5	$F = 50.7, p < 0.001$
Highest ticket price (\$)	64.3	75.1	85.6	$F = 34.9, p < 0.001$

^aPairwise comparisons and Tukey *post hoc* tests show differences between all groups.

Table 4. Importance mean and rotated factor matrix of the importance of different tourism attractions.

Dimensions and attractions	Importance mean	Factor loadings	Explained variance (%)	Eigenvalue
Art and cultural attractions (D1) ($\alpha = 0.73$) ^a			21.4	3.9
Performing arts	3.79	0.832		
Cultural fairs, festivals or events	3.80	0.778		
Places to buy local arts or crafts	3.59	0.605		
Libraries, literary events or bookstores	2.43	0.542		
Composite mean (CM1)	(3.61)			
Heritage attractions (D2) ($\alpha = 0.72$)			19.9	1.4
Customs and ways of living	3.65	0.814		
Architecture and buildings	3.45	0.794		
Historical attractions, sites or districts	4.09	0.672		
Composite mean (CM2)	(3.74)			
Natural attractions (D3) ($\alpha = 0.65$)			18.7	1.0
Agricultural attractions or events	2.84	0.810		
Gardens, zoos and aquariums	4.06	0.715		
Locally grown or processed products	3.29	0.615		
Composite mean (CM3)	(3.40)			
Total variance explained			60.1	

^aCronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for domains. Overall reliability ($\alpha = 0.82$).

along with their corresponding loadings, Eigenvalues and the percentages of variance explained by each dimension.

To compare the importance of each cultural dimension across segments, *composite means* (CMs; CM1, CM2 and CM3) were developed based on the mean importance scores of the

original variables that loaded on each dimension (Table 5). The CMs resulted in a five-point continuum with 1, being not important and 5, being extremely important. Overall, the *omnivores* assign greater importance to *art and cultural* dimension (CM1 = 3.70) than either the *sporadic* (CM1 = 3.53) or *univore* (CM1 = 3.57)

Table 5. Importance of different attractions and their dimension among segments.*

(n = 4206)	Sporadic (34.3%)	Univores (29.9%)	Omnivores (35.8%)	Significance
Art and cultural attractions (D1)				
Performing arts	3.62	3.82	3.93	
Cultural fairs, festivals or events	3.72	3.73	3.80	
Places to buy local arts/crafts	3.54	3.57	3.59	
Libraries, literary events or bookstores	3.24	3.16	3.23	
Composite mean (CM1)	(3.53)	(3.57)	(3.61)	$F = 23.1, p < 0.001^a$
Heritage attractions (D2)				
Customs and ways of living	3.58	3.58	3.74	
Architecture and buildings	3.39	3.37	3.57	
Historical attractions, sites or districts	4.02	4.06	4.19	
Composite mean (CM2)	(3.67)	(3.67)	(3.83)	$F = 25.8, p < 0.001^a$
Natural attractions (D3)				
Agricultural attractions or events	2.90	2.75	2.84	
Gardens, zoos and aquariums	4.09	3.99	4.09	
Locally grown or processed products	3.30	3.23	3.33	
Composite mean (CM3)	(3.44)	(3.33)	(3.40)	$F = 8.8, p < 0.001^b$

*Importance assessed using a five-point Likert-type scale where 1 = not important and 5 = extremely important.

^aTukey *post hoc* tests show differences between the *omnivores* and the other groups.

^bTukey *post hoc* tests show differences between the *univores* and the other groups.

segments ($F = 23.050, p < 0.001$). Similarly, the *heritage attraction* dimension plays a more important role in deciding where *omnivores* (CM2 = 3.83) go on their tourism trips compared with either of the other two segments ($F = 25.776, p < 0.001$). These results suggest that art and heritage attractions should be packaged and co-operatively marketed to attract more affluent tourists. Differences regarding the *natural attractions* dimension (D3) were not as pronounced. *Univores* considered these natural attractions as less important (CM3 = 3.33) than the *omnivores* (CM3 = 3.43) and the *sporadic* (CM3 = 3.44) ($F = 8.798, p < 0.001$). This possibly suggests that nature-related activities may no longer be perceived as a component of a tourism niche, but as a generalised activity due to an increased awareness and concern with natural and agricultural systems (e.g. locally produced food; biodiversity value).

The three segments demonstrated different pleasure travel behaviours (Table 6). As might be expected, the *omnivores* travelled more frequently and the *sporadic* made the fewest number of pleasure trips during the previous 12 months ($\chi^2 = 144.502, p < 0.001$). Respondents reported the proportion of their pleasure

trips taken during the previous 12 months for the primary or only purpose of visiting six different cultural attractions in a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = none, 2 = few, 3 = half, 4 = most and 5 = all). Overall, respondents took few pleasure travels for the main purpose of visiting cultural attractions. Visiting historical places was the most frequently occurring main purpose for pleasure trips across the groups, although the *sporadic* reported less propensity to undertake pleasure trips with this as the sole purpose ($F = 8.867, p < 0.001$). Travelling to attend a live performance was the second most frequent main purpose among the *univores* (mean = 1.92) and the *omnivores* (mean = 1.98), while the least recurrent for the *sporadic* (mean = 1.69).

Propensity to participate in these six cultural activities while travelling was also examined across participants using a four-point Likert-type scale with 1 as the lower end (never) and 4 as the higher end (always). Results suggest a relative high involvement in cultural activities while travelling for pleasure across all respondents. This was especially true for the *omnivores*, who also show a wider cultural consumption this time while touring. The

Table 6. Pleasure travel behaviour during the last 12 months across groups.

	Sporadic (34.3%)	Univores (29.9%)	Omnivores (35.8%)	Significance
Number of pleasure trips ($n = 4201$)				$\chi^2 = 144.5, p < 0.001^a$
Less than 2	16.5%	9.3%	7.2%	
2 or 3	37.8%	31.8%	28.2%	
4 or 5	26.1%	28.7%	31.4%	
6 or more	19.6%	30.2%	33.2%	
Past primary trip purpose ($n = 3962$)*				
Visit a historical place	2.14	2.06	2.26	$F = 8.7, p < 0.001^b$
Attend a live performance	1.69	1.92	1.98	$F = 27.2, p < 0.001^c$
Visit a zoo, aquarium or garden	1.86	1.72	1.84	$F = 6.9, p = 0.001^e$
Visit to a museum	1.76	1.69	1.83	$F = 6.6, p = 0.001^d$
Attend a festival	1.70	1.59	1.71	$F = 6.9, p = 0.001^d$
Activities engaged during past pleasure trips ($n = 4179$)**				
Visit a historical place	2.82	2.88	2.97	$F = 11.7, p < 0.001^b$
Visit a museum	2.36	2.41	2.61	$F = 31.4, p < 0.001^b$
Attend a live performance	2.11	2.39	2.51	$F = 72.9, p < 0.001^a$
Attend a festival	2.22	2.19	2.33	$F = 11.6, p < 0.001^b$
Visit a zoo, aquarium or garden	2.50	2.44	2.58	$F = 8.2, p < 0.001^d$

*Propensity of trips with these primary purposes was measured using a five-point Likert-type scale where 1 = none; 2 = few; 3 = half; 4 = most and 5 = all.

**Propensity to undertake these activities while on pleasure trips was measured using a four-point Likert-type scale where 1 = never and 4 = always.

^aPairwise comparisons show differences between all groups.

^bTukey *post hoc* tests show differences only between the *omnivores* and the other groups.

^cTukey *post hoc* tests show differences between the *sporadic* and the other groups.

^dTukey *post hoc* tests show differences only between the *univores* and the *omnivores*.

^eTukey *post hoc* tests show differences only between the *univores* and the other groups.

omnivores participated in a breadth of cultural activities significantly more compared with the other groups, including visiting historical sites, museums and natural centres and attending live performances and festivals ($p < 0.001$). In sum, this study suggests that the omnivorous cultural behaviour described in the arts studies is also present among cultural tourists. The three groups of live-performing arts consumers show distinct primary pleasure trip purposes. Results suggest that there might be a group of tourists, the *omnivorous cultural tourists*, who seek a wide variety of cultural experiences and opportunities while travelling. These results suggest that future studies in cultural tourism should consider including the omnivorous cultural behaviour when classifying cultural tourists. Results also show a group of individuals with very little interest in cultural

tourism destinations and activities that marketers need to recognise.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the relevance of the omnivorous–univorous theoretical framework reported in art marketing studies to cultural tourism. This study responds to the need for a better integration of the art and tourism disciplines (Tighe, 1986; Hughes, 2000; Dolnicar, 2002; Hargrove, 2002; Smith 2003) and the need to examine the application of the omnivorous–univorous theoretical framework in other cultural manifestations beyond the arts (Alderson *et al.*, 2007; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). Patrons of a major performing arts centre in Michigan were surveyed to identify their level

of cultural omnivoreness based on the number and diversity of live-performing arts events they attended in the last 12 months. Three segments were identified: *sporadic*, *univores* and *omnivores*. The *omnivore* segment is an interesting segment for the purposes of this study because of its appeal to the arts and tourism. *Omnivores* attend more and a greater variety (e.g. genres, venues, fee and free) of performances, which may be due to their higher incomes and education levels (Holbrook *et al.*, 2002; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2004). *Omnivores* also attend performances ranging in price from free (e.g. music in the parks, school performances) to expensive. A wider consumption in geographic (local to out of state) and expenditures terms (free to expensive) found in this study expands the omnivorous consumption behaviour of art and culture. The *univores* are frequent attendees to live performances but within a narrow variety. The *sporadic* are infrequent attendees to live performances having a low current and past engagement in cultural activities, maybe due to their young age and low income.

As for cultural tourism matters, a key finding of this study is that cultural omnivorous behaviour extends beyond arts consumption and is relevant to cultural tourism products and behaviours. *Omnivores* are more frequent tourists and are attracted to destinations with more diverse cultural and heritage attractions and experiences, including historical sites, museums, natural centres, live performances and festivals. They are also more likely to attend performances away from their state of residence and select destinations for pleasure trips based in part on cultural experiences. *Omnivores* also tend to participate more in a breadth of cultural activities while touring away from home. In sum, *omnivores* are very interested in destinations offering an eclectic selection of cultural experiences and opportunities suggesting a strong pull opportunity for cultural destinations. In addition, this study found that travelling to attend live performances was the second most reoccurring main purpose among *omnivores* and *univores* suggesting a potential tourism niche deserving further exploration. The three groups of live-performing arts consumers also show distinct primary pleasure trip purposes.

Study findings have theoretical implications for the cultural tourism field, showing that the omnivore–univore framework is applicable to the cultural tourism field but not to its full extent. First, results suggest that cultural tourists need to be examined based on the range of their cultural taste, taking into consideration omnivorous and univorous preferences. On this regard, an *omnivorous cultural tourist* appears as a group of individuals interested in cultural tourism and being attracted by a wide variety of cultural products and experiences while travelling for pleasure. These results expand the heterogeneous nature of cultural tourists as existing knowledge on cultural tourism has identified different cultural tourists mostly based on their interests and motivations (Formica and Uysal, 1998; McKercher, 2002; McKercher and Du Crois, 2003). Second, this study found that the dichotomist omnivore–univore solution is not sufficient to describe the cultural tourism realm as it has been recently found in other types of art consumption, such as the visual arts (Alderson *et al.*, 2007; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). The *sporadic*, a group of individuals not interested in cultural tourism and cultural attractions, emerge in this study and they need to be recognised by cultural tourism developers and marketers.

This study also has marketing implications for tourism practitioners and marketers. First, cultural tourism marketers need to consider different advertising messages and channels, as well as sales and pricing mechanisms to attract the three segments that resulted from this study. This is important as it has been recognised that different marketing strategies are needed to attract the diversity of current and potential cultural consumers (Hughes and Allen, 2005), especially for urban destinations where culture has become a major driving force (Van der Ark and Richards, 2006). On this regard, the *omnivorous cultural tourist* appears an appealing group to target given their ample taste for cultural products, activities and attractions and their little time and income constraints. This group can be better reached through co-operative targeted marketing by tourism agencies and attractions and arts organisations and businesses. Tourism destinations desiring to attract this group

should highlight a diversity of performing arts venues, arts retailers and architecture, along with a variety of conventional (e.g. museums, festivals) and avant-garde (e.g. local dining, traditional events) cultural opportunities. In turn, different types of performing arts venues need to recognise opportunities to join in and support efforts to market their communities as cultural tourism destinations.

Tourism–arts co-operative marketing efforts are critical to be implemented as they could benefit both industries through expanded markets, increased sales, reduced promotional costs and more satisfied customers. Most evidence suggests that cultural attractions will continue to be important elements of tourism product lines and community attractiveness. Joint communications (e.g. advertising, promotion, public relations) can simultaneously position communities as cultural destinations and enhance perceptions of the quality of life in local communities. These results are especially important given the growing importance of cultural tourism and the increased omnivorous taste among young people as it has been reported elsewhere (Peterson and Kern, 1996; Van Eijck, 2001).

Limitations and insights for further research

This study has some limitations cautioning generalisations. The first one is related to the fact that the sampling frame consisted of the e-club members of one performing arts venue in Michigan. Although the Wharton Center is the largest live-performing arts centre in Michigan and offers a variety of performing arts genres and venues, it is located in a university town and this is reflected in its market, which may limit the generalisability of the findings. Therefore, it is recommended that the study be replicated using a more diverse approach (e.g. geographic, different performing arts organisations).

As this study validates with some restrictions the omnivorous argument to cultural tourism studies, it opens many research opportunities to be addressed in the future. For example, a closer examination is needed regarding the breadth and variety of cultural attractions and products among *omnivore* and *univore* cultural tourists. Importantly, this study also raises the question about the appro-

priateness of the univore–omnivore dichotomist taxonomy instead of a continuum among cultural tourists, especially taking into consideration that recent research on the arts has found different types of *omnivore* consumers as well as *paucivores*, a fourth group that do not perfectly fit as *omnivore*, *univores* or *sporadic* (Alderson *et al.*, 2007; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). Results also suggest a potential tourism niche focusing on live performances. This topic appears interesting to examine because both *omnivore* and *univore* groups have high proportions of retired individuals or empty nesters and high family incomes, suggesting little time and money constraints for their culture consumption and tourism behaviour. However, this study examined the relationship between attendance at live performances and tourism by asking the e-club members about their recent pleasure trips. Studies also need to examine whether similar results are obtained when asking tourists about their attendance to cultural attractions and specifically to live-performing arts events.

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