

Segmenting tourists to aboriginal cultural festivals: An example in the Rukai tribal area, Taiwan

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Abstract

Festivals are increasingly being used as instruments for promoting tourism and boosting the regional economy. Festivals are a type of cultural events and are travel attractions with unique features. Much research, undertaken from a variety of perspectives, exists on festivals. However, very few studies related to aboriginal cultures have been published. The main objective of this study is to profile tourists based upon their motives and demographic characteristics, as these traits are associated with attraction to aboriginal cultural festivals and other related activities. The research reveals that cultural exploration, among other motivational dimensions, is the most important factor attracting tourists to the aboriginal cultural festival. In addition, not all tourists have the same degree of interest in the festival cultural experience. Furthermore, motivational variables are found to be more important than demographic variables in explaining and segmenting visitors to an aboriginal festival.

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1. Introduction

The staging of festivals or major events is very important from the perspective of destination marketing (Mules & Faulkner, 1996). Community festivals and special events have grown rapidly in number throughout the world during the past decade. Local festivals are increasingly being used as instruments for promoting tourism and boosting the regional economy (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003). Getz (1993) and Formica and Uysal (1998) showed that the economic gains from festivals can be substantial because festivals provide interesting activities and spending venues for both local people and tourists. Also, because of their frequent interdependence with the physical environment, festivals are a travel attraction with unique features (Gursoy, Kim, & Uysal, 2004).

Festivals, in essence, are an indispensable feature of cultural tourism (Formica & Uysal, 1998). Therefore, festivals have frequently been labeled as cultural events (Frisby & Getz, 1989). They are occasions that (re)interpret various symbolic elements of the social existence of a group or community, with the effect of re-creating social relations and the symbolic foundations underpinning everyday life (Turner, 1982). Festival tourism usually refers to events and gatherings that are staged outside the normal program of activities (Anwar & Sohail, 2003). The aboriginal tourism experience acquired through attending festivals has become an important part of aboriginal tourism and is viewed as being a powerful communication tool that is operated by various tourism stakeholders (Notzke, 2004).

Many studies related to festivals focus on: (1) host community reactions (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000), (2) hallmark and major events (Hall, 1992; Lee, 2000), (3) economic impacts (Gartner & Holecek, 1983; Kim, Scott, Thigpen, & Kim, 1998), (4) residents' attitudes and perceptions (Jeong & Faulkner, 1996), and (5) the

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perceived crowding of a festival experience (Lee & Graefe, 2003). However, very few studies related specifically to aboriginal cultures have been undertaken.

From the perspective of destination marketing, the goal of cultivating local tourism is to attract non-residents with the expectation that their spending will contribute greatly to the local economy, while respecting the viewpoints of all stakeholders as well as the sustainability of local resources (Buhalis, 2000). Visitors attending an aboriginal festival might qualify as cultural tourists with an interest in aboriginal peoples and their cultural expressions (Ryan, 2002). Wu (2002) revealed that visitors to tribal festivals believed that, by attending an aboriginal festival, the tribe's awareness of tourism development could be enhanced at different levels. Also, at the same time, the uniqueness of the aboriginal culture can be promoted. However, little has been written on visitors' motivations in studies of aboriginal tourism events.

2. Problem statement

Crompton and McKay (1997) argued that visitors' motives for visiting a festival are the starting point that triggers the decision process. Dewar, Meyer, and Wen (2001) mentioned that knowing the motives of visitors often results in ability to increase visitors' enjoyment; moreover, it makes it possible to attract and retain more visitors. Furthermore, in addition to the need to monitor visitors' satisfactions and enhance marketing effectiveness through understanding visitors' decision processes, Dewar et al. pointed out that it is imperative to identify visitors' needs so that festival organizers can design future programs tailored to them. These are major reasons why more attention should be given to understand the motivations of festival visitors better.

Once the motivations of visitors have been identified, it is essential to give attention to the needs of different target groups at the festival (Dewar et al., 2001). Target groups must be described using the skill of market segmentation. Segmentation is a powerful marketing tool because it brings knowledge of visitor identities (McCleary, 1995). In addition, Formica and Uysal (1998) demonstrated that successful tourism promotional efforts hinge on effective segmentation. It is not usually possible to identify a single motive for all tourists; studying one sub-group at a time is more realistic (So & Morrison, 2004). As such, it is important to determine the distinctive characteristics of specific groups of tourists within heterogeneous markets (Mok & Iverson, 2000).

Motivations of visitors may be expected to vary greatly from event to event (Scott, 1996; Rachael & Douglas, 2001). However, as Schneider and Backman (1996) and Lee, Lee, and Wicks (2004) suggested that

visitors who are participating in various festivals are likely to share similar motives in attending festivals and special events even if they come from different cultural backgrounds albeit to different degree. As a result, it is meaningful to clarify whether or not the motivations of tourists attending festivals are homogeneous and whether they vary according to different types of festivals, in particular in a novel context.

With respect to background information for various tourists, Fodness (1994) found that significant demographic differences exist in the leisure motives of tourists. Sirakaya, Uysal, and Yoshioka (2003) and Jang, Bai, Hong, and O'Leary (2004), using a sample of Japanese tourists, also noticed that significant differences exist in tourists' background information among various segments. For example, motives of Japanese tourists to Turkey differed significantly according to age, gender, and income variables (Sirakaya et al., 2003). In Group 1 (*Escapers*), tourists are more likely than the other group (Group 2, *Seekers*) to be female, lower income, and younger in age. In a similar vein, Chang, Wall, and Lai (2005) indicated that some demographic differences exist among Taiwanese tourists, such as marital status and age, pertaining to their visits to an aboriginal cultural village. In the group of high novelty-seekers, they are more likely to be single and under 30 years old than other groups. However, some researchers have arrived at an opposite conclusion. For instance, Keng and Cheng (1999) examined the segmentation of 150 Singapore vacationers visiting overseas destinations and found they were homogeneous in terms of their socio-demographic profiles. Similarly, Mohr, Backman, Gahan, and Backman (1993) compared first and repeat visitors attending a hot air balloon festival in South Carolina and concluding that no significant differences existed in motivational factors with regard to demographic variables. As such, it is still to be confirmed whether or not variations exist in motivations when linked to visitors' background information. Thus, it is pertinent to explore whether demographic variables are effective descriptors in profiling various tourist segments to an aboriginal festival.

As to aboriginal tourism more generally, aboriginal people have long been seen as being marginalized with limited resources—including economic and social capital—to draw on. Being minority groups, most aboriginal and tribal societies are outside the mainstream where political power and authority reside (Sofield & Birtles, 1996). Situations in Asia, such as Taiwan, are unexceptional. Specifically, aboriginal groups, long the objects of divide-and-conquer tactics, have been looked down upon throughout the world (Arrigo, Si, & Si, 2002).

Because competition is high for access to resources, an appropriate allocation should be informed by systematic and reliable information about and from tourists

(Formica & Uysal, 1996). In addition, knowledge of different types of tourists and the sizes of the segments may be used to inform decisions on festival content if tourism is a priority. Hence, in the context of aboriginal tourism, by using tourists' motives as the segmentation base variable, it is possible to determine appropriate existing market segments and the different motives that operate among them.

The main objective of this study is thus to profile tourists visiting an aboriginal cultural festival based upon their motives and demographic characteristics. In addition, the development, testing, and application of scales is an important research activity contributing to the accumulation of knowledge through the repeated use of valid and reliable measures. A slightly modified Crompton and McKay's (1997) scale on motives of tourists attending festival events will be used to explore the above issues, thereby testing the utility of the scale in a novel context.

3. Research setting and Rukai cultural festival

According to Ryan (2002), aboriginal tourism can be defined as the movement of persons for cultural motivations, such as travel to festivals and visits to sites associated with an indigenous people. Taiwan has 12 aboriginal tribes and a total aboriginal population of nearly 400,000, all of who are considered to be the most northern representatives of Austronesian culture. Geographically, the majority of Taiwan's aboriginal tribes are located in the mountainous interior, on the east coast, and on offshore Orchid Island. In response to the increase in aboriginal unemployment, the environmental devastation that resulted from the September 21, 1999 earthquake and from numerous typhoons and mudslides, tourism development in aboriginal sites has been encouraged by the national government as an economic diversification strategy (Mark, 2002). According to the Council of Indigenous People in Taiwan (2004), the development of aboriginal tourism is estimated to have enticed over 1,000,000 people a year to visit, with the tourism industry becoming the most important industry economically for the native inhabitants in Taiwan.

Wu-tai, located in the mountains of Ping-tung County (the most southern county in Taiwan), is the residency of the Rukai tribe. Wu-tai is selected in this research for a number of reasons. First, as stated in the Annual Report of Tourism, 2003 (Tourism Bureau, Republic of China, 2005a, b), Wu-tai enjoys a well-regarded reputation as an eco-tribal community. Their traditional slate houses, Rukai culture, and wood and stone-carvings are of particular interest. Handicrafts such as pottery vessels, antique-style pots with the symbol of the Rukai ancestors, and tribal symbols (e.g. hundred-pacer snake totems) are well preserved. Well-trained eco-interpreters

also contribute to the reputation. In fact, Wu-tai was the only tribal area chosen as an aboriginal summer camp for Taipei city's aboriginal youth to visit in 2004 (Indigenous Peoples Commission of Taipei City Government, 2004). Second, Rukai Day is recognized as one of the biggest aboriginal festivals in Taiwan (Tourism Bureau, Republic of China, 2005a, b). Third, Wu-tai is reported as the most authentic aboriginal bed and breakfast (B&B) township in Taiwan (Chiu, 2002). Thus, the significance of this aboriginal tribal area and the associated festival is obvious.

According to Shiu, Hsiu, and Hong (2001), Wu-tai has a population of less than 3000 inhabitants, of whom over 95% are Rukai natives. Wu-tai has a sub-tropical climate, mountains, traditional stone houses, attractive landscapes and, together with the Rukai culture, these features compose an attractive base on which aboriginal tourism can be developed (Lin, 2002). Traditionally, the economic activity of Rukai focused on hunting and farming. Peanuts, taro, corn and millet, are the most common crops (Huan, 2003). Hunting activities have gradually declined due to external limitations (e.g. governmental prohibition) and internal changes (e.g. financial pressure to make more money). The majority of the 278.80 km² of land is now used for forestry, followed by unusable land, and the usable space for agriculture is merely 0.1% of the total land area. As a result, some Rukai people have been forced into other occupations, such as tourism (Shiu et al., 2001). Climatically, Wu-tai is nicknamed "fog township" and the average temperature is about 17–18 °C (Tourism Bureau, Republic of China, 2005a, b). However, the development of tourism in Wu-tai has been further restricted due to difficult accessibility resulting from geographic constraints since its altitude nears 1000 m. Since 1993 there has been only a single paved access road (Shiu et al., 2001).

Nevertheless, following worldwide initiatives to promote sustainable development in aboriginal tribes (Xie & Wall, 2002; Xie, 2003), tourism is viewed as being potentially a lucrative, if not the best way to increase economic gains (McIntosh, 2004). Aboriginal cultural festivals are seen as being an efficient means to attract tourists in an attempt to reach such a goal.

The aboriginal cultural festival of the Rukai tribe is also called Rukai Day. In line with conventional customs, Rukai Day falls on August 15 each year (Huan, 2003). However, the Rukai cultural festival normally runs for 3–4 days and incorporates sports tournaments such as short-distance running. In fact, Rukai Day is the harvest festival of the Rukai tribe and sacrifices are offered to gods or ancestors after the millet harvest. This rite starts with baking millet cakes on top of the shale rock. The millet dough is covered with banana leaves and then pressed by another piece of shale for about 30 min. The shale and banana leaves are then

removed and the ‘wizard’ then divines the future according to the degree of moisture remaining in the millet cakes: the rainfall will be scarce if the cakes are too dry; conversely, there will be lots of rain if the cakes are moist. This ceremony is recognized as being the peak of the festival and is the focal point for tourists, as it includes entertaining performances, such as folk dances, folk singing and swing playing (Liu, 1992). In addition, existing facilities such as bed and breakfast accommodation, arts and crafts workshops, the Rukai exhibition centre and other tourism-related infrastructure are patronized by tourists. However, according to Rukai traditions (Chen, 2004), whoever participates in the festival, including tourists, must wear Rukai traditional outfits to gain admittance to the festival grounds, which are located in the Wu-tai primary school. These outfits are sold in the local souvenir shops or stands.

4. Methodology

4.1. Measures

An on-site intercept procedure was employed for this study. The survey instrument was based upon that used by Crompton and McKay (1997) and was composed of two sections: motive-related items and demographic information, including travel modes. To check the face validity of the survey instrument, two aboriginal people and two professors teaching marketing-related courses were invited to proofread all of the questions to ascertain comprehensiveness and clarity of the questionnaire. In total, 28 questions were listed concerning tourists’ motives for attending the aboriginal cultural festival. The major reason that the tourist motivation instrument used was derived from Crompton and McKay’s (1997) study, is because the scale was rigorously constructed, incorporating both *push* and *pull* factors (Cha, McCleary, & Uysal, 1995) and *escape-seeking* factors (Iso-Ahola, 1982; Sirakaya et al., 2003) into a broadly conceived scale making it appealing for assessing utility across different types of festivals (Lee, 2000; Lee et al., 2004). Furthermore, similar to Crompton and McKay’s (1997) study, the objectives of Rukai cultural festival is multi-dimensional, including enhancing cultural understanding by presenting cultural performances reflecting the solidarity of tribal people, educating young group members about their customs, and obtaining economic benefits. In other words, it is a tourism event offering more than economic benefits. Thus, the usage of Crompton and McKay’s (1997) instrument for this study is justifiable.

Demographic items included age, gender, education, marital status, region of residence, occupation, and travel modes.

Motives were measured using a five-point Likert type scale (where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) so as to identify the reasons visitors attended the aboriginal festival.

With reference to translation of the survey instrument, a back-translation technique was used to ensure equivalence (Dimanche, 1994; Sin, Cheung, & Lee, 1999). Back-translation refers to the use of two bilinguals of English and Mandarin. The first person (a native English-speaker) translates the material from the source language (English) to the target language (Mandarin in this case), and the second person (a native Mandarin-speaker) translates back from the target to the source without having knowledge of the original material. Afterwards, the researcher made a judgment about the quality of the translation by comparing the two materials in the original language, so as to minimize language nuances (Dimanche, 1994).

4.2. Sampling

Prior to the survey, a pilot study of 66 tourists was done using the identical instrument in Wu-lai, Taipei County where the Atayal tribe had had its annual aboriginal festival a few weeks earlier. After satisfactory inter-correlation was obtained through a reliability test (Cronbach α score was 0.85), some minor changes in wording were done. However, two items (“I do not mind if people think that I behave out of line during the festival” and “I tend not to participate in the festival with those people who have similar interests”) were deleted from the survey instrument due to their low factor loading scores. Then, a formal survey with 26 motivational items was conducted on August 15–17, 2004. Both pilot study and formal survey used a convenience sampling method.

With respect to the unit of analysis, international tourists were excluded due to the fact that an insufficient number of foreigners have been attracted to aboriginal attractions in Taiwan at the present stage. To further elucidate, domestic travel has been booming in Taiwan since 1998, when the five-day working week became national policy. According to the Tourism Bureau in Taiwan (2004), the number of domestic travellers reached 102,399,000 people in 2003. Taiwanese averaged 5.39 domestic trips in 2003 compared to 4.01 domestic trips in 1999. Despite the influence of the SARS epidemic, the domestic travel rate still reached 90.1% in 2003. The main purpose of domestic traveling was found to be pleasure, leisure, and vacation (61%). Because of the dominance of the Taiwan market, the subjects of the survey were confined to non-aboriginal Taiwanese tourists who participated in the Rukai festival.

4.3. Survey

The survey was conducted in the village of Wu-tai. Wu-tai is in Wu-tai national forest controlled district requiring an ID check-up to apply for a pass (Huan, 2003). Of the six villages (Ali, Dawu, Haocha, Jiamu, Quwu, and Wu-tai) in Wu-tai area, Wu-tai village enjoys the most well-known reputation as a tourism destination. It was claimed that approximately 20,000 tourists visited Wu-tai village yearly to see the natural scenery and, in particular, Rukai houses which are made out of black shale, a local stone (Shiu et al., 2001).

Surveys were undertaken near the entrance of Wu-tai Primary School, where the annual aboriginal festival is held. Six research assistants, including two graduate students and four senior students, were hired and trained to administer the survey. In total, 365 self-administered questionnaires were distributed and 315 (86.3%) usable questionnaires were obtained.

5. Results

5.1. Statistical analysis

Characteristics of visitors to the festival are presented in Table 1. The share of female visitors was almost equal

to that of males. Visitors were likely to be students (28.9%), service industry employees (13.3%) or business people (13.1%) from the northern part of Taiwan (44.4%), with a college level of education (62.9%) and under 35 years of age (64.5%).

Twenty-six of the motivation factors in this research had mean scores in excess of three (above *neutral*). Standard deviations are mostly from 0.63 to 0.80. In fact, half of them had mean scores over four (above *agree*). This implies that the survey instrument was suitable to use in the setting of an aboriginal cultural festival.

Factor analysis was used to identify the constructs underlying the 28 posited festival motivations. A principal components analysis with a Varimax rotation was used with a pre-determined cut-off eigenvalue greater than or equal to 1.0 (Heung and Cheng, 2000). Only factors with more than 0.4 loading were retained and included in the factor identification. Although the factor loading of item 10 (0.398) was slightly below the threshold 0.4 (Table 2), as a rule of thumb, it was acceptable since if one rounds it up, it will be equal to 0.4. The reliability coefficient of each factor ranged from 0.7 to 0.86 which was considered to be acceptable. In relation to the reliability of the scale, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy ($KMO = 0.909$) was quite high and Bartlett's test of sphericity was

Table 1
Demographic information of tourists ($n = 315$)

Variables	Sample size	Percentage	Variables	Sample size	Percentage
<i>Age</i>			<i>Marital status</i>		
16–25	107	34	Single	194	61.6
26–35	96	30.5	Married	121	38.4
36–45	59	18.7	<i>Travel mode</i>		
46–55	34	10.8	Individual	91	28.9
56–65	14	4.4	Package tour	215	68.3
65 and above	5	1.6	Others	9	2.9
<i>Occupation</i>			<i>Average income</i>		
Military	9	2.9	Below NTS 10000 (US\$ 333)	96	30.5
Governmental officers	15	4.8	NTS 10001 (US\$ 333)–20000 (US\$ 666)	22	7.0
Teachers	23	7.3	NTS 20001 (US\$ 666)–30000 (US\$1000)	55	17.5
Students	91	28.9	NTS 30001 (US\$1000)–40000 (US\$ 1333)	51	16.2
Business people	41	13.1	NTS 40001 (US\$ 1333)–50000 (US\$ 1666)	38	12.1
Workers	35	11.1	NTS 50001 (US\$ 1666)–60000 (US\$ 2000)	18	5.7
Service industry employees	42	13.3	Above NTS 60000 (US\$ 2000)	35	11
Self-employed	27	8.6	<i>Place of residence</i>		
Agriculture/fishing	1	0.3	North	140	44.4
Housewives	14	4.4	Central	49	15.6
Retired	7	2.2	South	116	36.8
Others	10	3.2	East	6	1.9
<i>Educational background</i>			Off-shore	4	1.3
Primary school	3	0.9	<i>Gender</i>		
Junior high school	11	3.5	Male	158	50.2
Senior high school	70	22.2	Female	157	49.8
University	198	62.9			
Graduate school	33	10.5			

Table 2
The result of factor analysis

Items	Factor 1 <i>Equilibrium recovery</i>	Factor 2 <i>Festival participation & learning</i>	Factor 3 <i>Novelty seeking</i>	Factor 4 <i>Socialization</i>	Factor 5 <i>Cultural exploration</i>	Mean
19. I like to participate in aboriginal festivals to reduce pressures	0.814					3.45
18. I go to aboriginal festivals to slow down my pace of life	0.793					3.80
17. My like to participate in aboriginal festivals to change the routine life style	0.678					3.91
20. I like to experience a colorful life style	0.675					3.92
24. By going to an aboriginal festival, I have a chance to meet people who are enjoying themselves	0.573					3.87
8. I come to an aboriginal festival to increase my understanding of aboriginal culture		0.750				4.36
9. I enjoy activities at an aboriginal festival that offer excitement and thrills		0.656				3.98
7. I like to explore new things here		0.611				3.95
6. I like to experience exotic customs and cultures		0.583				4.39
4. I like to visit aboriginal heritage sites and local museums		0.492				4.34
1. I like to participate in aboriginal festivals like this that are not easy for me to go to		0.489				4.20
12. I like to try new things here			0.734			4.00
14. I like things that come to me unexpectedly during my stay here			0.710			4.03
13. I feel much energized by attending such aboriginal festivals			0.592			3.95
15. I tend to enjoy myself here			0.579			3.94
11. I like to be relaxed in order to participate in this kind of aboriginal festival			0.546			4.41
26. I enjoy making new friends here			0.475			3.39
10. I do not like to plan this trip in detail because it takes away some unexpected pleasures			0.398			3.31
27. It is more fun to come here with others than alone				0.795		4.26
22. I like to participate in festivals with a group of people				0.684		4.08
28. I do not like to come to this type of festival by myself				0.672		4.04
25. I enjoy watching other tourists' behaviours and being with plenty of people during the aboriginal cultural festival				0.590		3.91
21. I come here so I can be with my friends				0.435		4.26
2. My ideal aboriginal festival includes looking at things I have never seen before					0.696	4.25
3. I wish to see new things while I am here					0.655	4.25
5. To discover new things here is a precious experience for myself					0.591	4.01
Eigenvalue	3.522	3.115	2.953	2.680	2.582	
Variance explained (%)	13.545	11.981	11.356	10.307	9.931	
Cumulative Variance (%)	13.545	25.526	36.883	47.189	57.120	
Cronbach's α	0.858	0.804	0.758	0.719	0.759	
Average mean score	3.791	4.203	3.939	4.111	4.170	

significant ($p = 0.000$). As a result, the factor model was deemed to be satisfactory.

The 26 factors having eigenvalues greater than 1, which explained 57.12% of the total variance, were grouped into five factors and named: '*Equilibrium recovery*', '*Festival participation and learning*', '*Novelty-seeking*', '*Socialization*' and '*Cultural exploration*' (Table 2). The first dimension, '*Equilibrium recovery*', accounted for 13.55% of the total variance with a

reliability coefficient of 0.86. The second dimension, '*Festival participation and learning*', explained 11.98% of the variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.80. The third dimension, '*Novelty-seeking*', explained 11.36% of the total variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.76. The fourth dimension, '*Socialization*', explained 10.31% of the variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.72 and the fifth dimension, '*Cultural exploration*', explained 9.93% of the variance with a reliability coefficient of

0.76. These five dimensions were slightly different from the six dimensions of [Crompton and McKay \(1997\)](#). In an attempt to be concise, dimensions of ‘*Known-group socialization*’ and ‘*External interaction/socialization*’ were combined into one dimension: ‘*Socialization*’ in the present study. In addition, the ‘*Gregariousness*’ dimension from the original instrument was replaced by the ‘*Festival participation and learning*’. These differences probably resulted from cultural differences reflected in the language meanings and, in particular, the aboriginal context.

A two-stage cluster approach was adopted as suggested by [Punj and Stewart \(1983\)](#). First, the Ward’s minimum variance method was selected in an effort to choose an appropriate number of clusters as well as to acquire the centroids (means) of clusters. Secondly, a *K*-means method was used after excluding the outliers from the first stage of the analysis. By calculating the squared Euclidean distance, which was based on the mean distance of the cluster groups from the centre of the cluster, clusters that were derived from the data analysis exhibited similar levels of homogeneity. As a result, a three-cluster solution appeared to provide the most distinctive and acceptable solution of the 10 solutions that were analysed.

Afterwards, a discriminant analysis was used to determine which of the tourists’ motives was driving the differences among the clusters and to evaluate the accuracy and stability of the cluster classification. Two canonical discriminant functions were calculated. The resulting discriminant functions were each subjected to a χ^2 analysis to determine the statistical significance of the functions. Two functions were found to be statistically significant. Function 1 (Wilk’s Lambda = 0.18, $\chi^2 = 528.06^{***}$, $df = 10$), with an eigenvalue of 4.32, explained 99.3% of the variation. With an eigenvalue of 0.03, Function 2 (Wilk’s Lambda = 0.97, $\chi^2 = 9.917^*$, $df = 4$) explained 0.7% of the remaining variation. To determine whether or not the functions were valid predictors, the classification matrices of respondents were also examined. In total, 98.7% of the 315-grouped cases were flawlessly classified; the very high accuracy rate suggested that the discriminant function appears to be very satisfactory in classifying the three clusters.

5.2. Findings

The above analyses indicated that a three-cluster solution is most appropriate for the data on Taiwanese tourists visiting the aboriginal festival. [Table 3](#) presents the outcome of an ANOVA test and also indicates that all five motivational factors exhibit statistically significant differences among the three clusters. Thus, the motivational scale that was adapted from [Crompton and McKay \(1997\)](#) is further justified. In addition, the Scheffe test was used to identify any further differences

between clusters in regards to each factor. The findings confirmed the appropriateness of each category. Also, to describe the three clusters and to label them, the mean scores for each factor were computed. Cluster 1 had the highest score for culture exploration (mean = 4.12), followed by Festival participation and learning (mean = 4.11). Thus, Cluster 1 was labeled as ‘*Aboriginal cultural learner*’. In Cluster 1 (50.5%), tourists enjoy exploring and learning new things from the aboriginal site. They are a group of younger tourists (69.8% are under 35 years old), have a slightly higher proportion of females (50.3%), constitute mostly students and teachers (38.4%), and have more singles (65.2%) than married (34.8%). The majority of them come from the northern part of Taiwan (45.3%).

Cluster 2 placed the highest importance on Festival participation and learning (mean = 3.70). Meanwhile, respondents also tended to enjoy interaction with various people (mean = 3.62). Therefore, Cluster 2 was named as ‘*Change routine life travellers*’. In Cluster 2 (19.5%), tourists are inclined to change their life pace and among the three clusters they have the lowest motives in attending aboriginal cultural festivals. Similar to Cluster 1, this group has higher females (52.5%), the majority of them are below 35 years old (68.9%) and a large proportion comprises students and teachers (42.6%). Most possess a college degree (67.2%). Compared to other clusters, they have a higher educational background with a higher proportion with both college and graduate school training (77%). This implies that tourists with a higher education are more likely to be interested in leaving the everyday environment behind and are looking for change or novelty when they travel. In other words, according to [Iso-Ahola’s](#) arousal theory (1983), these types of people are likely to be influenced by the escaping component rather than the seeking component of the motivational forces that influence tourist behaviour. In addition, 66.7% of tourists in this group are singles and just over half come from the northern part of Taiwan (54.1%).

Compared with the other two groups, Cluster 3 had the highest score on culture exploration (mean = 4.73). Thus, Cluster 3 was labeled as ‘*Active culture explorers*’. All five motivational factors ranked the highest in Cluster 3, followed by Cluster 1 and then Cluster 2. In Cluster 3 (30%), these tourists are very much interested in novelty-seeking and new cultural experiences. They have a higher proportion of males (51.6%) than other clusters. Similar to Cluster 1 and 2, they have high proportions of singles (45.2%) and young tourists such as students (30.9%). Compared to other clusters, they have a higher proportion of tourists from the southern part of Taiwan (37.9%), although the majority is still from the northern part of the island, such as Taipei (45.3%). The aboriginal festival in Wu-tai is always held in summer when most of the students and teachers have

Table 3
Factor means among the three clusters

Factor	Means			F-value	Scheffe test
	Cluster 1: <i>Aboriginal cultural learners</i> (n = 159)	Cluster 2: <i>Change routine life travellers</i> (n = 61)	Cluster 3: <i>Active culture explorers</i> (n = 95)		
<i>Equilibrium recovery</i>	3.75	2.88	4.44	254.98***	3 > 1 > 2
<i>Festival participation & learning</i>	4.11	3.70	4.68	140.97***	3 > 1 > 2
<i>Novelty-seeking</i>	3.86	3.39	4.43	134.91***	3 > 1 > 2
<i>Socialization</i>	4.06	3.62	4.52	66.74***	3 > 1 > 2
<i>Cultural exploration</i>	4.12	3.44	4.73	157.71***	3 > 1 > 2

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Table 4
The differences of motivational factors among three groups of travel modes

Motivational factors	Travel modes (means)			F-value
	Individual travellers (n = 91)	Package tour tourists (n = 215)	Others (n = 9)	
<i>Equilibrium recovery</i>	3.75	3.84	3.47	1.735
<i>Festival participation & learning</i>	4.14	4.23	4.24	0.979
<i>Novelty-seeking</i>	3.85	3.99	3.93	2.091
<i>Socialization</i>	3.93	4.20	4.52	9.396***
<i>Cultural exploration</i>	4.12	4.19	4.11	0.534

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

their breaks. Thus, the proportion of students is higher here than other festival-related research.

By using χ^2 analysis, parallel to Formica and Uysal (1998) and Keng and Cheng (1999), no statistically significant differences were found in demographic variables among the three clusters. For example, the majority of tourists among three clusters have similar and lowest income (approximately below US\$ 333) due to the fact that most of them are likely to be students. It appears that motivational variables are more important than demographic variables in explaining (and segmenting) visitation to an aboriginal festival.

Although it is not the main research objective, differences in aboriginal festival tourists' motives were also examined in relation to different travel modes (Table 4). Among five delineated motivation factors, the study revealed that a significant difference only exists among three groups with respect to the *Socialization* dimension. This is not surprising since they all had gone to the same event. Perhaps the socialization factor reflects the fact that some were on their own and some were with others. In fact, the majority of motivational factors ranked the highest in package tour tourists. The Rukai entertainment performances always involve group activities and perhaps package tour tourists are attracted to and feel comfortable in the aspect of the special event.

6. Conclusions and implications

The aim of this study was to profile the motives and demographic characteristics of tourists to an aboriginal cultural festival using market segmentation. The findings of this study reflect that tourists visiting aboriginal cultural festivals are somewhat heterogeneous. Therefore, differentiated marketing strategies should be stressed and executed by relevant parties. Specifically, tourists in Cluster 2 (entitled *Change routine life travellers*), unlike other tourists in other clusters, are less likely to be interested in aboriginal culture than being able to get away from their familiar life patterns. In other words, they tend to escape from their own environment by seeking some stimuli from attending a festival. Accordingly, marketing efforts targeting this group should emphasize the tribal area in a holistic perspective instead of purely emphasizing its aboriginal culture i.e. beautiful scenery, well-known B&B (slate houses in this case), the annual festival, and similar attractions that young crowds visit should be included in the promotional packages, in addition to the specific aboriginal culture. For tourists in Clusters 1 (entitled *Aboriginal cultural learners*) and 3 (entitled *Active culture explorers*), promotional tactics should stress the authenticity and uniqueness of aboriginal culture since they are highly likely to be interested in experiencing the

so-called back-staged aboriginal customs; at the same time, they are enthusiastic in participating in a festival that has a variety of things to offer. In particular, more diverse activities such as fishing, hunting, and partaking in aboriginal handicraft workshops can be arranged to complement the cultural festivals and to attract tourists in Cluster 3 to extend their duration of staying and, hopefully, to fulfill their genuine needs. On the other hand, some homogeneity does exist among the three clusters. Specifically, tourists to aboriginal cultural festivals are likely to be single, university students, or people from the service industry; by and large, in the case of Wu-tai, they are from northern Taiwan, followed by southern Taiwan. Thus, ads relating to this sort of aboriginal festival should be placed in the local newspapers in both northern and southern Taiwan, such as in Taipei metropolitan area, by the end of June before the summer break starts.

This study has attempted to contribute to the body of knowledge concerning tourist motivation for attending aboriginal festivals. Contrary to the belief that aboriginal peoples' cultures are a quaint novelty that are attractive to all tourists (Mark, 2002), the results show that not all tourists have the same degree of interest in the cultural experience that the festival provided. Rather, some of young tourists in this case appeared to be more interested in taking the opportunity to enjoy a change of pace by participating in an interesting (maybe somewhat exotic) festival itself, and by viewing rural scenery and aboriginal people in well-dressed traditional outfits in a novel context.

Despite that variation existing among different segments with respect to tourist motivation, the findings of this research reveal that cultural exploration, among other motivational dimensions, is the most important factor stimulating tourists to attend the aboriginal cultural festival. This result was compatible with Crompton and McKay (1997), and thereby further supports the appropriateness of utilizing their modified motivational scale. However, some questions inevitably arise. For instance, are tourists merely attracted by a superficial exposure to aboriginal activities, as may be obtained at a cultural festival, or are they really interested in experiencing aboriginal cultures and life styles? Do they prefer an authentic experience contained within the festival or is it merely a product to be enjoyed? These questions merit further research. Furthermore, although it is not the core concern in this research, it has been argued that authenticity is a negotiable rather than an absolute concept (Cohen, 1988; Wall, 2005). Vibrant cultures are not static but evolving. Rather than asking "Is this experience authentic?" and attempting to adhere to some arbitrary standard of authenticity, perhaps it is more important to ask, "Who makes claims for authenticity and what interests do such claims serve?" (Ryan and Huyton,

2002). Such questions should also generate more future research attention and their answers will throw light on two items: (1) who has the power to determine what cultural resources may or may not be harnessed for aboriginal tourism, and (2) who the beneficiaries of the development of cultural tourism will be.

Of course, like other research, the present research has some limitations. Firstly, questions about tourists' consumption behaviours (such as their expenses and purchases) and the frequency of their attendance of this and other aboriginal festivals (first time versus repeat visitor) were not explored in this research and merit further attention. Secondly, other segmentation variables, such as benefit-seeking, that have been usefully employed by other researchers (Jang, Morrison, & O'Leary, 2002; Frochot, 2005), could be incorporated into future studies. Thirdly, the research setting is confined to merely one tribal society in a specific geographical setting, calling into question the appropriateness of generalizing the results. However, this research contributes understanding on aboriginal cultural festivals for a number of reasons. First of all, the study is novel in that the author is not aware of other studies that have segmented tourists to aboriginal festivals on the basis of their motives. Second, some specific findings, such as the proportions of people and their motives in each segment, will vary from place to place, but the general point remains with respect to aboriginal tourism i.e. not all tourists have the same degree of commitment or interest in experiencing the aboriginal culture that a festival provides. Third, consistent with Lee et al. (2004), motivational variables are found to be more important than demographic variables in explaining and segmenting visitors to an aboriginal festival. Furthermore, the study can be readily replicated elsewhere.

Festival tourism was conceptualized here as being an ethnic experience made up of a mixture of tangible (e.g. entertaining performances) and intangible (e.g. perceived authenticity) components. Not only is it necessary to understand the motivations of tourists if the experiences that are provided are to meet their expectations, it is also necessary to understand the nature of the conditions on which aboriginal communities are prepared to welcome tourists—a topic that is not explored in this paper. As such, it is vital that efforts be made by government, the tourism business sector, and aboriginal communities, as indicated by Anwar and Sohail (2003) and Xie (2003), to promote tourism in aboriginal communities in an appropriate manner. For example, in viewing the fact that Tourism Bureau in Taiwan has declared the intension of putting more weight on ecotourism in many tribal areas (Tourism Bureau, Republic of China, 2005a, b), a knowledge of sustainable development should be solidly grounded and executed among tribal communities. As mentioned by Getz (1990) and

Backman, Backman, Uysal, and Sunshine (1995), festivals or special events can be viewed as being part of alternative tourism which can contribute to sustainable development by helping to preserving fragile natural and cultural environments. Innovative eco-aboriginal packages could be designed for the fast growing domestic market.

Unsurprisingly, compatible with conclusions of Schneider and Backman (1996) and Keng and Cheng (1999), the findings reveal that the location of this study appears not to have affected the outcome of using a similar scale in North America or elsewhere (Dewar et al., 2001). This study also supports the notion that some core dimensions of motivation appear to be similar in different festival research, while the order and the components of motivational factors vary according to type of festivals (Crompton & McKay, 1997; Lee, 2000). Regardless of cultural boundaries, a festival motivation scale developed in North America can be successfully transferred to other cultural festivals and even applied in the context of an aboriginal culture in this case. In addition, similar studies could be extended to foreign tourists whose characteristics and interests may be different from domestic tourists and who may become a more important market for tribal areas as the market matures.

In sum, the present study is a starting point in aboriginal tourism marketing. A follow-up market positioning, as suggested by Scott (1996), could be done through further analyses of visitors' motives in attending festivals. Hopefully, the attendance of tourists and repeat tourists to aboriginal sites will increase in a sustainable manner by offering mainstream tourism products that present aboriginal culture appropriately (Ryan and Huyton, 2002; McIntosh, 2004). Furthermore, sensitivity will be required in an effort to enrich tourists' festival participation experiences (Stewart & Deibert, 1993) and a detailed marketing mix should be established as a contribution to festival planning, as recommended by Sinclair (2003), in order that quality experiences can be provided to visitors without diluting the authenticity and integrity of aboriginal culture.

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