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Motivation and experience in symbiotic events: an illustrative example grounded in culture and business events

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the relation between motivation and experience in attendees at different types of events. There has been relatively little research into the experience dimensions of event attendees, or to what extent different motivations affect the experience, even in the events literature, motivation has been a central topic. Both academia and industry recognise event attendees' motivations as an important factor that helps us to understand developments in a broader framework. However, further research in this area is needed to understand how motivations and experience are related and how this relationship develops in different types of events. We used the Event Experience Scale in a survey conducted at two different events. This paper concludes with some critical observations identifying similarities and differences in motivations and experience at two different types of events, suggesting new pathways for further research.

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Introduction

In the events field literature, motivations are one of the central topics that both academia and industry have been focusing on. Event attendees' motivations are recognised as an important factor that helps researchers to understand trends in the broader framework of the events field, as well as from a management and marketing perspective of specific events. Motivations are also the basis on which event managers improve their marketing campaigns by knowing their audience better and targeting their groups accurately.

Motivations were first studied in the tradition of psychology, in which understanding the individual and the reasons why certain phenomena occur play a fundamental role. As human beings are complex, understanding motivations also helps to comprehend the causes of certain behaviours. In the events literature, this has been one of the most recent trends in analysing events. Leisure theories of motivation have also been used in many of the events studied during the last two decades, including music festivals, sports events or trade fairs and congresses. These are nurtured in the previously mentioned psychological trend; however, they also include the sociological dimension. If event

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attendee motivations are understood as individual expressions contextualised in the group and in society, then these motivations must also include other spheres.

In recent decades, some literature has included and looked at, albeit marginally, event attendees' experience (De Geus, Richards, & Toepoel, 2016; Wood & Moss, 2013). This interest also corresponds to events industry practices and developments, and to competition among high-level events. Due to the increasing number of events being produced, managers have to find new ways to successfully continue their event. Within these new developments, and within the framework of the experience economy, this distinction seems to demand more creativity and strong investment in continuous innovation to maintain attendee interest. Despite the fact that, initially at least, the literature generally focused on leisure events, these concerns and trends also exist in business events, which can have an important economic impact.

Oftentimes, motivations are assumed to be the basis for providing a better experience, since, when event managers know their target group motivations, they can better cater for the needs of their attendees. Another idea which is often taken for granted is that by measuring motivation and satisfaction levels, event managers will obtain enough information to guarantee that their target group's needs will be satisfied and their expectations met.

Recent studies have focused their attention on event experience (Morgan, 2008; Pegg & Patterson, 2010), but there is still a lack of attention in some areas, such as the elements which constitute the experience, the specifics of different types of events and the differences between experience dimensions and attendee profiles.

The objective of this paper is to investigate the importance of different dimensions in the framework of the study of event attendees' experience and motivations. Based on objectives, characteristics and certain specificities, experience and motivations will differ from one type of event to another.

This research paper, therefore, aims to contribute towards highlighting some of these dimensions by comparing two different events in their symbiotic characteristics. A business event called 4YFN (www.4yfn.com) produced within the framework of the Mobile World Congress, and a cultural event called the b-side Multimedia Arts Festival (<http://b-side.org.uk/>).

Experience and motivation in events

As is well known, events have become a field of study for academics as well as an axis of experimentation for professionals, where managers, attendees and stakeholders develop their interests. Nowadays, diverse events with different kinds of characteristics have emerged through new ideas to rejuvenate traditional events, transforming them into the current varied ecosystem of events. Traditionally, events have been seen as a social phenomenon 'in which, through a multiplicity of forms and a series of coordinated events, participate directly or indirectly and to various degrees, all members of a whole community' (Falassi, 1987). There has also been a consensus to understand events as 'a unique moment in time celebrated with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs' (Goldblatt & Nelson, 2001). Considering these definitions, two relevant event aspects can be underlined: the uniqueness dimension (as an event happens once and is not generally repeated), and events as platforms for achieving specific goals.

Recently Hannam, Mostafanezhad, and Rickly (2016) have offered a much broader definition, as they stress that changes, transitions and transformations could also be seen as events. In this sense, events may be also considered as part of a transition, with the event being the trigger for the results. Consequently, events may also be understood as platforms to generate specific effects and outcomes (Getz, 2012), but also, as Wiersma (2001) suggests, they may include effects related to business, economic, social and environmental aspects. Along the same lines, some academics have placed particular emphasis on the social effects of events, stressing that experience and motivation are important aspects to consider when attendees decide to take part in an event. Thus, social issues are likely to be an important element for attendees, especially when making the decision to participate or not in the event (Colombo, 2009; Dwyer, Forsyth, & Spurr, 2006; Richards & Wilson, 2004).

Event experience is underlined as a unique and memorable phenomena that happens once out of the ordinary (Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2015; Quan & Wang, 2004; Smith, 2016), for example, some event visitors considered much valued the subjective experience, the ambience and the feel of the event, much more than the programme offered (Kooistra, 2011). This leads us to consider that part of the experience can be given by a specific motivation, such as the desire to see something specific, to feel something specific. Therefore, the relationship between motivation and experience is evident in the desire to live something extraordinary. In this context, the characteristics of the events will be essential to generate experiences and motivations, but also share or differentiate sensations or feelings of the participants. The literature on event experience and motivation is scarce on observing diverse dimensions that events share in relation to the experience and motivations of the participants.

Generally, events have a number of common features. As Getz (2012) proposes, events have similar main objectives, they celebrate or present a specific topic, they do not have a permanent management structure and they have different frequencies which will determine their organisation, but they can also be planned or not, and consequently generate different outcomes. Therefore, several domains (such as planning, timing, management, content, field, location and participation) are important not only when analysing and studying events in general, but also in particular when observing aspects such as effectiveness, impact and attendee experiences and motivations. For example, the field in which the event operates is relevant, even if nowadays the boundaries between event fields and sectors are blurring. Nevertheless, certain standardised categories are still maintained, such as those stressed by Getz (2012) which include sports, recreation, leisure, entertainment, culture and business, all of which require specific venues and different management styles.

Since the early days of event studies, understanding and identifying motivations for attending events have been one of the main focuses, in particular relating to festivals and business events. Many of the motivations, particularly in leisure-related events such as festivals, have emerged from tourism and leisure studies, with theories such as the escape-seeking dichotomy proposed by Iso-Ahola (1982) being fundamental.

It was in the 1990s that more studies specifically aimed at event motivation started to surface. Uysal, Gahan, and Martin (1993) investigated motivation in one specific event, using a case study methodology. Backman, Backman, Uysal, and Sunshine (1995) focused on the relationship between motivations and activities within events tourism,

while Crompton and McKay (1997), basing their study on tourism motivations, mentioned the importance of understanding visitor motivations to better target, programme and position events. Scott (1995) investigated motivations in three similar events, with results aimed mainly at a segmentation of visitors and concluding with demographic factors relating to variation in the motivations. Later, the study of visitor motivations continued to attract the interest of academic studies that then began to focus either on comparison and systematisation (Nicholson & Pearce, 2001) or on providing a more detailed insight into aspects of motivations in specific types of events (Bowen & Daniels, 2005) and relationships between motivations, satisfaction, activities and, more recently, visitor experience (Morgan, 2008; Pegg & Patterson, 2010). This shift of focus to experience is related to what Pine and Gilmore (1998) have called the experience economy. In fact, in early literature from events studies (Getz, 1997, 2012) experience is a recurring word, as it also started to be in the industry, which is evident in event company websites, professional publications and even promotional materials for events.

Experience has become an important aspect of events, as event managers want to optimise their profits or event awareness and make the event successful. Events are particular in the sense that they are concentrated in space and time, and therefore the experience is enhanced by the sense of uniqueness and certain exclusivity. FOMO (Fear of missing out) is also another factor related to this concentration of space and time.

Experiences have been studied generally in the field of marketing but also in tourism. Nevertheless, some literature stresses the importance to analyse events experience and to try to find ways to measure that experience. Then, event experience has been gaining relevance in different areas, from the design of the experience (Richards, Marques, & Mein, 2014), understanding that experience (Mossberg, 2007), to event experience measuring (De Geus et al., 2016). Some concrete proposals have been published for example an interactive experience model, applied basically on a research based in museums (Falk & Dierking, 2011) or in a tourism-based experience model (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010), however, the contextualisation of the participant experience and its different dimensions have not been taken earnestly into account.

From the categories of events experience highlighted by Getz (2012) (cognitive, emotional and physical), De Geus et al. (2016) went on to the systematic study of the experience dimensions. Specifically, this model introduces several elements related to the experience frame shifting the pattern to a more comprehensive approach, introducing aspects such as experience conditions, interaction and involvement. In this work, the objective was to create a measuring instrument for event experiences. This instrument (the Event Experience Scale) was created and validated, adding the dimension of novelty to the previous three dimensions. The scale was later used and adapted to the Carnival project of ATLAS (Marques, Borba, Willemsen, & Durand, 2018). The scale is a valid instrument to understand event experiences, although it focuses on the subjective individual experience, which hardly takes into account the social sphere. Despite this limitation, the EES is still one of the first and most appropriate instruments to use when studying event experiences.

However, what the literature and these recent developments also show is that there is a gap between the literature on leisure-related events and business events. As Mair (2010) points out, the business events literature has only very recently started to consider the individual conference attendees, and Tretyakevich and Maggi (2012) delve into the leisure

aspects and potential motivations of a business event, since these can affect the decision-making process. The experience of the event can in fact be related to these motivations, so the question that remains to be answered is: to what extent do motivations affect the event experience, both in business events and leisure-related events?

Symbiotic events between business and culture

Business events have been transformed into an amalgam of activities. Traditionally, business events were classified as including meetings, markets, conferences, exhibitions, incentive travel, and any kind of corporate events. Nowadays, any exhibition could hold a conference, special meetings and corporate activities, all developed around a concrete industry with cultural activities and parallel programmes. These activities may also be related to a specific goal to develop a certain industry or generate economic development or tourism outcomes for the host region or city. For example, nowadays a market or shopping festival often includes cultural activities or a cultural programme – such as the REC Shopping Festival in Igualada (Spain), where concerts and performance activities are an added attraction to the event – and academic conferences like the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience (USA), one of the biggest conferences in the world where attendees can participate in a large programme of social events.

The characteristics of leisure and business events have been rapidly transforming during recent decades. Cultural events, traditionally understood as an expression of human activity that contributes to social and cultural human life, are nowadays strongly linked to tourism, business and other kinds of political strategies (Bodwin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2011). Cultural events are also divided into different categories depending on their programme, purpose and the art form they celebrate. One example is a festival that is held in a particular location, with the aim of bringing people together in that specific place, such as the European Capital of Culture initiatives. Calendar festivals are also relevant as events that celebrate the traditions of specific large or small communities, such as Caribbean carnivals and commercial music festivals, which have become highly popular outdoor events held in spring and summer.

Nevertheless, most of these cultural event categories have been evolving over recent decades, and we can now find commercial music festivals with a clear aim to become a sector that produces a professional fair related to the event, such as *Sónar Barcelona: Music, Creativity and Technology* (Spain) or a traditional community calendar festival designed to promote a particular product, such as the Day of the Omelette with Sauce (*Diada de la truita amb suc*) in Ulldemolins (Spain).

These examples illustrate a current trend in generating symbiosis in events by combining various characteristics, allowing organisers to select different dimensions and choose the best of each category to more effectively develop their goals, and yield concrete outcomes generally related to development, social, economic or corporate aims. Therefore, symbiotic events can be defined as those that would originally have been classified in one of the established categories, especially due to their relationship with a specific sector, but that have opened up their programmes to include additional content and activities that were not previously considered to fall within this specific category.

The idea of symbiotic events differs from what are known as hybrid events in the corporate world, as they do not just combine physical and virtual experiences. Symbiotic

events may have several characteristics in common, although they differ in their fundamental definition. The experience and motivation of attendees may be different or similar depending on the event itself, but it would be important to observe similarities among attendees at these events which combine diverse characteristics.

As boundaries between event categories are becoming more blurred, motivations of attendees are also more mixed. In this context, this exploratory comparative research aims at contributing to the event studies literature by analysing different dimensions of experience and motivations of attendees of business and leisure-related events. Concretely comparing these dimensions to observe what similarities and differences we find between these events.

Research design and methods

This research focuses on event attendees' experience and motivations, and aims at establishing a relationship between different dimensions. Therefore a quantitative approach was deemed most suitable. A survey was applied consisting of three parts: motivations, the Event Experience Scale (EES) and socio-economic characteristics.

The EES conceptual model was applied considering: (1) event conditions that were liminoid, unusual and out of the ordinary, along with the interpersonal interactions; (2) event dimensions on both sides, in the personal realm by observing expectations and motivations, but also in the event environment by studying psychological and social aspects that build anticipation and encourage attendees to return; and, finally, (3) event outcomes such as satisfaction, emotions, behaviour and memories, among others. We focused on the event dimensions proposed by the EES, as they allow us to observe aspects such as attendee motivation as well as experience, understanding some differences depending on the engagement and involvement in the event.

The scale was applied in 2016 and 2017 to the b-side Multimedia Arts Festival (<http://b-side.org.uk/>) and the 4 Years From Now (4YFN) event, which forms part of the Barcelona Mobile World Congress (MWC, <http://mobileworldcapital.com>). These two events have the particularity of being recognised as a specific sector-based event (one cultural and the other business). However, they have certain characteristics that frame them within the idea of symbiotic events, which mix activities or specificities from different sectors. Therefore, they are suitable for their similarity as well as their differences as two good examples in which to observe visitors' motivation and experience.

Empirical setting

The 4 years from now (4YFN)

4YFN is an innovation and start-up platform developed within the framework of a mobile technology congress with the aim of promoting and bringing to market new ideas and business models. Its main goal is to harness the synergy at the MWC to create a business platform for newcomers and on which talent can grow, business can take place and networking with the world mobile industry can be done. Although it could be considered a business event, 4YFN collaborates closely with training institutions, accelerators, cultural platforms and social initiatives; therefore, all the products presented and activities carried out at this event are of the same nature. The programme is relatively diverse, ranging from

business and culture to training. 4YFN is organised and promoted by Mobile World Capital Barcelona (<http://mobileworldcapital.com>) and GSMA, the global association of the world's leading mobile operators. The data was collected in February 2017 in Barcelona.

b-side Multimedia Arts Festival

The b-side Multimedia Arts Festival (<http://b-side.org.uk/>), based in the United Kingdom, is produced and organised by a group of artists to provide reflection, beauty, interventions and encounters with the arts along the UK coast. The festival takes place in Weymouth and Portland every two years, although the b-side organisation is permanently active through a year-round programme. The main goal of the b-side Festival is to offer a space for artists and communities to experiment and exchange knowledge and experience. It offers workshops where visitors can take part in encounters and talks in which everyone may propose ideas and share reflections. The programme is based on exhibitions, performances, open-air interventions, concerts, talks, reflections, and more. Therefore, we also consider that, even though this event should be understood as an arts and culture festival, its variability, not only in form but also in content, with its conceptual reflections offers us a much wider scope. The data was collected in September 2016 in Portland.

Sampling and data analysis

4YFN had an estimated 20,000 visitors and b-side 5000 visitors. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, the aim was to get a minimum of 100 valid responses, which according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2007) is the minimum number of respondents to withdraw relevant insights. Although the degree of representativeness might be lower than with a larger sample, it is still valid and reliable to provide new insights on both events.

In both cases, the data was collated on-site. For 4YFN event, a group of students collected data during one day of the event, randomly asking respondents in different locations, using the platform Qualtrics. For b-side festival, data was collected in major venues and happenings throughout the event by volunteers working at the event and then inserted into Qualtrics for a matter of consistency. In total, there were 312 valid responses, with 195 survey valid responses at the b-side Festival and 117 at the 4YFN event.

To underline the relevance of diverse dimensions in the study of event attendees' experience and motivations, we considered some methodological procedures to analyse the data using SPSS 24. Firstly we developed a description of the data using percentages in light of different variables. Although other variables would also have been of interest, we focused on two of them, gender and previous visits. Gender was considered as it has been an outstanding aspect in the recent debates related to the events industry. Thomas (2017) has criticised inequality from the event industry power positions perspective, and Jarman (2018) emphasises that festivals are social markers mirroring real social structures. Previous visits are also an important element when analysing motivations and experience, according to Wilson, Arshed, Shaw, and Pret (2017). We take into account the link between event experience, satisfaction and loyalty. Since repeating audience generally highlights a positive experience and, therefore, a certain motivation to return to the

event, while events with an audience consisting of a majority of people who visit the event for the first time, tends to show the opposite.

Consequently afterwards we proceeded to develop an illustration of the motivations exposed by informants on both events, as it gives us the general idea about the tendency of our data on each event. Finally, we proceed to apply the EES following the proposal of De Geus et al. (2016).

Findings and discussion

We first present the results of the generic description of the data obtained based on two variables; followed by the results of motivation and experience of each event; and lastly, we analyse the relationship between the previous visit and experience of each event.

General profile of respondents

As indicated above, we present the description of the data we have collected based on variables that are considered of great importance to observe motivations and experience, gender and previous visit. The gathered data provides an initial picture of those two variables and, strongly illustrate the idea that these two events have markedly different gender profiles, since 4YFN was mostly attended by men (72%), whereas there were more women at the b-side Festival (68%).

Moreover, previous experience and information about the events are always important when analysing motivations and experience. At the outset, 4YFN could be considered an event that attendees like to repeat, while attendees of the b-side Festival, given that it is about constant discovery, could consequently be identified as non-repeating attendees. As [Figure 1](#) shows, the data reveal otherwise. At 4YFN, the majority of the respondents (about 60%) indicated that they had not previously attended the event, while at the b-side Festival more than half (about 52%) of the attendees interviewed had been at previous editions.

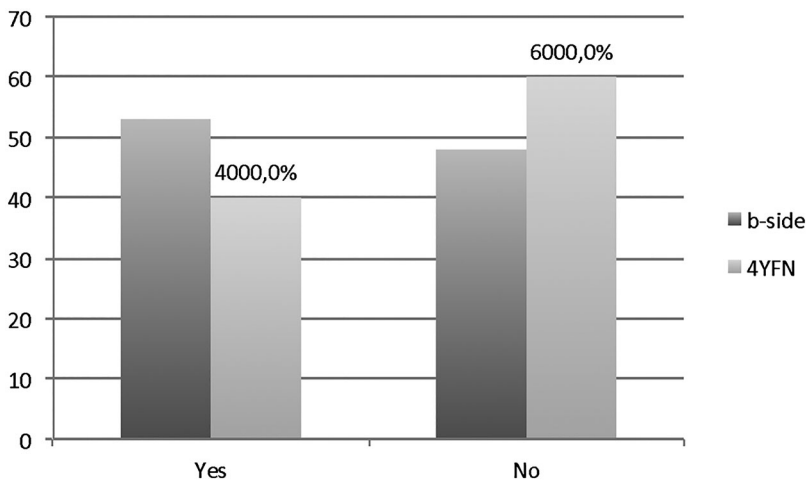


Figure 1. Previous visits to the event. Source: Authors own elaboration.

In this sense and considering all characteristics of each event, it could be deduced that in the case of the 4YFN, participants have a clear commercial goal and the majority only attend once, for economic, commercial or work issues. While the b-side is a leisure festival, which makes it attractive from an entertainment point of view, and consequently if attendees had had a good experience there is a tendency to repeat.

Attendees motivation and experience

We now present the results of the motivation expressed by participants in each event as well as the experience that they have also expressed through the analysis of EES. Finally, we have generated a comparison between both events regarding attendees motivation and experience.

The 2016 b-side Festival attendees' motivations were mainly linked to three factors: 'liking the event' (nearly 45%), 'to learn something' (over 30%) and 'to try something new' (just over 25%). It is therefore suggested that a connection with learning and acquiring some new form of knowledge is very important. The musical programme is also an important factor and plays a key role in the overall set of motivations, ranking higher than aspects such as entertainment and spending time with family and friends. In terms of the 'other' category, it is relevant to point out that many respondents mentioned 'education' and 'professionally-related purposes'. This may be important for future planning, but the results should be also considered with caution, as some of the data were collected specifically from groups of students on field visits, which might explain some of these findings (Figure 2).

There are significant connections between previous visits and some of the motivations. For example, 71.9% of people that had previously visited the b-side Festival indicated 'I like this event' as a motivation. The significant relationship between these elements suggests that people who have previously attended the festival are more inclined to return, motivated by a good relationship with the event. The same seems to apply to the musical programme (which might be identified as the presence of soundscapes). Thus, respondents who have attended previous editions of the festival are more inclined to be attracted by the musical programme.

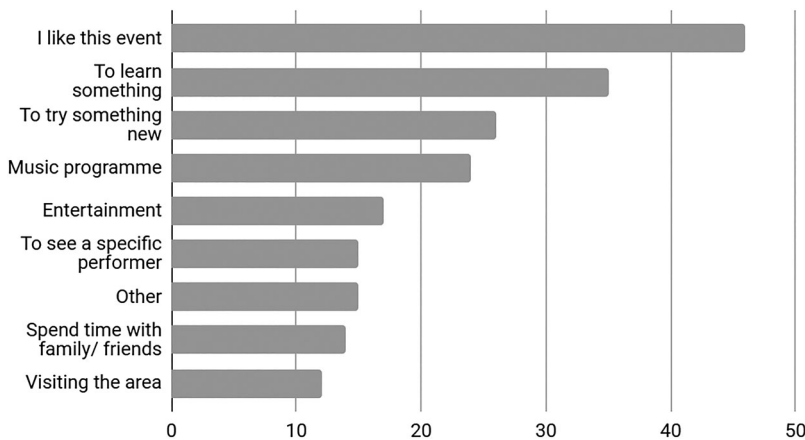


Figure 2. Motivations at the b-side Festival. Source: Authors own elaboration.

It should also be underlined that there is a significant relationship between people who had not been to the festival before and those who were motivated to visit the local area (73.9%). This means that the b-side Festival is a factor in attracting people to the destination. Another important motivational aspect is the relationship between the repeat visits and learning: 61.3% of respondents who had not visited the b-side Festival previously wanted ‘to learn something’, compared with 38.7% of repeat visitors (Figure 3).

Attendee motivations at the 2017 4YFN were slightly different from those of the b-side Festival, as they were mainly business-related. There were three main motivating factors for attending the event: ‘business’ (almost 22%), ‘networking’ (14%) and ‘knowledge’ (13%). It is illustrative that these motivations are related to factors strongly linked to the economy and innovation, and it is also relevant to observe how some informants related networking with business (6%) or with knowledge (5%).

These results are slightly aligned with the event’s goals, which seek to help technological start-ups to network with investors and connect with large corporations that promote innovation. Thus, the event is designed to help those start-ups that are looking for first rounds of investment, are interested in specialised advice, or want to internationalise and accelerate their digital business. In this sense, it could be said that 4YFN is perceived as a place to develop and connect entrepreneurs and companies, and exchange innovation experience, and, therefore, the main reason to attend is logically ‘business’, followed by ‘networking’, factors that are also strongly related to ‘knowledge’.

Furthermore, in this case, there are some connections between motivation and previous visits. Although the majority of the respondents were visiting the event for the first time (60%), a large number had attended in previous years (40%). Of these, many indicated that their visit was for business reasons (70%), indicating that people who had been at the event before were also inclined to return for economic reasons. Nevertheless, the vast majority of respondents were attending for the first time, leading us to conclude that their motivations were linked to the event’s characteristics, since it is designed to promote specific new company initiatives that enable them to continue with their business projects. Therefore, the majority of participants only intend to visit the event once, and those who return are seemingly investors or accelerators.

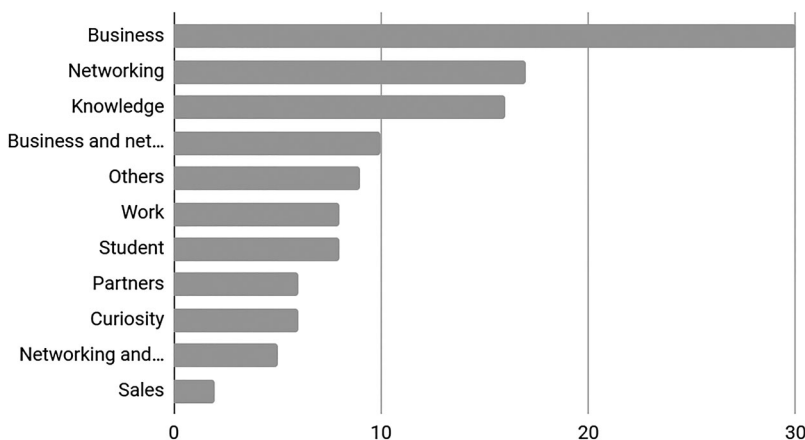


Figure 3. Motivations at the 4YFN event. Source: Authors own elaboration.

In order to be able to compare motivation results of both events, we recorded some of the responses, grouping them according to the content expressed by the informants. There was a reduction of the different concepts expressed by attendees on b-side and 4YFN from twenty to seven to be able to compare them. Figure 4 shows the similarities and differences on event motivations expressed by attendees on both events.

We can observe that both events share one element in common which is learning. From b-side, respondents consider a motivation to attend the event aspects such as ‘to learn something’ or to ‘try something new’ and also at the 4YFN attendees also expressed as motivation ‘knowledge’ to be an ‘student’ or to have ‘curiosity’. As it can be seen in the figure, this is the element that coincides on both events, since in most of all others they differ to a great extent. It also seems relevant to see that learning is the main motivation in the b-side whereas it is not in the 4YFN, which is still business.

Visitors’ experience at the b-side Festival was clearly positive, with all items scoring a mean of at least 5.6. The lowest score indicates that visitors were not very aware of their own values, although some cognitive dimensions are among the highest, such as ‘learning something’ and ‘thinking’. Uniqueness is also an important feature of this event. For a festival, it is interesting to note that the excitement mean is comparatively low (5.7). Most of these results can be explained by the fact that the b-side Festival has a strong experimental character. For this reason, the festival is seen as unique, but as not many people know much about it and its artistic performances can be rather unusual, the level of excitement before attending the festival is not as high as might be expected, which contrasts with the sense of learning and acquiring knowledge. Therefore, more than being an emotional event, this festival clearly has a strong cognitive dimension.

As shown in the Event Experience Scale, it is worth mentioning that in the case of 4YFN, most of the respondents considered that their experience during the event involved

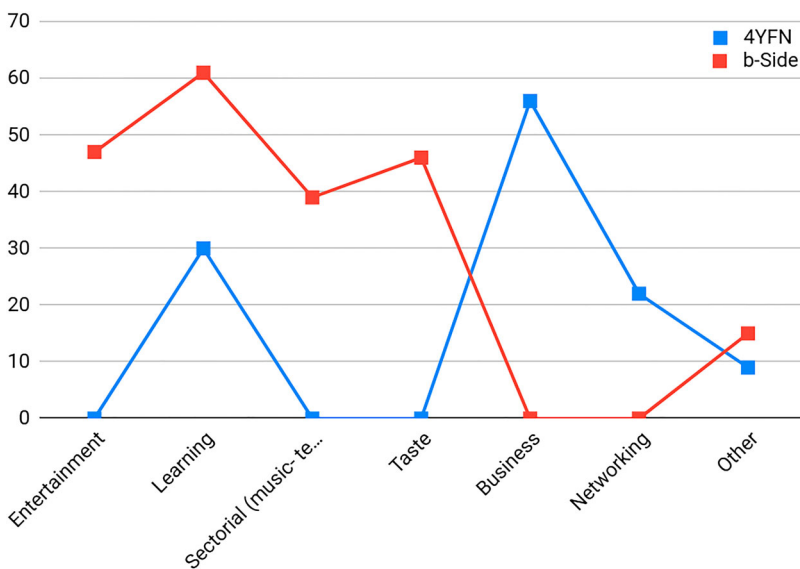


Figure 4. Motivations comparison of the b-side Festival and 4YFN. Source: Authors own elaboration.

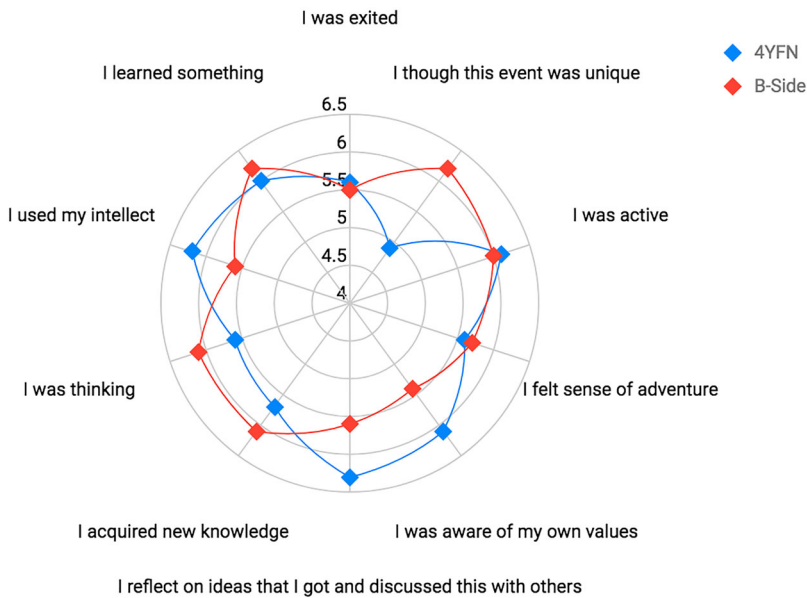


Figure 5. Event Experience Scale comparison of the b-side Festival and 4YFN. Source: Authors own elaboration.

‘using their intellect’, ‘reflecting on ideas and discussing them’ and ‘being active’. This data suggests that the activity conducted during the event is related to business, with people and companies looking for economic opportunities, networking and knowledge. Figure 5 also illustrates how those who responded to the survey considered that the event is not unique. In this sense, it could be understood that the informants see this event as having the standard format of corporate fairs, of which there are many in the world. Therefore, even though this event is a business activity, when the respondents reflect on their experience, they also connect it with a cognitive dimension.

Comparing the responses from both events, attendee experiences are similar but they do differ in several aspects. As seen in Figure 5, the major similarities are related to ‘being active’ and ‘being excited’, as in both cases the informants considered that they had similar experiences. The greatest difference between attendees’ experiences centres on the ‘uniqueness of the event’: 4YFN it is not considered to be unique, whereas the b-side Festival is. Nevertheless, it is important to underline that in both events the cognitive dimension is relevant, as respondents mentioned experience aspects related to learning, thinking, using their intellect and reflecting on ideas and discussing them.

Previous visit related with experience

One of the possible explorations that could be done to analyse different dimensions influencing visitors decisions, would be to establish the relation between previous visit and experience. Concretely to observe if the respondent which had been previously in the event has another kind of experience than the one who has not previously visited the event before. Consequently following we develop a bivariate analysis to observe frequencies that allow us to identify established relations with those variables.

Taking into account that audience who knows the event and remembers a good experience, may be motivated to visit the event again. Then here will be the link between visitors experience and motivation.

To be able to observe concretely this variable relationship we select the experience that has been considered more in each of the events as well as the one that has been considered less within the EES. In the case of the 4YFN, it is ‘I thought this event was unique’ that becomes an average of 4.9 points, and ‘I reflected on ideas that I got and discussed this with others’ that obtained an average of 6.2 points. Figure 6 represents some results of this bivariate analysis.

In this case, it is worth mentioning that a great number of respondents agreed (considering somewhat agree, agree and strongly agreed) on both experiences. Even in 4YFN the majority of the respondents did not attend before the event, in the first experience ‘I thought this event was unique’ its is relevant to underline that of those respondents considering ‘somewhat agree’ the difference between those attending the event before and those do not is relatively large, almost more than 10 points. And contrastelly those respondents ‘disagreeing’ about this experience has not difference between the ones who know the events before and the ones being for the first time there, with 6 each. The same goes for the experience ‘I reflected on ideas that I got and discussed this with others’ (illustrated in red and number 2 in the graph). There is a big difference between those who have previously attended the event and those who do not, such as those who respond ‘agree’ with a difference of 10 points, while those who respond ‘disagree ‘neither’, ‘somewhat agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ only have a difference of 3 points. This shows that in the case of the 4YFN there are different levels of the experiences in which yes, the fact of having attended the event previously can generate some influence, however there are other levels which this aspects is not really influential.

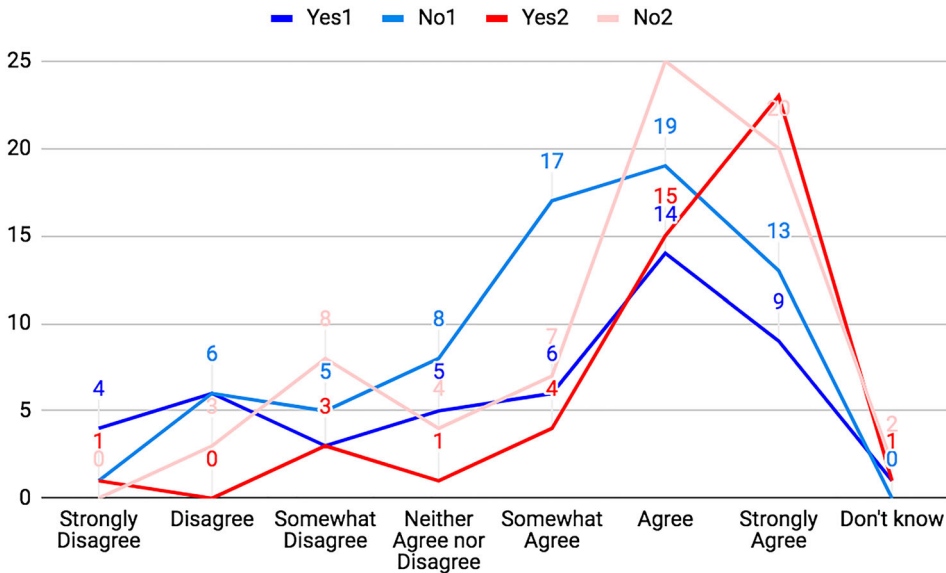


Figure 6. Relation between experience and previous visit in 4YFN. Source: Authors own elaboration.

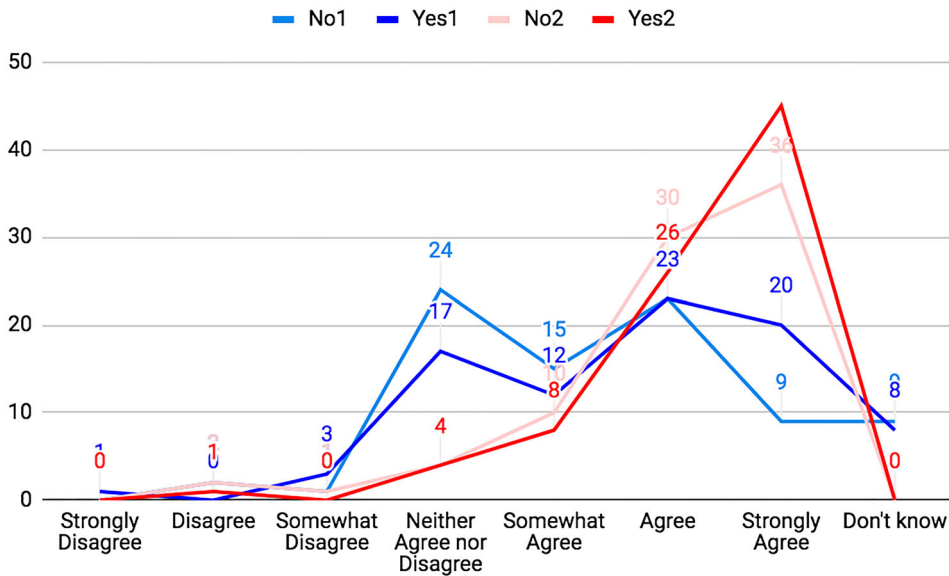


Figure 7. Relation between experience and previous visit in b-side. Source: Authors own elaboration.

Regarding the B-Side, we also take for the analysis those experiences with the most but also the less considered. Mainly the most considered, 'I learned something' which becomes an average of 6.2 points, has the similar general behaviour to what we have seen regarding 4YFN; most of the informants agreed with this experience, 'somewhat agree' 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. Nevertheless the less considered experience 'I was aware of my own values' which becomes an average of 5.4 points, most of the answers distributed between 'neither agree or disagree' and 'agree' (Figure 7).

In this case, it is also interesting the differences of consideration between those informants being for the first time in the festival or not. Regarding 'I learned something' (represented with red and number 2 at the figure) it is remarkable that generally the respondents do not differ too much between those who have previously attended and those who do not. It started to differentiate in the case of 'agree' with 4 points of difference and those who consider 'strongly agree' with approximately 10 points. Contrasting the behaviour of the experience 'I was aware of my own values' (represented with blue and number 1 at the figure) the most difference is on those considering this experience 'strongly agree' with 11 points, followed by the ones considering 'neither' with 7 points of difference. In this case also it is illustrative to see the influence that in some levels of those experiences play the fact that some respondents have been before into the events or not.

Summarising, even if it is really complex to affirm that the previous visit influence the experience of the visitors, those analysis framed the idea that the experience of our respondents has been at least in different levels depending on this previous visit.

Conclusion

This paper aims to highlight the importance of different dimensions when analysing motivations and event experience. Although the event studies literature has studied

motivations, the events experience is yet understudied in its different complexities. Using the Event Experience Scale (De Geus et al., 2016), we observed attendees' motivation and experience at two different events, revealing the importance of event objectives, characteristics and certain specificities for better understanding attendee motivations and experiences.

Although it may appear that the two events analysed are quite different, as one is a leisure festival (b-side Festival in the UK) and the other is a corporate event (4YFN within the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona), there are some similarities and variances. On the one hand, what makes them alike is that they can be understood as symbiotic events, which we have identified as events that, despite having different objectives, share certain characteristics related to social and economic development. On the other hand, their distinct characteristics, the sector in which they operate and their visitors make them different. For example, the attendees considered each event differently, so their motivations and experiences should be completely different. However, the data presented in this article highlight that this is not necessarily the case.

The results show that there is a logical link between event characteristics and motivation. In other words, leisure event motivation is related to taste, innovation and learning, as most of the answers focus on liking, learning and newness, while corporate event motivation is related to strategic company aspects, such as business, networking and knowledge.

However, it is in the case of experience that similarities appear, since the results do not vary much from one event to another in specific dimensions. For example, at both events, visitors experience feelings of being very active as well as excited by the event activities. This would indicate that these two events have some attendee experiences in common, leading us to draw the conclusion of there being a possible relationship between these results and what we understand as symbiotic events. Consequently, we could stress that, although these events are different in origin and intention, there are various aspects related to attendee experience that they have in common. Also, there are other aspects that may end up influencing experience, such as the fact that they visited the event beforehand or not. Through the analysis carried out in this research, we have observed that there is some influence on the levels of the experiences expressed by the respondents and the previous visit.

Furthermore, we could also state that it is possible to bridge the gap between leisure and business events in terms of analysis methodologies, as in this case, we observed the possibility of sharing a research instrument (the EES) which works for both events.

This study is however limited to two types of events. Further research should include other event types as well as more sample units. This would allow to understand to what extent the main conclusions of this study are applicable to different types of events in the same or different countries. Therefore the event studies field would benefit from expanding the present research, both to advance in the understanding of such events and the improvement of management practices. It is evident from this research that the events industry should provide increased attention to how the event experience can be further understood in its different dimensions in relation to the visitors' motivations. This will allow for improved experiences and better events in such a competitive environment.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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