

# CULTURAL TOURISM MOTIVATION – THE CASE OF ROMANIAN YOUTHS

**Adina Negrușă**

*Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai Facultatea de Business*

**Medet Yolal**

*Anadolu University School of Tourism and Hotel Management*

*Cultural attractions have become particularly important and play an important role in tourism at all levels. They are also increasingly being placed at the centre of urban and rural development and constitute an important aspect of social and cultural lives of the residents. Cultural tourism is defined as ‘visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution. The main purpose of this research is to identify and understand the general dimensions of motivation for attending cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is motivated by tourists’ interest in historical, artistic, scientific or heritage offering by a community, region, group or institution. It can be considered an independent segment of the tourism industry as well as a complement to mainstream tourism, in connection with other forms of attraction. In this sense, local communities and national organizations all over the world have developed particular cultural and heritage tourism products that attract increase the number of tourist visits each year. The study examine the motivations of Romanian young people in attending cultural tourism for underling the perspectives of cultural tourism development in Romania. We developed a quantitative study and designed a structured questionnaire to obtain information regarding youths’ motivations and perceptions toward attending cultural tourism, including their demographic characteristics. Based on significant literature review we included 7 composite motives: learning reasons, cultural motives, experience something new, pleasure-seeking and entertainment, physical reasons, relaxation-based motives and indirect motives. The findings of this research provide a comprehensive view of cultural tourism behavior in Romania. The evidence suggests that for the young and highly educated generation the most important reasons which attract them to cultural tourism activities are the novelty and learning experience. These distinct characteristics of young people’s motivation and their behavior toward cultural tourism have a number of both practical implications for the cultural tourism organizers and theoretical contribution to the growing research of cultural tourism.*

*Keywords: tourism, cultural tourism, motivation, youth customers,*

*JEL codes: L83, M39*

## **Introduction**

A growing number of visitors are becoming special-interest travelers who rank the arts, heritage and/or other cultural activities as one of the top five reasons for traveling (NASAA, 2010). In the last decade cultural tourism became a big business, representing from 8 to 20 percent of the tourist market share. The number of international tourists increased in the last years as well as cultural tourism. However, a distinction should be made between those people visiting specifically for cultural purposes and those who are incidentally taking in culture on their visits. For this reason a clear counting of cultural tourists for a country could not be done properly in practice. In fact it is considered that only a small proportion of international visitors could be motivated by a single cultural attraction. According to a study conducted by the European Commission, 20 percent of tourists who visited Europe cited cultural motivations, while 60 percent of European tourists are interested in cultural discovery during their trips (European Forum of World Heritage Cities, 2003).

What motivates people to participate or experience cultural tourism? Although there is extensive research on travel motivations, preferences and behaviors, going back to the early years of tourism research, until very recently travel research on students has been a neglected area. This study aims to explore the motives of students attending cultural events, heritage exhibits, rural places, or historical sites; collectively termed cultural tourism. For the purpose of the study, the paper starts with a review of the literature on motivation, and a short section of cultural tourism development in Romania.

### Literature review

Motivation is the initiator of the decision process in individuals. It is '*the internal, psychological influences affecting individuals' choices*' (Middleton, 1994, p. 51). Motivation is composed of psychological/biological needs and wants that arouse, direct, and integrate a person's behavior and activity (Dann, 1981; Iso-Ahola, 1980). Therefore, understanding consumers' motives is a key prerequisite to designing and tailoring offerings to particular markets (Park, Reisinger & Kang, 2008). Effective marketing and managements is impossible unless the consumers' motivation were identified, understood, and prioritized. Knowing the motivation of visitors allows tourism agents to intercede more successfully at various points in the visitors' decision-making process, resulting in the attraction of more visitors, getting them to stay longer, increasing their enjoyment, changing anti-social behavior, and much more (Dewar, Meyer & Li, 2001).

There are three well-known theories of tourism motivation that can explain tourists' behavior. These are Maslow's (1954) needs hierarchy, Dann's (1977) and Crompton's (1979) pull-and – push factors, and Iso-Ahola's (1982) *escape* and *seeking* dichotomy.

According to Maslow, human needs are arranged in a hierarchy, from the most important to the least pressing. Maslow's hierarchy of needs in order of importance is physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self actualization needs (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2006). The theory implies that when a need is satisfied, it will not be a motivator any longer, and the person will then try to satisfy the next most important need.

Dann (1981) and Crompton (1979) explain tourism behavior with pull-and-push factors. Pull factors are external factors that are aroused by the product or destination and induce people to visit a destination, stay in a hotel, or attend an event. On the other hand push factors are internal forces that are psychological in nature and create the desire to travel. Pull factors are connected to external, situational, or cognitive aspects of motivation (Yoon & Uysal, 2005) and stimulate push factors. Crompton (1979) identifies seven push motives and two pull factors. The push motives were escape from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, and facilitation of social interaction. The two remaining motives, novelty and education, formed the pull factors. Iso-Ahola (1982) model proposes that the two major motivation forces that influence behaviour are *escapism* (from the daily routine) and *seeking* (desire to obtain psychological rewards via experiencing new things, places, tastes etc.).

The main cultural points of interest in Romania are represented by monasteries and churches, which attract most of the foreign tourists who want to learn some of Romania's traditions and history. Domestic cultural attractions seem to raise a limited interest among Romanians (Dulau, & Coros, 2009). From one year to another, the cultural tourism consumption is gradually diminishing among young people. In 2009, the smallest consumption of culture was registered compared to previous 5 years. This decrease of cultural tourism consumption affected entertainment and cultural tourism specifically (National Barometer, 2009).

In 2009, a 20 percent decrease was registered for the museums and exhibitions visitors comparing to 2008 (National Barometer, 2009). The most important factor which determined this tendency was the decrease of visitors with high school level of education, which in 2009 visited museums

more frequently. More than 60 percent of the respondents to this barometer did not visit a museum, nor attend to an opera or theater performance, nor participate a folkloric fair or to a music or entertainment event. In conclusion the Romanians are less interested in cultural activities and so in cultural tourism. Cultural event like Sibiu European Capital of Culture 2007 has been demonstrated to have a strong impact on cultural tourism. This proves that the program was efficient both from national and international perspectives. Tourists mostly preferred artistic products like: musical performances, art festivals, visiting museums, film shows and theater plays. The popularity of the program resulted in a growth in the number of tourists and visitors who enjoyed cultural activities. The program attracted more than 800,000 tourists which represent a 300 percent increase compared with the previous year, 2006 (Statistical Yearbook for Sibiu County, 2006).

## Methodology

This paper aims to examine the motivations of students in attending cultural tourism. For the purpose of the study, we developed a quantitative study on the students from the Faculty of Business, 'Babes-Bolyai' University from Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

A structured questionnaire was designed to obtain information regarding students' motivations and perceptions toward attending cultural tourism, including their demographic characteristics. The data collection instrument was developed in Romanian and had two sections. The first section had a motivation scale. The current study adopted the motivation scales from previous travel motivation studies (Uysal, Gahan & Martin, 1993; Prentice, Butler & Airey, 2006; Cetinel & Yolal, 2008). Based on significant literature review we established that these motives fall into 7 dimensions: learning reasons, cultural motives, experience something new, pleasure-seeking and entertainment, physical reasons, relaxation-based motives and indirect motives. Thirty-three items were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from *1= not important at all*, to *5= very important*. The last section of the questionnaire included such demographic variables as age, gender, class, monthly budget and participants' monthly budget spent on cultural tourism activities.

Data were collected by way of a self-administered questionnaire with the study sample comprising students from bachelor degree programs. Of the 200 students who responded, 19 questionnaires were incomplete and thus eliminated from further data analysis. As a result, 181 usable questionnaires were retained in the analysis, representing 90 percent response rate.

## Results and discussions

The descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of participants is presented in Table 1. The gender distribution of the students was quite uneven, with 32.0 percent male and 68.0 percent female. They are mostly between the ages of 20-21. Forty-four percent of the students are in their first year of education, 22.1 percent in the second and 33.7 percent in their third year.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Participants

Demographic characteristic	Frequency N	Percentage %
<b>Gender</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100</b>
Female	123	68.0
Male	58	32.0
<b>University degree</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> year	80	44.2
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	40	22.1
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	61	33.7

*Author processed.*

24.5 percent of the students are also employed. This factor influences their budget available (Pearson Chi-square value is 41.9). Thus, 45.5 percent of students which indicated a monthly

budget about 200-350 Euros are employed, and similarly 63 percent of respondents indicated a budget of 350 or more Euros are employed, too.

The exploratory factor analysis of 33 items of motivation resulted in five factors; learning, cultural, relaxation, entertainment and novelty, and explained almost 51.65 percent of the variance in motivation.

The main reason why students attend cultural tourism is the ‘need to experience something new’. Due to the highest scores obtained for ‘experience new and different things’ and ‘the variety of things to see and do’, a younger generation could be attracted to different forms of cultural tourism regarding the offer’s novelty and promotional activities (Table 2).

Cultural tourism in general is connected with some types of learning experience like getting information about places, people and events, expanding knowledge or doing something worthy for themselves. Thus 5 items for learning motives were defined in the questionnaire: to broaden general knowledge, to prepare homework, to contribute education, because it is important, and to learn about culture. These items also obtained high scores from the total 33 items, placing ‘learning’ motive in the second position of the five factors.

Also we took into consideration the need to attract students to cultural events, such as festivals, exhibitions, performances etc. These kinds of events have a major impact on the development of cultural tourism. Some festivals are organized now in historical places or use cultural themes for attracting more visitors and creating a cultural image for the city and for the community. For this reason we analyzed student’s attitudes toward cultural reasons on 7 items. The entire factor comes in the third position with an average of 3.71 mean values and the highest score was obtained for the ‘need to experience cultural events and places’, followed by the ‘desire to have these experiences’ and ‘learn or share as a part of their culture’.

The results of the study revealed that ‘push’ factors like learning and experience something new registered higher scores for female as well as male students in comparison with ‘pull’ factors like cultural motives. These findings are suggesting the idea that promotion campaigns and the promoted image should be more concentrated on the benefits of cultural tourism activities to general education and learning process. The novelty feature should also be highlighted for the younger people to generate a positive attitude on cultural events or places.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for 5 factors

<b>I</b>	<b><i>Learning (5 items)</i></b>	<b><i>Mean</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b><i>KMO</i></b>
I.16	<b><i>To broaden my general knowledge</i></b>	<b>4.06</b>	0.857	
I.19	To prepare homework or a project	3.52	0.998	
I.23	<b><i>Would contribute to my education</i></b>	<b>4.07</b>	0.786	
I.26	It is important to visit cultural places	3.79	0.907	
I.27	To learn about culture	3.92	0.816	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.87</b>		<b>0.707</b>
<b>II</b>	<b><i>Cultural (7 items)</i></b>	<b><i>Mean</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b><i>KMO</i></b>
I.5	To be with people with similar interests	3.51	1.057	
I.6	<b><i>To experience cultural events and places</i></b>	<b>4.06</b>	0.857	
I.12	<b><i>I enjoy cultural places and events</i></b>	<b>3.98</b>	0.813	
I.14	A specific interest in such attractions	3.49	0.910	
I.24	It is a part of my culture	3.86	0.920	
I.28	I felt that I should visit the cultural places	3.47	0.946	
I.29	Because of its historic background	3.63	0.901	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.71</b>		<b>0.719</b>

<b>III</b>	<b><i>Relaxation (7 items)</i></b>	<b><i>Mean</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b><i>KMO</i></b>
I.1	To get away from the demands of life	3.22	1.127	
I.2	To have a change from my daily routine	3.62	0.996	
I.8	<b><i>To be with friends/ family</i></b>	<b>3.75</b>	1.065	
I.13	It is important to visit cultural places	3.30	1.055	
I.17	<b><i>To spend my spare time</i></b>	<b>3.66</b>	0.979	
I.25	To be emotionally involved	3.07	1.068	
I.33	I want to relax	3.59	1.049	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.46</b>		<b>0.697</b>
<b>IV</b>	<b><i>Pleasure-seeking and entertainment (4 items)</i></b>	<b><i>Mean</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b><i>KMO</i></b>
I.9	<b><i>To be with other people who enjoy</i></b>	<b>3.52</b>	0.998	
I.18	To tell friends about it	2.92	1.019	
I.31	<b><i>I want to have some entertainment</i></b>	<b>3.48</b>	1.083	
I.32	I want a day out	3.19	1.105	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.28</b>		<b>0.629</b>
<b>V</b>	<b><i>Experience something new(4 items)</i></b>	<b><i>Mean</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b><i>KMO</i></b>
I.3	I was curious	3.83	0.900	
I.4	<b><i>To experience new and different things</i></b>	<b>4.24</b>	0.814	
I.7	It is stimulating and exciting	3.59	0.894	
I.11	<b><i>I like the variety of things to see and do</i></b>	<b>4.23</b>	0.754	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.97</b>		<b>0.635</b>

*Author processed.*

## Conclusions

This study was an initial attempt to understand the motivation for attending cultural tourism among Romanian youths. The findings of this research provide a comprehensive view of cultural tourism behavior in Romania. The evidence suggests that for the young and highly educated generation the most important reasons which attract them to cultural tourism activities are the novelty and learning experience. Knowing this, the marketing strategies and policies should be more oriented to these characteristics. Since new, different and stimulating experiences are strongly connected with products like festivals and musical events, performance and exhibitions, it may be concluded that these represent the appropriate ways for developing cultural tourism in Romania. Festivals and local events provide the opportunity for the communities to develop and share their culture and help the tourists to interact with the host community.

This study also investigated the differences in motivations of young people according to their demographics characteristics such as: gender, university degree and monthly budget. The results of this study revealed that the gender has a small influence on cultural motivations. The higher budget group is influenced by the reason of 'being a part of my culture'. On the other hand, students with lower monthly budgets are influenced by the need to experience cultural events and places.

The motivational push factors show that learning reasons like 'to broaden general knowledge', 'would contribute to my education', and 'because it is important to visit cultural places' are the most important reasons for attending cultural tourism. In this vein, it is important for the educational institutions to get their students more involved in culture. Assignments and projects would motivate students to participate in cultural events and places. Such reinforcement would probably get students to be involved in culture in their future life, and contribute to the development of cultural tourism.

Finally, it is suggested that sustained and regular studies are also needed to monitor youths' motivations for attending cultural tourism. Cities and towns that have cultural assets to promote in domestic and international markets should also conduct research to understand consumer behavior in order to increase socio and economic contribution of the cultural tourism. Such information would be of great help in understanding the extent to which local support could be obtained and how the demand for cultural tourism could be measured and monitored. Similar studies conducted in different geographical areas would also help us to comprehend a better picture of young people's motivations of different locations and cultural backgrounds.

## **Bibliography**

### **Books:**

1. Iso-Ahola, E., *The social psychology of leisure and recreation*. Vm.C. Brown: Dubuque. 1980.
3. Kotler, P., Bowen, J.T. & Makens, C., *Marketing for hospitality and tourism*. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education International 2006.
3. Middleton, V.T.C., *Marketing in travel and tourism*. Butterworth-Heinemann: Oxford 1994.

### **Articles:**

1. Cetinel, F. and Yolal, M., "Motivations for visiting and not visiting museums", in *International Tourism Conference, Cultural and Event Tourism: Issues & Debates*, Alanya, Turkey 05-09 November, Detay Yayincilik: Ankara, pp. 234-251. 2008
2. Crompton, J.L., "Motivations for pleasure vacation", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 6 (4), pp.408-424.
3. Dann, G., "Tourism motivations: appraisals", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 1981 Vol. 8 No. 2, pp.189-219.
4. Dewar, H., Meyer, D. & Li, W.M., "Harbin, lanterns of ice, sculpture of snow", *Tourism Management*, 2001, 22 (5), pp.523-532.
5. Dulau, A., and Coros, M., "Investigating cultural tourism development and attractiveness in Transylvania, Romania: A focus on the Counties of Cluj and Sibiu", in *Proceeding of the 2<sup>nd</sup> WSEAS International Conference Recent Advantages in Cultural heritage and Tourism*, Rodos, Greece 22-24 July (2009), WSEAS Press, pp.74-79.
6. Iso-Ahola, E., "Towards a social psychology theory of tourism motivation: a rejoinder", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 1982, 9 (2), pp.256-262.
7. Park, K.S., Reisinger, Y. & Kang, H.J., "Visitors' motivation for attending the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, Miami Beach, Florida", *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 2008, 25(2), pp.161-181.
8. Prentice, R., Davies, A. & Beeho, A., "Seeking generic motivations for visiting and not visiting museums and like cultural attractions", *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 16(1), 1997, pp. 45-70.
9. Uysal, M., Gahan, L.W. & Martin, B., "An examination of event motivations: a case study", *Festival Management & Event Tourism*, 1993, 1(1), pp.5-10.
10. Yoon, Y. & Uysal, M., "An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: a structural model", *Tourism Management*, 26(1), 2005, pp. 45-56.

### **Annual reports:**

- \*\*\* NASAA-National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, (2010), "Cultural visitor profile", available at [http://www.nasaa-arts.org/artworks/culture\\_profile.shtml](http://www.nasaa-arts.org/artworks/culture_profile.shtml).
- \*\*\* National Barometer, (2009), available at <http://culturadata.ro/PDF-uri/Barometru2009.pdf>
- \*\*\* Statistical Yearbook for Sibiu County, 2006
- \*\*\* WTO, European Forum of the World Heritage Cities, "Cultural Tourism: Opportunities and Challenges", Luxemburg, 2003