

‘Different Strokes for Different Folks’: Segmenting Drag Cabaret Audiences in South Africa

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Abstract: In a competitive post-modern society, traditional theatre genres (e.g. satire, dance, drama, ballet, opera, classical music concerts and West End/Broadway hits) battle to attract audiences. This is especially the case considering the myriad of more popular entertainment- and leisure activities these offerings compete with. One such activity appears to be that of drag cabarets; which only became an accepted part of mainstream arts and culture during the last decade. Considering the nascent nature of drag cabarets, it is probable that its appeal among audiences has been empirically overlooked by researchers. To investigate the appeal of this increasingly popular leisure activity, a web-based electronic survey was completed by 670 drag cabaret audience members in three South African cities, namely Cape Town, Johannesburg and Pretoria. This study aimed to plug the gap in existing literature through sharing insights on the dynamics of human and social behaviour in a post-modern society through determining the motives of attending drag cabarets. Moreover, drag cabaret audience members were segmented through ‘benefit segmentation’ by applying a hierarchical cluster-analysis using Ward’s procedure with Euclidean distances. The findings revealed four distinct audience clusters, namely *the avid drag fan*, *the comedy enthusiast*, *the brotherhood tribe* and *the sisterhood tribe*. The identified audience clusters differed partially on some demographical- and consumption behavioural variables, but mostly on motivational factors. Moreover, this study found that drag cabaret audience members should not be regarded as homogeneous. To sustain interest in this developing leisure activity, recommendations were made on how to attract the right audience members, with the right message to ensure that products and services are specifically designed for and/or promoted to these audience members while meeting their particular needs.

Keywords: audience; cabaret; drag; entertainment; leisure behaviour; market segmentation

1. Introduction

Theatre, in dramatic arts, relates to art in the form of live performances where actions are deliberately planned to stage a show or performance (Chaillet, 2002). The word ‘theatre’ derives from the Greek word ‘*theaomai*’, meaning ‘to see’ and typically refers to a configuration in which performers tell stories through putting on a show for an audience (Ali, 2016). In turn, Hill, O’Sullivan and O’Sullivan (2012) state “the audience is an integral part of an artistic experience. Only when the public experiences what the artist wishes to communicate is the creative process complete”. In a competitive post-modern society, however, traditional theatre genres *inter alia* satire, plays, orchestras, contemporary ballet and dance, opera, and musicals, seemingly battle to attract audiences as a result of a myriad of more popular entertainment- and leisure activities on offer (Passebois & Aurier, 2004). One such activity appears to be that of cabarets in the form of drag performances – i.e. drag cabaret (Brennan & Gudelunas, 2017).

Drag cabarets have however only become an accepted part of mainstream arts and culture during the last decade, arguably due to the influence of RuPaul Andre Charles, the most respected and well-known drag artist in the world (Roschke, 2019). RuPaul is widely recognised for revolutionising the portrayal of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning and Others (LGBTQ+) community, largely due to the award-winning *RuPaul’s Drag Race* television show which has close to 1.3 million viewers for each episode (Morris, 2021). The United States reality television program, in which performers compete for the title *America’s Next Drag Superstar*, is described as a show-business phenomenon that educates many people otherwise unfamiliar with aspects of the LGBTQ+ culture (Rimalower, 2015).

Despite the popular cultural manifestations of drag in the media, along with drag cabarets’ growth in popularity, the appeal of these performances among audiences has been empirically neglected. The latter may be attributable to the perceived “demographic homogeneity of arts audiences”, since performing arts venues generally “tend to see only a single audience for the arts” (Johnson & Garbarino, 2001). From an ontological

stance, a skewed perception of homogeneous arts audiences is likely to leave a gap in performing arts, hospitality, and leisure literature and could result in marketers neglecting to incorporate their audiences' needs into their marketing strategies (Scollen, 2008). As such, there appears to be a need for developing a more customised, in-tuned, customer profile to assist entertainment venues to both improve their offerings by catering for the specific needs and preferences of its audiences, as well as "increasing satisfaction with the theatre experience considering the increasingly crowded and competitive marketplace in which theatres operate" (Hattingh, 2018).

Taking into account the limited knowledge of drag cabaret audiences, this study aims to build on the call of Kruger and Saayman (2015a) for further leisure behaviour research on the needs and preferences of niche audiences attending different types of live performances; the purpose of this research is, therefore, to determine the motives for attending drag productions. Further, based on these motives, this research identifies and profiles different market segments through cluster analysis by focusing on live performance audiences at Beefcakes Cabaret Theatres (hereafter referred to as BCTs) in three South African cities, Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Pretoria. Each venue can accommodate over 100 people and tickets cost R300.00 (roughly US\$20) per person which includes a meal and a live performance while the audience is described as predominantly young, white, heterosexual, and female (Hattingh, 2021). Many in attendance celebrate birthdays, bachelorette parties, divorce parties, or a 'girl's night out' (Beefcakes, 2021). The waiters working at BCT are hired specifically for their sexual appeal, hence the name Beefcakes. For leisure and entertainment, the venues offer a variety of live performances by South Africa's top drag artists, themed nights, and special events (Beefcakes, 2021).

2. Motivational factors influencing live performance audiences' behaviour

Motivation is considered an important subject in leisure studies and is described distinctly by different authors. Iso-Ahola (1982) argues that the term 'motivation' is regarded as psychological wants, forces, or needs that direct, arouse, and initiate human behaviours and activity. In turn, Moutinho (1987) defines motivation as "a state of need, a condition that exerts a push on the individual towards certain types of action that are seen as likely to bring satisfaction". In layperson's terms, motivation can, therefore, be seen as "the internal, psychological influences affecting individuals' choices" (Middleton, 1994) that act as "triggers that lead somebody to act on a salient, unmet need" (Slater, 2006).

Consumers of the arts may have, for instance, several unmet needs, which they could meet through engaging in leisure activities such as attending a live performance (Kruger & Saayman, 2012). According to Dikmen and Bozdağlar (2013), motivation is not the only psychological force influencing human behaviours, however, it is the main aspect affecting their decision-making processes. The first stage of the decision-making process involves recognising the needs of consumers and is therefore useful in determining an individual's motivated behaviour (Boekstein, 2012). Consequently, entertainment venues ought to recognise and understand the main needs that audiences seek to satisfy through attendance, and to identify the motivational factors that influence their decision-making process (Slater, 2006).

Table 1 shows the limited research that has been conducted on drag cabarets in South Africa. It identifies some common motives and specific market segments identified from a selection of leisure studies that focused mainly on performing arts audiences, particularly live performance audiences. Although certain motives such as entertainment, escape, social interaction, edutainment, personal enrichment (learning), and status seem to overlap in Table 1, the order and importance seem to vary for each study. Indeed, some studies suggest that motives are subject to the type of production or arts performance (Dikmen & Bozdağlar, 2013), attendees' socio-demographic and geographical backgrounds (Kruger & Saayman, 2012), and group composition (De Rooij, 2013), implying that "the motives of audiences at a particular theatre genre (e.g. musical) cannot be applied to audiences at other theatre genres (e.g. comedy)" (Hattingh, 2018).

Table 1: Previous research on motives for attending different types of live performances

Researchers	Type of leisure activity/performance	Motivational factors	Market segments
Caldwell (2001)	Performing arts in general	Enrichment, reduction, communion, distinction (status or ego-enhancement)	N/A
Johnson and Garbarino (2001)	Theatre in general	Leisure (relaxation, entertainment, social goals) and enrichment (including emotional and educational experience)	N/A
Swanson, Davis and Zhao (2008)	Live performances in general	Social interaction, recreation, education, aesthetics, escape, and enhancement of self-esteem	N/A
Kruger and Saayman (2012)	Live music performance	Artist affiliation and unique experience, socialisation and event novelty, fun and group affiliation, enjoyment and entertainment, and nostalgia	Avid fans and recreational attendees
De Rooij (2013)	Performing arts in general	Cultural aesthetics, cultural reduction, cultural stimulation, social duty, social attraction, social distinction, and social bonding	N/A
Saayman and Saayman (2014)	Live orchestral performance	Escape, socialisation, and event attractiveness	The vintage males, the vintage females, and modern enthusiasts
Kruger and Saayman (2015a)	Live music performance	Group affiliation, artist affiliation and entertainment, social interaction, and unique experience	Music lovers and beatle maniacs
Kruger and Saayman (2015b)	Circus performance	Entertainment and fun, social status and socialisation, aesthetics and enchantment, act affiliation and uniqueness	Enthusiasts, novices, and observers
Kruger and Saayman (2017)	Opera performance	Group affiliation and fun, unique experience, entertainment, appraisal, and socialisation	Phantom lite and phantom deluxe
Hattingh and Niekerk (2020)	Live stand-up comedy production	To be entertained by a favourite comedian(s), to enjoy the unique atmosphere, to socialise with friends, family, or colleagues, to relax and have fun, to enjoy comedy (i.e. crying from laughter)	The highbrow socialite, the hero worshipper, the bored and curious, and the culture vulture

3. Methodology

This study was empirical in nature and constituted exploratory research. Moreover, a quantitative research methodology was employed to explain the heterogeneity of drag cabaret audiences. It is suggested that the use of quantitative techniques and multivariate analytic methods could significantly assist with the segmentation process (Eftchiadou, 2001) by categorising data sets into similar behavioural groupings derived mainly through these quantitative techniques (Dolnicar, 2002). As a result, a survey was deemed to be the most appropriate method of primary data collection for this study. The method of survey administration used was a self-administered web-based electronic survey, designed in a program called SurveyPlanet. The survey was administered in English and comprised two sections, namely Section A and Section B. Section A obtained socio-demographic details (age, gender, relationship status, level of education, occupation, sexual identity, and racial classification). Section B obtained audiences' motives to attend drag cabarets by measuring 19 motivational factors on a five-point Likert scale (1 = not at all important, 2 = unimportant, 3 = neither important nor unimportant, 4 = important, 5 = very important). The survey's reliability and validity were enhanced, as the variables were borrowed, and adapted where necessary, from previously validated leisure studies, specifically Swanson et al. (2008), Saayman and Saayman (2014), Kruger and Saayman (2015a, 2015b, 2017), and Hattingh and Niekerk (2020).

This study employed a mixture of non-probability sampling methods, specifically convenience, and snowball sampling. Drag cabaret audiences were invited to participate in the study by distributing the survey hyperlink to customers on the BCT email database who had previously visited the venue, which is considered to be a form of convenience sampling (Malhotra & Birks, 2007) in which respondents themselves select whether they want to take part in the research. Before submitting the electronic survey, the final question asked participants to recommend and forward the hyperlink to other potential participants; thus, the study also implemented

snowball sampling. Data were collected over a period of two months (June 2019 to July 2019), when a sample size of 670 drag cabaret audience members was reached and included responses from audiences at all three BCTs (Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Pretoria).

4. Findings and discussion

4.1 Identification of the segmented clusters

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to code, capture and analyse the data from the 670 completed and usable surveys. A 'post hoc' method of segmentation was performed to explain the heterogeneity of drag cabaret audiences and to develop distinct market segments by applying a hierarchical cluster analysis on the scores of the motives for attending drag performances using Ward's procedure with Euclidean distances. With hierarchical clustering, the number of clusters is not defined a priori; instead, clusters are suggested by the data (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). In other words, members were clustered according to their natural similarities. The audiences' motives were used as the main segmentation base for market segmentation without pre-processing the raw data as recommended by Dolnicar (2002) and Hattingh and Spencer (2020). The number of clusters was identified in a heuristic manner by visually analysing the dendrogram (Dolnicar, 2002). Solutions with two, three, four, and five clusters were explored, and a four-cluster solution appeared to provide the most distinctive and acceptable solution, specifically common motives within clusters, yet different motives across clusters (Table 2).

Table 2: The four clusters ($n = 670$)

Number	Name	Size	% of sample
Cluster 1	<i>The avid drag fan</i>	196	29
Cluster 2	<i>The comedy enthusiast</i>	200	30
Cluster 3	<i>The brotherhood tribe</i>	145	22
Cluster 4	<i>The sisterhood tribe</i>	129	19

4.2 Interpretation and profiling of the segmented clusters

To ensure the stability and the quality of the cluster analysis results, several statistical analyses were performed. To determine the most important motives of each cluster, the four clusters were cross-tabulated with the 19 motives, and chi-squared tests revealed statistically significant differences between the importance scores of all motives ($p < 0.05$) (Table 3), thus confirming that the segments were statistically different from one another and that internal validity was present.

Table 3: Cross-tabulation and chi-squared test results of clusters compared with motives

Category	Motive (importance scores)	The avid drag fan % (N = 196)	The comedy enthusiast % (N = 200)	The brotherhood tribe % (N = 145)	The sisterhood tribe % (N = 129)	Chi-square probability
<i>Cultural reduction</i>	To relax and have fun	100	97	90	97	0.000*
	To be entertained by drag artist(s)	95	70	66	78	0.000*
	To escape from my daily routine and responsibilities	61	78	28	64	0.000*
	Curiosity got the better of me	38	21	8	51	0.000*
<i>Cultural stimulation</i>	To explore/learn new things (e.g. broadening my mind)	88	51	12	61	0.000*
	To learn about South African drag culture	92	27	5	40	0.000*
<i>Cultural aesthetics</i>	To enjoy the unique atmosphere	98	90	72	96	0.000*
	Because I enjoy comedy (i.e. crying from laughter)	71	98	49	63	0.000*
	To enjoy the costumes, make-up, sound, and sights associated with drag performances	95	66	45	92	0.000*
	To meet and interact with my favourite drag artist(s)	86	35	5	52	0.000*
<i>Social</i>	For a chance to be with people who enjoy drag					

Category	Motive (importance scores)	The avid drag fan % (N = 196)	The comedy enthusiast % (N = 200)	The brotherhood tribe % (N = 145)	The sisterhood tribe % (N = 129)	Chi-square probability
<i>attraction</i>	shows	94	40	19	68	0.000*
	To meet new people with similar interests	65	21	14	34	0.000*
<i>Social distinction</i>	To tell others that I've seen a live performance by a well-known drag artist(s)	69	13	5	57	0.000*
<i>Social bonding</i>	To socialise with friends, family or colleagues	95	87	79	96	0.000*
	To share the experience with someone special	69	51	39	81	0.000*
	To experience LGBTQ+ community pride	96	48	23	52	0.000*
<i>Social duty</i>	To support drag artists and performances	97	73	42	91	0.000*
	To support my friend, family member or colleague performing on stage (an ally of the LGBTQ+ community)	51	14	8	21	0.000*
	It's a ritual/hobby of interest	45	12	5	17	0.000*

*Significance at the 5% level

To identify the four clusters meaningfully for marketing purposes, and to ensure external validity, or external criterion analysis, the clusters were cross-tabulated with sociodemographic and leisure behaviour characteristics (Table 4). Chi-squared tests revealed no statistically significant differences across the four clusters in terms of occupation ($p = 0.309$); number of times attending drag performances at BCTs (return vs first-time visitor) ($p = 0.109$); travel cohort ($p = 0.194$); and group size ($p = 0.123$). The clusters were, however, significantly different at the 5% level in terms of regularity of performing arts attendance ($p = 0.000$); age ($p = 0.049$); race ($p = 0.017$); sexual identity ($p = 0.002$); gender ($p = 0.036$); and educational level ($p = 0.000$). The relationship status ($p = 0.087$) was significant at the 10% level. These descriptive statistics were used to interpret and profile the clusters by applying a label to each cluster to reflect the most important motive, sociodemographic, or leisure behavioural characteristics that differentiated each cluster. This is important for marketing strategy formulation as it provides practical, usable, and readily translatable information for each cluster (Sarigollu & Huang, 2005).

Table 4: Cross-tabulation and chi-squared test results of clusters compared with socio-demographic and leisure behaviour characteristics

Descriptive	The avid drag fan % (N = 196)	The comedy enthusiast % (N = 200)	The brotherhood tribe % (N = 145)	The sisterhood tribe % (N = 129)	Chi-square probability
<i>Regular performing arts attendance</i>					0.000*
Yes	61	23	20	19	
No	39	77	80	81	
<i>Age</i>					0.049*
18–20	4	4	2	7	
21–30	53	46	32	40	
31–40	30	24	41	33	
41–50	19	21	20	15	
50+	3	5	5	5	
<i>Race</i>					0.017*
Black/mixed	25	12	12	20	
White	71	85	84	76	

Descriptive	The avid drag fan % (N = 196)	The comedy enthusiast % (N = 200)	The brotherhood tribe % (N = 145)	The sisterhood tribe % (N = 129)	Chi-square probability
Indian/Asian	4	3	4	4	
<i>Sexual identity</i>					0.002*
Straight	55	55	33	68	
Gay	34	36	61	28	
Lesbian	3	2	5	2	
Bisexual	8	7	1	2	
<i>Gender</i>					0.036*
Male	37	37	58	32	
Female	63	63	42	68	
<i>Education level</i>					0.000*
No formal education up to secondary completed	18	12	12	21	
Certificate/diploma	56	44	26	51	
Bachelor's degree	18	24	29	17	
Honours degree	5	15	19	7	
Masters or doctorate degree	3	5	14	4	
<i>Relationship status</i>					0.087**
Single	39	30	38	31	
In a relationship	35	37	30	37	
Married/Civil Union	23	26	31	28	
Divorced/widowed	3	7	<1	4	

*Significance at the 5% level

**Significance at the 10% level

4.2.1 Cluster 1: The avid drag fan

The *avid drag fan*, the second-largest cluster with 196 respondents, was unique in the sense that respondents seemed to regard all but one motive as important; it is the only cluster in which the motives' importance scores were higher than 50% for 18 of the 19 cases (except for visiting BCTs due to it being a ritual or hobby of interest) (Table 3). This cluster, however, when compared with the other clusters seemed to attach much higher importance to certain motives. One such category is 'cultural stimulation', i.e. to learn about South African drag culture (92%) and to explore/learn new things (88%), which suggest that they are open-minded and seeking to broaden their mindsets. These findings are supported by Kruger and Saayman (2015a) and Hattingh (2018) who found that learning/exploring new things are among the most salient motives for attending live performances. Furthermore, it has been argued that leisure experiences can "expand people's cultural horizons and expose them to new and challenging people, ideas and customs" (Bowdin, Allen & O'Toole, 2006). For example, attendees in this cluster may wish to familiarise themselves with new or different types of live performances such as the increasingly popular drag/cabaret performance culture.

Although it is clear that this audience group have several needs they want to be met through attendance (evident in the importance scores), this group was further unique when compared with the other clusters as respondents seemed to be highly motivated to attend drag productions to support drag artists and performances (97%), and to support a friend, family member or colleague performing on stage (51%). This type of support, which De Rooij (2013) refers to as 'social duty', appears to be an important factor motivating this audience group to attend drag performances. According to Table 3, other significant motives for this audience group include attending to experience LGBTQ+ community pride (96%), for a chance to be with people who enjoy drag shows (94%), and to meet and interact with their favourite drag artist(s) (86%). These findings also support Hattingh and Niekerk's (2020) 'hero worship' audience segment as this cluster has a particular need to meet and interact with their favourite drag artist(s). This particular audience group appears to attend a drag performance to support or 'worship' their hero's and can therefore be considered to be LGBTQ+ allies.

In terms of socio-demographics and leisure behaviour characteristics (Table 4), respondents in this cluster were mostly single (39%), white (71%), although a significant percentage, different from other clusters, included black and mixed-race attendees (25%), straight (55%) or gay (34%), female (55%) or male (45%), mostly between the ages of 21 and 30 (53%) who hold a certificate or diploma (56%) and regularly attend arts performances (61%). The above findings allude to a young and open-minded mixed audience group (white, black, mixed-race, straight as well as gay) seeking to learn about drag culture, LGBTQ+ community pride, and wanting to meet/interact with their favourite drag artists. They are loyal supporters of drag performances/productions, in short, they are allies to the LGBTQ+ community - hence this cluster was labelled the *avid drag fan*.

4.2.2 Cluster 2: The comedy enthusiast

This cluster contained the largest sample of respondents (200), and is highly motivated by comedy, i.e. crying from laughter (98%) (Table 3), which suggests that one of the most important motives to attend drag cabarets for this cluster is for 'transcendence'. According to De Rooij (2013), transcendence relates to "a spiritual experience allowing the consumer to break loose and to rise in this world, experiencing extraordinary states of being, and being uplifted". For example, those who get tears from laughing may be motivated by transcendence (De Rooij, 2013). This cluster seems to be similar to Caldwell's (2001) 'enrichment' category. For example, there are similarities in terms of laughter, enjoyment, and being uplifted. Hattingh (2018) found a large majority of live stand-up comedy audiences are motivated to attend to enjoy comedy and laugh. Therefore, the current finding suggests that this particular drag cabaret audience group is similar to Hattingh's (2018) comedy-specific audience group. This audience group is further motivated to escape from their daily routine and responsibilities (78%) (Table 3) which supports the findings of Caldwell (2001), Johnson and Garbarino (2001), Swanson et al. (2008) and Hattingh (2018) regarding the importance of 'reduction', i.e. recuperation, relaxing, diversion and escapism in attending performing arts.

In terms of socio-demographics and leisure behaviour characteristics (Table 4), attendees in this cluster were mostly female (63%), in a relationship (37%), white (85%), straight (55%), and gay (36%) between the ages of 21 and 30 (46%) who hold a certificate/diploma (44%) and regularly attend arts performances (67%), possibly due to their intense need for laughter and escaping their usual environment. The above findings allude to a young audience group consisting of straight as well as gay attendees who appear to use drag performances to meet their need for laughter through attending comedy productions and escaping from their everyday humdrum and, therefore, they are labelled the *comedy enthusiast*.

4.2.3 Cluster 3: The brotherhood tribe

This cluster contained the third largest sample of respondents (145) and had relatively low importance scores across most motives. However, in comparison with the other audience clusters, this cluster was unique in the sense that only four motive importance scores loaded higher than 50% (Table 3). This group seems to be attracted to drag performances mainly to relax and have fun (90%). This finding lends support to Hattingh's (2018) argument in that one of the most important motives for attending live stand-up comedy include 'to relax and have fun'. Due to the similarities and possible overlap between the drag/cabaret and comedy genres, this finding is not surprising. This audience group was also highly motivated to socialise with friends, family, and colleagues (79%). Socialisation appears to be one of the most important reasons for attending live performances as this factor was found to be significant in all the literature studies reviewed (Table 1). The next important motive to attend drag performances for this cluster is to enjoy the unique atmosphere (72%). This finding supports that of Hattingh (2018) who found the unique atmosphere offered by a live-stand-up comedy production or, in this case, a drag cabaret, as one of the main motives for attending. The final important motive for this group is to be entertained by a drag artist (66%). The study conducted by Johnson and Garbarino (2001) corroborates the importance of entertainment as entertainment was found to be one of the main motives for audience members attending live performances. This finding, therefore, solidifies that one of the most important reasons for this audience group to attend drag performances is to be entertained.

In terms of socio-demographics and leisure behaviour characteristics (Table 4), respondents in this cluster were mostly single (38%), white (84%), gay (61%), men (58%) between the ages of 31 and 40 (40%) who hold a bachelor's degree (29%) and do not regularly attend theatre performances (80%). The above findings allude to a predominantly young, white, gay male audience group seeking relaxation, fun, and entertainment in a unique atmosphere in which to satisfy their social needs by meeting with friends, family, and colleagues, and therefore they are labelled the *brotherhood tribe*.

4.2.4 Cluster 4: The sisterhood tribe

The *sisterhood tribe* audience group was the smallest and contained 129 respondents. Although the importance of some of the motives in this cluster overlapped with the other clusters, there are group characteristics that strengthen membership in this particular cluster. The *sisterhood tribe* cluster placed even higher importance on socialising with friends, family, or colleagues (96%), sharing the experience with someone special (81%), and curiosity (51%) than the *avid drag fan*, the *comedy enthusiast*, and the *brotherhood tribe* (Table 3). This group, similar to the *brotherhood tribe*, seems to have a particular need for socialisation and to share the leisure experience with someone special. For example, attending to support a bride-to-be (bachelorette party), a divorcee, a birthday celebration, or a 'girl's night out'. Earl (2001) argues that a major benefit of attending live performances includes fulfilment of curiosity. Drag performances and LGBTQ+ culture were likely unknown to this cluster which could explain why the *sisterhood tribe* is more curious than the other audience groups.

In terms of socio-demographics and leisure behaviour characteristics (Table 4), respondents in this cluster were mostly in a relationship (37%), white (76%), straight (68%), female (58%), between the ages of 21 and 30 (40%) who hold a certificate/diploma (51%) and do not regularly attend arts performances (81%), perhaps due to the infrequent nature of bachelorette, divorce or birthday parties. The above findings allude to a predominantly young, white, straight female audience group seeking to share special experiences and was, therefore, labeled the *sisterhood tribe*. This finding supports Cracker's (2017) argument in that, although gay men have long been perceived as drag theatre's most loyal audience, there is a new wave of young women challenging that conventional wisdom, joining gays as some of the biggest consumers of drag culture.

5. Conclusions, implications, and recommendations

The findings of this study make several contributions to the broader body of knowledge on performing arts, hospitality, and leisure literature by investigating the appeal of drag productions and challenging the myth regarding the perceived homogeneity of arts audiences.

First, through a quantitative audience investigation, this paper marks the first time that drag performance audiences are segmented based on motivation, behavioural and demographic grounds. Although no segment is completely homogeneous, as some motives, socio-demographic, and leisure behaviours overlapped and were important to all clusters, there are group characteristics that strengthen membership. Empirical evidence, albeit not universally representative of all drag cabaret audiences (given that only one entertainment venue participated in the study and all respondents were internet users), suggests that these audiences do not attend for the same reasons, and are therefore not homogeneous. It is therefore pertinent that marketers base future marketing on the premise of "different strokes for different folks" (Vitale, n.d.); there are divergent groups of drag cabaret audiences with different leisure behaviours and needs.

Second, although this paper marks the first time of employing this method of analysis for a drag cabaret audience study, it demonstrates that the clustering procedure can significantly assist in segmenting leisure audiences. The clusters of drag cabaret audiences proposed by this study, each with its own set of motives, socio-demographic and leisure behaviours, could help BCTs refine their target marketing strategies and may assist in understanding the different opportunities each segment presents. Furthermore, it could assist other drag/cabaret theatres, in attracting the right people with the right message as well as ensuring that products and services, designed for and promoted to these audiences meet their particular needs. The findings suggest that drag cabaret audiences cannot be targeted with a single marketing campaign as different audience segments have different needs they seek to satisfy through attendance. It is therefore advisable that the identified motivational factors, which influence the decision-making processes of each identified cluster, be highlighted in different marketing campaigns to motivate these different audience groups to attend in the future.

6. Limitations and future research recommendations

While this study may be regarded as one of the first in attempting to segment South African drag cabaret audiences, a caveat should be attached to the findings. Self-selection bias is of particular concern as only internet users were included in this study. This research should be considered exploratory and does not intend to provide conclusive evidence or generalisable findings to all drag/cabaret theatres as this research only considers live performance audiences of BCTs in three South African cities. Longitudinal research should thus be conducted at other drag/cabaret theatres, locally and internationally. A comparison of the profiles and motives for attending

drag performances would then be possible in future studies by considering employing additional qualitative techniques such as focus groups and participant observation to investigate the deeper reasons as to why certain motives are more important in drag cabaret audiences' decision-making processes and leisure behaviour.

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