International Journal of Culture and Art Studies (IJCAS)
Journal homepage: https://talenta.usu.ac.id/ijcas

Motivations for Masquerade Participation and Their Implications for Domestic Tourism Development: Evidence from the Ankos Festival, Ghana

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 4 October 2025
Revised 23 October 2026
Accepted 27 October 2026
Available online 31 October 2026

E-ISSN: 2654-3591
P-ISSN: 2623-1999

How to cite:
Anderson, A.N., Ackon, J., & Neequaye, K. (2026). Motivations for masquerade participation and their implications for domestic tourism development: Evidence from the Ankos Festival, Ghana. *International Journal of Culture and Art Studies, 10*(2), 152–173.

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http://doi.org/10.32734/ijcas.v10i2.22986

ABSTRACT

This study, anchored on push-pull motivation theory, examines the motivational factors underlying participation in the annual masquerade festival (Ankos) in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana, and considers their implications for domestic tourism development. Specifically, the study identifies the push and pull factors that influence masquerades' (individual festival performers') decision to participate in the Ankos Festival, and discusses how these motivational patterns may inform domestic tourism promotion and marketing, without claiming to have directly measured tourism-development outcomes such as visitor numbers, expenditure, or destination growth. Methodologically, a descriptive research design within a convergent mixed-methods approach, underpinned by a pragmatist research philosophy, was adopted. Three hundred and ten (310) masquerades were conveniently sampled and responded to a structured questionnaire, while five (5) key stakeholders, comprising masquerade group executives and festival organizers, were purposively selected for semi-structured interviews; the quantitative and qualitative strands were collected concurrently and merged at the interpretation stage. The quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 27, while the qualitative data were analysed thematically using interpretative phenomenological analysis, which enabled the identification of recurring themes and ideas. The qualitative narratives from the five key stakeholders were used to validate and contextually enrich the quantitative patterns, particularly those relating to costume attraction, group status, and festival organisation, providing explanatory depth that the survey data alone could not supply. The study identified four underlying motivational factors that push and pull masquerades to participate in the festival: cultural and social connection, personal enrichment, festival quality and heritage, and identity and experiential value. These motivational patterns are discussed for their implications for policy-making, tourism marketing, and the promotion of domestic tourism.

Keywords: *Masquerad, Motivation, Push-Pull Factor, Domestic Tourism Development, Ankos Festival*

1. Introduction

Tourism has been recognized as a major player in the economic development, poverty alleviation and employment of many economies including Ghana, with tourism contributing a total revenue of 8.9 trillion US dollars, representing 10.3% of the global GDP in 2019 (Jiao et al., 2024; Yergeau, 2020). Ghana's travel and tourism sector likewise contributed 3.4 billion U.S. dollars to the country's gross domestic product in 2022 (Sasu, 2024). Despite the increasing growth of international tourism (USD 1.6 trillion in 2024) which is highly influenced by disasters (World Tourism Barometer, 2025), domestic tourism has shown to withstand both internal and exogenous shocks and continue to occur within a destination. Domestic tourism has contributed to the survival or continuous growth of economies in times of global phenomenon like floods, hurricanes and

Covid-19 (Adinolfi & Skotoyi, 2023). Consequently, the resilience of domestic tourism serves as a crucial pillar for sustainable tourism growth (Seyfi et al., 2022), which economies are exploring for the promotion and development of tourism. Events and festivals have evolved to become one of the means in the promotion of tourism.

Festival which involves the celebration of an important occasion and activities in a community normally demonstrate gaiety, funfair and spectacular scenes attracting a flow of people to participate in this special occasion (Dadman & Madani, 2022). The concept of masquerade which exhibits a festival has progressed over time and is perceived differently among cultures and countries, celebrated in dimensions including culture, religion, community programmes and entertainment, with some historical accounts tracing its earliest documented forms to Italy before it spread through Europe, England, and eventually to the Caribbean and South Eastern United States, where it evolved into modern carnivals (Esther & Orieoma, 2022). Across these settings, masquerade festivals are acutely fixed in history, spirituality, religion and culture, and remain among the most popular indigenous performances, combining dancing, music, drumming, acrobatics and drama (Orji, 2019; Akubor, 2016).

Masquerade dates back into history from various communities and countries with enthralled perceptions. In Ghana, masquerades are given names as Fancy dress and Ankos which started in the coastal towns during the colonial days in the 18th century and has grown to be popular in parades, entertainment and competitions (Dennis & Darko, 2024). Masquerade groups have been formed by many communities and regions in Ghana. It is asserted by Micots (2014) that masquerading groups mainly from Akan including the Effutu, Ahanta, Ga, and other coastal communities celebrate the festival with music and dance, acrobatics and in colourful costumes. Ghanaian Fancy dress/Ankos has become an important part of most local celebrations such as Easter, Christmas, New Year's Day, community festivals, and at the funeral of members (Micots, 2014). Ankos Festival in Sekondi-Takoradi, now called the Westside Carnival, has become an annual programme celebrated with joyous entertainments which attracts people from diverse walks of life to commemorate the festival. The celebration has spanned for over two decades and still counting, with over 30 masquerade groups and each group is made up of over 4,000 members (Kpekpo, 2022). Some common names of masquerade groups include the Supreme, Canada, Sunnato, Unicorn, Cosmos, Punch, Oil City, Millionaires, Holy Cities, Nyanta Boys among others. The masquerades include men, women, young, elderly and kids who throng the streets with brass band music and dance, joining the participation and fun is the on-lookers with cheers and joy. Despite this scale and longstanding popularity, the festival's specific contribution to domestic tourism in the Western Region, and by extension Ghana, remains largely undocumented and underleveraged by tourism stakeholders, which is the empirical problem this study responds to.

Beyond Ghana, masquerade carries markedly different meanings elsewhere in West Africa. In Nigeria, for instance, masquerades are often understood as ancestral or spiritual intermediaries consulted for blessing, protection, peace-making, and oath-taking across various ethnic groups, including the Esan, Ifeku-Ibaji and Igala peoples (Akubor, 2016; Asenime, 2022). This pronounced spiritual and ritual dimension, however, is not characteristic of the predominantly entertainment- and tourism-oriented Ankos tradition that is the focus of the present study, which is the basis on which the discussion below returns to the Ghanaian context.

These variation in activities and purposes have attracted many researchers to study the festival across various perspectives such as beliefs and practices, the profile, dress codes and colours as well as socio-economic implications (Dennis & Darko,2024, Addai, & Ameyaw,2024). In the same vein, the celebration of festival multifaced as entertainment, culture and spirituality makes it a phenomenon to explore in terms of tourism. But Douglas et al. (2024) assert that the motivation of people influences their travel destination and choice of activities. Which some studies have considered motivations, activities and destination choice (McKercher & Tolkach, 2020; Kim & Lehto, 2013), however, not in the context cultural tourism/ masquerade festival. Hence, McKercher and Tolkach (2020) calls for further studies in relation to motivation and activities in different settings. Echoing McKercher and Tolkach's assertion, existing studies on the masquerade have focused on its entertainment, ritualistic, socio-cultural, and historical and dramatic scopes, with inadequate scholarly attention given to its adaptation in the promotion and sustainability of domestic tourism. Specifically, while prior cultural-tourism research has examined motivation, activity choice, and destination choice in general (McKercher & Tolkach, 2020; Kim & Lehto, 2013), and masquerade-specific studies have documented its entertainment, ritual, socio-cultural, and historical dimensions (Dennis & Da rko, 2024), none of these studies has examined the internal motivational structure of masquerade participants themselves, nor systematically linked that structure to domestic tourism destination development. This is the specific gap the present study addresses. Consequently, this study seeks to explore the motivation of masquerades participating in the festival and leveraging it for the promotion and sustainability of domestic tourism in Sekondi-Takoradi. The study provides information or insights on the motivation of masquerades to program organizers, service

providers, marketing organisations and policies makers to inform their promotional activities, product packages and decision making.

2. Tourist Motivation

Festivals and cultural events serve as significant attractions for tourists and local participants, driven by various motivational factors (Akhundova, 2024). These motivations are essential for effective festival management and promotional strategies. Entertainment and fun play a major role in festival participation; attendees seek amusement, excitement, and immersive experiences that provide joy and enjoyment on masquerade celebration (Duran & Hamarat, 2014). In addition, Carse (2022) asserts that entertainment which is a major motivational factor in event tourism, offer unique performances, music, dance, and artistic displays to attendees. Consequently, the Ankos Festival celebrated in Sekondi-Takoradi of Ghana, with its energetic street performances and colorful masquerade displays can be marketed as an exciting event that appeals to domestic tourists seeking entertainment. In another vein, the pursuit for novel and pleasurable experiences are perceived to often drives individuals to attend festivals, enhancing their overall satisfaction (Lee & Kwon, 2021). Iso-Ahola (1982) also highlighted the role of socialization as a strong motivator in leisure activities, vis a vis masquerade activity, as individuals seek to bond with others and expand their social circles. Festivals facilitate meaningful interactions by creating shared experiences and fostering a sense of belonging within communities. Then, group-based activities, networking programs, and interactive performances that prevail through the Ankos celebration in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana can encourage participation from different regions of the country thereby promoting domestic tourism.

Attending prestigious events can enhance an individual's social status and self-esteem. Festivals often attract individuals seeking to associate with esteemed cultural gatherings, celebrities, or high-profile attendees (Hollows et al., 2014). The perception of exclusivity and status elevation is a significant motivator, particularly for individuals interested in social distinction and recognition in masquerade festivals. Hence, the exclusivity and cultural importance of masquerade festival, can attract domestic tourists interested in heritage tourism and prestige-driven experiences. In another vein, visiting friends and relatives (VFR) has been recognized as a motivator, where Tan (2024) argued that festival participation often offers opportunities to reconnect with family and friends. VFR form of tourism plays a significant role in motivating individuals to travel to festival locations, especially when events serve as communal reunions. Masquerade festival like Ankos which draws both locals and foreign visitors can promote family reunions and community gatherings.

Likewise, many festival-goers seek leisure and relaxation as a break from daily routine life (Rahme, 2020), an indication that Masquerade festivals provide a laid-back atmosphere that allows attendees to unwind and rejuvenate. Yilmaz (2020) suggests that the escapism provided by festivals allows individuals to detach from daily stress of activities, enhancing their mental well-being, and overall life satisfaction. Choe et al. (2015) also mentioned that leisure activities, including festivals, offer psychological relaxation and stress reduction. Consequently, engaging in music, dance and festive activities serves as an effective coping mechanism for emotional and mental rejuvenation to improve mental well-being (Tao et al., 2022). On this backdrop, the Ankos Festival's lively atmosphere, engaging music, and communal spirit provide an opportunity for attendees to unwind.

The visual appeal of traditional and thematic costumes at masquerade festivals is a major draw for attendees (Dennis & Darko,2024). Costumes symbolize cultural heritage and provide an engaging visual experience. Han et al (2019) highlights that festivals with strong visual aesthetics attract more attendees and participants, as they contribute to the overall immersive experience and cultural authenticity. Similarly, creativity is a basic element of masquerade activities, attracting individuals motivated by artistic expression. Festivals showcase diverse artistic performances, traditional attire, and vibrant displays that appeal to those with a passion for music, dance, and costume design. Amorim et al. (2020) emphasized that festivals provide a platform for cultural expression, creativity and innovation, making them appealing to artistically inclined participants. In another vein, Wu (2018) asserts that effective marketing strategies significantly influence festival attendance. Promotion through digital media, advertisements, and word-of-mouth impacts potential attendees' perceptions and decisions (Luonila et al., 2016). Festivals that leverage on strong branding, influencer endorsements, and creative promotional campaigns tend to attract higher participation rates (Kruger, 2022).

Additionally, early-bird promotions, referral incentives, and travel packages have the tendency to attract more domestic visitors. A festival's success is largely dependent on its organization, including logistics, security, accessibility and event scheduling. Well-organized festivals enhance visitor satisfaction and encourage repeat attendance (Vieira, et al., 2025). Participants are more likely to attend festivals with seamless management, clear programming, and efficient crowd control measures. Recognizing proper crowd

management, security, transport arrangements, and accommodation options are critical for ensuring a positive experience. Hence, investments in festival logistics can improve its appeal as a domestic tourism product.

Moreso, the attractiveness of festivals is the attributes of its history and cultural heritage appeal. Attendees are often motivated by a desire to learn about and connect with their cultural roots. Deng et al. (2023) argued that cultural and heritage festivals foster a sense of identity and pride, attracting visitors interested in traditional customs, folklore, and historical narratives. African masquerades are an enigma that has existed for thousands of years, and still are relevant in many societies today regardless of the surge in modernity (Akubor,2016). Therefore, a festival's rich history utilized for storytelling, guided historical tours, cultural exhibitions, and collaborations with museums can provide deeper insights into the festival's origins to attract tourists to a destination. Hence, the composite motivations of tourists found in a destination or activity stand the chance of attracting various tourists, through the push or the pull attributes.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two complementary theoretical perspectives that help explain why individuals are drawn to attend the Ankos masquerade festival: push-pull theory and tourism motivation theory. Push-pull theory, first articulated by Dann (1977) and later formalised by Crompton (1979), distinguishes between two broad categories of travel motivation. Push factors are internal, socio-psychological forces that predispose an individual to travel, such as the desire to escape routine, the need for rest and relaxation, the pursuit of social interaction and prestige, and the search for novelty and self-fulfilment; these needs arise largely independently of any particular destination and help explain why people want to travel. Pull factors, by contrast, are the external, destination-specific attributes that influence where a motivated traveller actually chooses to go, including cultural heritage, scenery, event quality, accessibility, and the attractiveness of the activities on offer; these helps explain where people choose to travel. Crompton (1979) argued that most travel decisions involve a combination of both forces, with push factors generating the initial desire to travel and pull factors shaping the specific destination or event selected.

Tourism motivation theory broadens this push-pull logic into a more general account of tourist behaviour. Iso-Ahola (1982) proposed that tourism motivation is best understood through a seeking-escaping dichotomy, in which individuals simultaneously seek intrinsic psychological rewards, such as social interaction, mastery, and self-esteem and seek to escape from the stresses and routines of everyday environments. Building on this, Uysal and Jurowski (1994) operationalised push and pull factors empirically and showed that they can be statistically distinguished within the same traveller sample, while Yoon and Uysal (2005) extended the model to show that motivation does not operate in isolation but works through satisfaction to shape destination loyalty, so that well-matched push and pull motivations are associated with higher satisfaction and a greater likelihood of repeat visitation or positive word-of-mouth. Taken together, these frameworks suggest that understanding a festival's appeal requires attention not only to what internally motivates attendees to participate in cultural events of this kind, but also to the specific attributes of the festival that pull them toward this particular event rather than an alternative.

These two frameworks jointly guide the interpretation of the motivational factors reported in the Results and Discussion section below. The empirical factors extracted from the survey data are examined for the extent to which they align with internally generated push motivations, externally oriented pull motivations, or, as the findings go on to show, a hybrid of both, thereby extending the push-pull and tourism motivation literature to the specific context of masquerade-based cultural festivals in Ghana.

4. Method

This study adopted a descriptive research design within a convergent mixed-methods approach, underpinned by a pragmatist research philosophy. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently and merged at the interpretation stage, with the qualitative interview data used to validate, explain, and contextually enrich the patterns identified in the quantitative survey data, rather than the two strands being treated as independent designs. The study area is Sekondi-Takoradi, in the Western Region of Ghana, where the Ankos Festival is held. The study's unit of analysis was the individual masquerade: a person who performs as a registered member of one of the Ankos masquerade groups active in Sekondi-Takoradi. This is distinct from the five key stakeholders (masquerade group executives and festival organizers), who were sampled separately for their institutional knowledge of the festival rather than as masquerade performers themselves. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to masquerades during the 2024 Ankos Festival celebrations in Sekondi-Takoradi. Three hundred and ten (310) masquerades who were present and actively participating at festival grounds and assembly points on celebration days, and who volunteered after the purpose of the study was explained to them, were conveniently sampled; no further

probability-based or quota procedure was applied beyond willingness to participate and active group membership. Convenience sampling was adopted because no sampling frame of all masquerades exists, making probability sampling impractical; however, this choice limits the statistical representativeness of the sample and constrains the generalisability of the quantitative findings beyond the sampled groups. Separately, five (5) key stakeholders were purposively selected based on their knowledge of the study objectives and their leadership roles within the festival, and were engaged through semi-structured interviews that provided the qualitative aspect of the study. Furthermore, secondary data from books, reports, scholarly articles, and documents on masquerade festivals and events were reviewed. In the data collection, ethical considerations were adhered to, where informed consent was ensured, and non-identification of names in responses and data was observed throughout. Given that the sample included 63 respondents between 13 and 18 years of age, parental/guardian consent and participant assent were additionally obtained for underage respondents, and the study was conducted under ethical clearance from the Takoradi Technical University Ethics Board prior to data collection. The quantitative data were analysed using IBM SPSS version 27, where descriptive statistics and factor analysis were conducted, while the qualitative interview data were analysed thematically using interpretative phenomenological analysis to identify recurring themes.

5. Results and Discussions

Table 1 showed the result on socio-demographics of the respondents, where majority (59%) were male and females represented 41%. The result reflects Akyeampong and Yankholmes, (2016) assertion that masquerades are male-dominated due to the nature of the masquerade activities. Regarding the age of the masquerades, a significant number of respondents (74.2%) falls between 13 and 28 years, suggesting that younger individuals are the dominant group in masquerade, while older age groups (35+ years) made 9% of the sample, indicating less participation from older individuals. In line with this result, Pielichaty (2015) posited that younger individuals actively engage in masquerade festival than the old. Also, majority of respondents were single (52.6%), 38.1% were married and 9.4% indicated divorced, widowed or separated. On another hand, the result on the level of education of respondents showed that they were educated. Where 40.3% had basic level of education, 6.1% holds master's degree and 4.2% indicated they hold technical or vocational training certificates.

5.1 Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1. Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Frequency=310	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	183	59
Female	127	41
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Age		
13- 18 years	63	20.3
19 - 23 years	97	31.3
24 - 28 years	70	22.6
29 - 34 years	52	16.8
35 - 39 years	14	4.5
40 years and above	14	4.5
Marital Status		
Single	163	52.6
Married	118	38.1
Others	29	9.4
Place of resident		
Ashanti	17	5.5
Central	55	17.7
Eastern	34	11

Volta	21	6.8
Greater Accra	59	19
Western	103	33.2
Western North	21	6.8
Level of Education		
JHS	68	21.9
SHS	57	18.4
Diploma	44	14.2
HND	66	21.3
Degree	43	13.9
Masters	19	6.1
Others	13	4.2

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

The respondents' places of residence were explored in Table 1. The sample drew from seven of Ghana's sixteen administrative regions, with the majority (33.2%) residing in the Western Region, 19.0% in the Greater Accra Region, and 17.7% in the Central Region, while the Eastern Region (11.0%), Volta Region (6.8%), Western North Region (6.8%) and Ashanti Region (5.5%) were less represented; the remaining nine regions of Ghana were not represented in this sample. The majority of respondents residing in the Western Region is not surprising, as the Ankos Festival is prominently celebrated in Sekondi-Takoradi, Western Region, and local engagement in festivals is driven by community identity, cultural pride and economic benefits (Chukwurah et al., 2025). Likewise, Bossey (2022) expressed that individual are more likely to attend cultural events that are geographically accessible. The presence of respondents from several other regions suggests that the festival draws some recognition beyond its immediate locality, although the sample should not be read as representative of Ghana or of all its regions.

5.2 Participation in Ankos Festival by Masquerades

According to Son and Krolikowski (2024), the frequency of participation in an event depicts social sustainability and sense of place. On the back on this assertion, the participating or joining masquerade groups were assessed to understand the frequency and the pattern of attendance among the masquerades and the results were shown in Table 2. On assessing the frequency of attendance, the results indicated that 43.5% of the respondents participate in the festival annually, 33.5% are first time attendees, 14.5% are occasional attendees and 8.4% responded with other unknown categories. The relatively high percentage of annual (repeat) participants suggests a degree of repeat participation and attachment to the festival among this sample; however, repeat attendance is, at most, an indicator of participation frequency and loyalty, and should not by itself be read as direct evidence of the festival's broader social, economic, cultural or environmental sustainability, which was not separately measured in this study. This pattern is nonetheless broadly consistent with Black's (2016) assertion that repeat attendees are important for festival success, as they can provide a measure of continuity and help sustain cultural traditions over time. In another vein, the occasional attendees and the others (8.4%) which do not fit into the traditional categories with opinions of one-off, personal availability and competing events provides an avenue for festival organizers to develop targeted strategies or strengthen their promotional activities to convert theses irregular attendees into regular participant.

Furthermore, respondents showed the number of Ankos groups they have joined, 9.4% have joined five groups, 29.4% have been in three different groups, 25.5% in two groups and 21.0 % have joined only one group. Various reasons for joining different Ankos groups were identified, where 32.3% of the respondents indicated music and band as the source of attraction, 29.4% cited costumes, while 8.4% mentioned cohesion and 4.5% gave other not-specified reasons. Regarding the sources of information about the masquerade festival and the groups, majority (63.2%) of the respondents mentioned family and friends, while 19.0% identified media exposure and 17.7% cited unspecified other sources.

Table 2. Participation in Ankos Festival by Masquerades

Responses	Frequency n=310	Percentage (%)
Frequency of participation		
Every year	135	43.5
Occasionally	45	14.5
First time	104	33.5
Others	26	8.4
Ankos group joined		
One	65	21.0
Two	79	25.5
Three	91	29.4
Four	46	14.8
Five	29	9.4
Reasons for Joining Groups		
Costumes	91	29.4
Categories of people	79	25.5
Music and Band	100	32.3
Cohesion	26	8.4
Others	14	4.5
Sources of information about Ankos		
Family	86	27.7
Friends	110	35.5
Media	59	19.0
Others	55	17.7

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

The results align Brown (2019) argument that festival-goers are often motivated by a variety of experiences, which explains why participation in multiple Ankos groups was common in the study. Likewise, Rodríguez-Campo et al. (2022) highlighted that music is a key motivator for most festival attendance, as it enhances the sensory experience and fosters emotional engagement, which the result has confirmed. In addition, Mackman (2020) describes festivals as spaces of "communitas," where individuals build social relationships and break traditional social hierarchies. Hence, the tendency of participants engaging in more than one masquerade group suggests a desire for social connection beyond a single affiliation, buttressing Portugal et al. (2022) and Sun et al. (2023) arguments that festival participation is often motivated by social interaction and group belonging. Consequently, the decision to join different groups shows festival-goers prefer diversity in their engagement than being restricted to a single group.

Buttressing the opinions of the respondents, key informants confirmed the identification of costumes and music and dance as an important attraction of the festival. On the other hand, status of participants in a group is a motivating factor of some individuals in joining a particular group. Narratives from stakeholders such as festival organizers, service providers and masquerade group leaders are as follows:

"*The pattern, colors, styles and theme of the year's celebration are well considered when planning to launch the* uniform *for a particular year's celebration. Note that the attractiveness of a costume is one important aspect which is never underrated in the choice of the uniforms as newcomers are influenced by it"* (Male, Masquerade leader).

"People are attracted to a particular group based on the status of people in it. Some groups have doctors, lecturers*, bankers, lawyers, politicians and people staying outside the country. So, some people are attracted by their peers when joining a group"* (Event organizer).

5.3. Motivations for Participation in Ankos Festival

Various statements articulating possible motivational factors for attending the masquerade festival were presented to respondents on a scale collapsed into three response categories, agreement, neutral, and disagreement, as shown in Table 3. The agreement percentage reported for each item reflects only the share of

respondents who endorsed that particular statement; on its own, it does not indicate how dominant or comparatively important that motivation is relative to the others. With this caveat, wearing colourful costume recorded the highest level of agreement (90.6%), alongside neutral (6.5%) and disagreement (2.9%) followed by the organization of the festival agreement (83.5%), neutral (12.6%) and disagreement (3.9%), with regards to sense of community (80.6%), neutral (18.1%), and disagreement (1.3%) and relief from stress and mundane activities agreement (80.0%), neutral (18.4%) and disagreement (1.6%). Researchers have expressed various opinions about these factors as well; such as Tian, et al. (2024) who argued that festivals serve as stress-relieving experiences, improving emotional well-being and mental health. While Mair and Duffy (2018) mentioned that festivals create a sense of community by bringing people together in shared cultural experiences, encouraging social cohesion. In addition, Munsi (2024) emphasizes that artistic expression is central to festival engagement, as costumes and performances contribute to the overall experience, consistent with the high agreement recorded for the costume item.

Table 3. Masquerades Motivation of Participation in Ankos Festival

Masquerades Motivations	**Agreement (%)**	**Neutral (%)**	**Disagreement (%)**
I am motivated by cultural heritage and tradition	61.3	14.8	23.9
I am motivated by entertainment and fun	71.3	15.8	12.9
I am motivated by socialization and meeting new people	63.5	23.5	12.9
I am in just for the prestige/ recognition	64.5	22.9	12.6
I am motivated by leisure and relaxation	70.3	18.7	11.0
Wearing of Colorful costume	90.6	6.5	2.9
I am motivated by sense of pride	73.9	25.8	0.3
I am motivated by sense of community	80.6	18.1	1.3
Visiting friends and relatives	61.3	32.3	6.5
Creative expression of the festival (Music, dance)	70.3	26.5	3.2
To relieve stress and mundane activities	80.0	18.4	1.6
I am motivated by business relationship	71.6	14.8	13.5
I am motivated by the marketing strategies	73.5	21.3	5.2
I am motivated by the organization of festival	83.5	12.6	3.9
I am motivated by the history behind the festival	77.1	9.7	13.2

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

In another vein, respondents showed fair to strong agreement with several other motivational factors: cultural heritage and tradition agreement (61.3%), neutral (14.8%) disagreement (23.9%), business relationship agreement (71.6%), neutral (14.8%), disagreement (13.5%), leisure and relaxation agreement (70.3%), neutral (18.7%), disagreement (11.0%) and the history behind the festival (77.1%), neutral (9.7%), disagreement (13.2%). Visiting friends and relatives was endorsed by 61.3% of respondents as an inspiring cause, neutral (32.3%), disagreement (6.5%), entertainment and fun recorded 71.3% agreement, neutral (15.8%), disagreement (12.9%), socialization and meeting new people recorded 63.5% agreement, neutral (23.5%), disagreement (12.9%) and creative expression through music and dance recorded 70.3% agreement neutral (26.5%), disagreement (12.9%). According to Fu et al. (2018), cultural festivals often reflect a community's identity, beliefs and traditions, hence individuals participate in festivals as a way of reaffirming these values. Similarly, Nag and Mishra (2025) note that cultural heritage-based festivals provide emotional and symbolic meaning, especially for those seeking to connect with their roots. Even so, cultural heritage and tradition recorded the highest disagreement value in Table 3 (23.9%), the only item exceeding 20% disagreement, indicating that while most respondents endorsed this motivation, a non-trivial minority did not regard cultural heritage as personally motivating. This suggests that, within this sample, items such as costume, festival

organisation, and sense of community commanded comparatively broader endorsement than the cultural-heritage dimension, without implying that cultural heritage is unimportant to participation in the Ankos festival vis-à-vis domestic tourism overall.

To further analyze the motivational variables underlying of the participation in the masquerade, factor analysis using varimax rotation was conducted on the items in the questionnaire under "Motivational Factors of Festival Participation." Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were conducted prior to analysis in order to check for quality in the data. The value of KMO index was 0.640, which was greater than the ideal value of 0.5 and indicated good sample size as well as inter-variable relationship. Bartlett's test of sphericity was also determined and it showed significant at $p < 0.001$ to ensure the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix a requirement for factor analysis. These results are indicated in Table 4 and the rotated motivational factors are shown in Table 5.

Table 4. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)and Bartlett's Test on Masquerades Motivations

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.640
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2669.427
	Df	105
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 5: Motivational Factors of Masquerades for Ankos Participation

Factors	Mean	SD	Factor loading	Explained variance (%)	Cronbach's alpha
Factor 1: Cultural and Social Connection				**26.975**	**0.893**
I am motivated by Entertainment and fun.	2.58	0.709	0.851		
I am motivated by Cultural heritage and tradition	2.37	0.845	0.846		
I am motivated by Just for the prestige/recognition	2.52	0.709	0.833		
I am motivated by Socialization and meeting new people	2.51	0.714	0.727		
Factor 2: Personal Enrichment				**19.332**	**0.811**
I am motivated by Creative expression (e.g., music, dance)	2.67	0.535	0.812		
I am motivated by to visit friend and relatives	2.55	0.615	0.786		
I am motivated by leisure and relaxation	2.59	0.680	0.725		
Factor 3: Festival Quality and Heritage				**14.381**	**0.759**
I am motivated by Good organization of the festival	2.80	0.490	0.825		
I am motivated by History behind the festival	2.64	0.705	0.788		
I am motivated by good marketing strategies	2.68	0.566	0.682		
Factor 4: Identity and Experiential Value				**8.169**	**0.783**
I am motivated by sense of pride	2.74	0.449	0.797		
I am motivated by Business relationship	2.58	0.718	0.685		
I am motivated by Relieve stress and mundane	2.78	0.450	0.624		
I am motivated by Wearing of the colourful costume	2.88	0.408	0.575		
I am motivated by Sense of community	2.79	0.436	0.376		

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

In Table 5, the rotation component matrix reveals four main factors which explained a total variance of 68.875. These four factors cumulatively described the reasons for participation, of which the first factor accounted for 26.975% of the variance, the second 19.332%, the third 14.381%, and the fourth 8.169%. The motivational factors of masquerades for Ankos participation provided further insight into the participant

motivation framework. Factor one, named "Cultural and Social Connection," captured motivations around cultural heritage, entertainment, socialization, and prestige identification, and possessed factor loadings between 0.727 and 0.851. This suggests that the respondents are highly drawn towards the festival as a means for expressing collective culture and consolidating social ties. The second factor, "Personal Enrichment," reported motivations centered around personal enrichment, for example, self-expression, going away to visit friends and family, and leisure and relaxation (loadings: 0.725–0.812). The respondents appear to view the festival as a means of having a personal enrichment experience and being refreshed.

The third factor, "Festival Quality and Heritage," emphasized organizational excellence, historic significance, and effective marketing (loadings: 0.682–0.825). This factor describes the critical role of well-organized events and marketing campaigns in attracting and retaining participants. Finally, the fourth factor, "Identity and Experiential Value," captured a combination of personal pride, business networking, stress relief, and the aesthetic value of colorful costumes (loadings: 0.376–0.797). Though community belonging was loaded lowest, it was still a significant factor in this component, reflecting the multifaceted nature of participants' experience motivation. These findings on the four factors paint a rich picture of the multifaceted nature of motivations for participation in the masquerade festival. From social identity and culture to personal enrichment, organizational excellence, and value from the experience, the findings capture the multifaceted mix of factors that make the festival a beloved and enduring tradition.

These four empirical factors can be read against the push–pull framework introduced earlier. Factor 2 (Personal Enrichment: creative self-expression, visiting friends and relatives, leisure and relaxation) and elements of Factor 4 (sense of pride, relief from stress) correspond most closely to push motivations internally generated needs that predispose masquerades to seek out the festival largely irrespective of its specific attributes. Factor 3 (Festival Quality and Heritage: organisation, history, marketing) and the costume-related items within Factor 4 correspond more closely to pull motivations attributes of the Ankos Festival itself that draw participants toward it. Factor 1 (Cultural and Social Connection) combines both push elements (socialisation, prestige-seeking) and pull elements (the specific cultural heritage attached to Ankos), indicating that push and pull motivations are not always cleanly separable in this setting but can co-occur within the same underlying dimension. Rather than simply confirming the push–pull dichotomy, these findings extend it by showing that festival-specific social status and identity considerations form a distinct, hybrid dimension that conventional push–pull models do not explicitly capture. This context-specific refinement of the push–pull framework for masquerade-based cultural festivals is the study's principal contribution to tourism motivation theory. Viewed through Iso-Ahola's (1982) seeking-escaping dichotomy, Factor 2 and the stress-relief elements of Factor 4 represent the escaping dimension, while the socialisation, prestige, and identity elements of Factor 1 represent the seeking dimension, consistent with Uysal and Jurowski's (1994) demonstration that push and pull motivations operate as statistically distinguishable but co-occurring dimensions. Following Yoon and Uysal (2005), the strength and clarity of these motivational factors, particularly the high agreement recorded for entertainment, costume, and community-related items, suggest a plausible pathway through which well-matched masquerade motivations could translate into participant satisfaction and sustained festival loyalty, although this motivation-satisfaction-loyalty linkage was not directly tested in the present cross-sectional design.

5.4 Differences in Motivation across Masquerade Characteristics

This section discusses how socio-demographics characteristics relates with the motivational factors of Ankos participation. Mocanu et al. (2021) argue that socio-demographic characteristics influence choice of leisure an individual undertakes. Hence, the study assesses the socio-demographics factors across the four factors of motivation such as cultural and social connection, personal enrichment, festival quality and heritage identity and experiential value.

5.4.1 Socio-demographic Characteristics by Cultural and Social Connection

To explore the potential influence of socio-demographic characteristics on the motivation factor "Cultural and Social Connection" among participants in the Masquerade Festival in Sekondi-Takoradi, a series of non-parametric tests were conducted. Firstly, a Mann-Whitney U test was employed to compare the levels of motivation related to cultural and social connection between male and female respondents. The test results revealed no statistically significant difference between the two genders, $U = 11399$, $p = .768$. The mean rank for males was 156.71, while for females it was 153.76. This finding suggests that both genders exhibit a similar degree of motivation in participating in the festival for cultural and social reasons. This outcome reinforces with Mohamed, (2024) earlier observations that, in highly cultural or community-centered events, motivations such as heritage and belonging often resonate across genders. Although other studies Bonnardel, et al. (2018)

have reported stronger relational motivations among women, the present result suggests that, within this sample, male and female participants reported comparable levels of cultural and social connection motivation. A non-significant result indicates insufficient evidence of a gender difference in this sample; it does not establish that cultural significance "overrides" gender as a determinant more broadly.

Age, however, emerged as an important factor. The Kruskal-Wallis test (χ^2 (5) = 32.714, p < 0.001) showed that motivation levels varied across groups. Participants aged 35–39 years reported the strongest cultural-social motivation (mean rank = 228.86), while those aged 29–34 years were least motivated (mean rank = 112.42). Other age groups fell between these extremes, with younger respondents below 18 (148.37) and those aged 19–23 (149.03) reporting lower scores compared to older groups such as 24–28 (185.71) and 40 years and above (168.00). This finding reflects the work of Otoo and Kim (2020) on broader tourism motivation literature, which notes that priorities evolve with life stage: older groups tend to value culture and heritage more strongly, while younger cohorts often focus on novelty and leisure.

Furthermore, a Kruskal-Wallis test to examine differences in the motivation factor "Cultural and Social Connection" across different marital status groups showed a statistically significant difference among the groups (χ^2 (2) = 7.509, p = 0.023). The mean ranks for each marital status group were as follows: Single (mean rank = 142.73), Married (mean rank = 170.27), and Others (mean rank = 167.17). The results indicate that motivation for cultural and social connection varies significantly across different marital status groups, with the highest motivation observed in the married group and the lowest in the single group. Marital status can influence tourism preferences and behaviors (Tomić et al., 2019). In this context, married participants may find festivals particularly valuable for family bonding and community engagement, whereas singles may be motivated by entertainment or novelty rather than cultural continuity.

Education level was another differentiator. The Kruskal-Wallis test (χ^2 (6) = 17.835, p = 0.007) revealed significant differences across categories. Degree holders scored highest (186.58), followed by Diploma (180.55) and Masters (166.74), while HND participants reported the lowest motivation (128.12). JHS (156.54), SHS (143.81), and "Others" (136.31) fell in between. This pattern is consistent with Lin et al. (2024)'s assertion that higher levels of education foster greater awareness and appreciation of cultural and heritage values, leading to stronger motivations in such domains.

Table 6. Socio-demographic Characteristics by Cultural and Social Connection

Socio-demographic Characteristics	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	P-value
Gender				
Male	183	156.71	11399	0.768
Female	127	153.76		
Age	N	Mean Rank	Kruskal Wallis H Test	P-value
Below 18	63	148.37		
19-23 years	97	149.03		
24-28 years	70	185.71		**0.000****
29-34 years	52	112.42		
35-39 years	14	228.86	$X^2(5) = 32.714$	
40 years and above	14	168.00		
Marital status				
Single	163	142.73		
Married	118	170.27	$X^2(2) = 7.509$	**0.023****
Others	29	167.17		
Level of education				
JHS	68	156.54		
SHS	57	143.81		
Diploma	44	180.55		**0.007****
HND	66	128.12		
Degree	43	186.58	$X^2(6) = 17.835$	
Masters	19	166.74		

Others	13	136.31		
Place of residence				
Ashanti	17	138.06		
Central	55	180.29		
Eastern	34	226.24		
Volta	21	172.95		**0.000****
Greater Accra	59	55.97	$X^2(6) = 118.932$	
Western	103	162.14		
Western North	21	219.81		

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Place of residence produced the most striking differences (χ^2 (6) = 118.932, p < 0.001). Respondents from the Eastern region (226.24) and Western North (219.81) reported the strongest motivations, while those from Greater Accra scored the lowest (55.97). Other regions recorded Central (180.29), Volta (172.95), Western (162.14), and Ashanti (138.06). This finding is consistent with, though does not by itself confirm, Behr et al. (2024) research showing that locality shapes motivational priorities, as people from culturally embedded or less urbanized regions often attach stronger meaning to traditional festivals than urban dwellers who may have diverse recreational alternatives. As region of residence, urbanisation, and cultural embeddedness were not directly measured as distinct constructs in this study, this remains a plausible interpretation of the residence-based differences rather than a demonstrated mechanism.

5.4.2 Socio-demographic Characteristics by Personal Enrichment

Delving into how socio-demographic characteristics influence the motivation factor "Personal Enrichment" among participants in the Masquerade Festival in Sekondi-Takoradi, a series of non-parametric tests were conducted. All the results showed statistically significant values except the level of education as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Relationship between Socio-demographic Characteristics and Personal Enrichment

Socio-demographic Characteristics	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	P-value
Gender				
Male	183	165.20	9845.500	**0.013****
Female	127	141.52		
Age	N	Mean Rank	Kruskal Wallis Test	P-value
Below 18	63	116.86		
19-23 years	97	174.51		
24-28 years	70	157.97		**0.001****
29-34 years	52	156.77		
35-39 years	14	190.50	$X^2(5) = 21.927$	
40 years and above	14	145.64		
Marital status				
Single	163	131.65		
Married	118	182.19	$X^2(2) = 28.947$	**0.000****
Others	29	180.93		
Level of education				
JHS	68	155.13		
SHS	57	141.36		
Diploma	44	151.32	$X^2(6) = 6.177$	0.404
HND	66	160.70		
Degree	43	178.92		

Masters	19	141.24		
Others	13	150.54		
Place of residence				
Ashanti	17	116.18		
Central	55	138.09		
Eastern	34	186.97		
Volta	21	211.43		**0.000****
Greater Accra	59	119.63	$X^2(6) = 43.946$	
Western	103	177.56		
Western North	21	118.64		

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

The Mann-Whitney U test revealed that males expressed stronger motivation for personal enrichment than females (U = 9845.500, p = 0.013). The mean rank for males (165.20) was higher compared to females (141.52), suggesting that men are more driven by personal development and self-fulfillment when engaging in the festival. This aligns with research of Mendis et al. (2024) which indicates that male participants in cultural events often emphasize self-enhancement and social visibility, while females may prioritize collective or relational aspects.

Subsequently, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to assess whether there were variations in the motivation factor "Personal Enrichment" across age, marital status, level of education and place of residence. With Personal Enrichment by the age groups, the results revealed a statistically significant difference [χ^2 (5) = 21.927, p = 0.001] among the age groups. The mean ranks for each age group were as follows: Below 18 years (mean rank = 116.86), 19-23 years (mean rank = 174.51), 24-28 years (mean rank = 157.97), 29-34 years (mean rank = 156.77), 35-39 years (mean rank = 190.50), and 40 years and above (mean rank = 145.64). This suggests that the motivation for personal enrichment varies significantly across different age groups, with the highest motivation observed in the 35-39 years age group and the lowest in the Below 18 years age group. This pattern resonates with life-course perspectives on festival motivations, where younger individuals prioritize entertainment and leisure, while middle-aged groups often view festivals as opportunities for self-growth, cultural pride, and identity reinforcement (Wu, 2018).

Marital status was another differentiating factor. A statistically significant difference was observed across groups [χ^2 (2) = 28.947, p < 0.001]. Married respondents scored highest (182.19), followed closely by those in the "Other" category (180.93), while singles scored lowest (131.65). These findings suggest that married individuals and those in long-term partnerships are more likely to view the festival as a source of enrichment, possibly because of its role in strengthening family ties and transmitting cultural values. Hence, echoing the assertions of Gulnora (2024); Quinn and Ryan (2019); Booth and Cameron (2020) in literature which expressed that marital status influences participation in heritage events, with families often engaging in such activities to enrich cultural identity and create shared experiences.

In contrast, education level did not significantly influence motivation for personal enrichment [χ^2 (6) = 6.177, p = 0.404]. Mean ranks ranged from 141.24 for Master's holders to 178.92 for degree holders, but the overall differences were not statistically meaningful. This suggests that, unlike cultural-social connection, personal enrichment motivations cut across educational levels, indicating that the desire for self-fulfillment at festivals may not depend on formal education. This finding departs slightly from studies that link higher education with stronger cultural motivations (Dapko,2016); implying that enrichment in this context may be more personal and experiential than educational.

Finally, place of residence showed significant variation [χ^2 (6) = 43.946, p < 0.001]. Respondents from the Volta region scored highest (211.43), followed by Eastern (186.97) and Western (177.56), while those from Ashanti (116.18) and Greater Accra (119.63) recorded the lowest scores. Western North residents (118.64) also displayed relatively weak motivation. This pattern suggests that individuals from regions with strong traditional heritage (Volta and Eastern) may place greater emphasis on festivals as avenues for personal growth and cultural pride. Conversely, respondents from highly urbanized areas such as Greater Accra may have access to multiple alternative recreational and enrichment opportunities, reducing the relative importance of the festival. This is a plausible explanation for the pattern observed, but access to alternative recreational opportunities was not directly measured in this study and should therefore be treated as a possible interpretation rather than a tested finding. This observation resonates Díez-Pisonero (2025) and Katsoni and Costa (2025)

arguments, which note that motivations often reflect regional cultural embeddedness and the extent to which festivals complement or substitute other leisure opportunities.

Taken together, these results highlight that gender, age, marital status, and region of residence significantly shape personal enrichment motivations, while level of education does not. This suggests that personal enrichment in the Ankos Festival is strongly tied to life stage, social relationships, and cultural context, rather than formal learning background.

5.4.3 Socio-demographic Characteristics by Festival Quality and Heritage

Respondents' socio-demographic characteristics and their impacts on the motivation factor "Festival Quality and Heritage" to participate in the Masquerade Festival was analyzed with non-parametric tests (Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis). The analysis of socio-demographic factors in relation to the motivation dimension Festival Quality and Heritage produced mixed patterns. Gender did not significantly influence motivation, as revealed by the Mann-Whitney U test [U = 10719.500, p = 0.194]. Both males (mean rank = 150.58) and females (mean rank = 162.59) exhibited comparable levels of motivation, suggesting that appreciation of festival quality and heritage is shared across genders. This finding resonates with prior research, which notes that perceptions of heritage and event quality are more strongly tied to cultural identity and collective belonging than to gender differences (Fu et al., 2018).

Results from the Kruskal-Wallis test conducted to assess the variations in the motivation factor "Festival Quality and Heritage" across different age groups revealed a statistically significant χ^2 (5) = 30.175, p < 0.001 difference among the age groups. The mean ranks shown in Table 8 suggests that the motivation related to festival quality and heritage varies significantly across different age groups, with the highest motivation observed in the below 18 years age group (mean rank =192.60), and the lowest (mean rank = 126.00), in the 35-39 years age group. Sawyer (2025) echoed that youth often place high value on novelty and cultural immersion, while older cohorts may show selective involvement.

Likewise, Kruskal-Wallis test carried out with the motivation factor "Festival Quality and Heritage" across different marital status groups showed results indicating a marginally significant χ^2 (2) = 5.682, p = 0.058 difference among the marital status groups. The mean ranks for the various marital status groups were: Single (mean rank = 146.46), Married (mean rank = 161.80), and Others (mean rank = 180.69). The results suggest that while the motivation for festival quality and heritage may vary across different marital status groups, the differences are not statistically significant at the conventional alpha level of 0.05. This pattern suggests that diverse household arrangements and social networks may subtly shape festival motivations, though not strongly enough to establish clear distinctions. Marital status may affect participation styles, it does not always translate into significant differences in motivation as suggested by Molanorouzi, et al. (2015).

Table 8. Socio-demographic Characteristics by Festival Quality and Heritage

Socio-demographic Characteristics	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	P-value
Gender				
Male	183	150.58	10719.500	0.194
Female	127	162.59		
Age	N	Mean Rank	Kruskal Wallis Test	P-value
Below 18	63	192.60	$X^2(5) = 30.175$	**0.000****
19-23 years	97	126.21		
24-28 years	70	159.19		
29-34 years	52	161.58		
35-39 years	14	126.00		
40 years and above	14	179.96		
Marital status				
Single	163	146.46	$X^2(2) = 5.682$	0.058
Married	118	161.80		
Others	29	180.69		
Level of education				

JHS	68	192.04		
SHS	57	150.70		
Diploma	44	122.67		
HND	66	162.02	$X^2(6) = 26.776$	**0.000****
Degree	43	148.23		
Masters	19	120.47		
Others	13	138.65		
Place of residence				
Ashanti	17	145.41		
Central	55	171.61		
Eastern	34	195.54		
Volta	21	125.86	$X^2(6) = 67.242$	**0.000****
Greater Accra	59	200.49		
Western	103	110.45		
Western North	21	180.86		

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Education level, however, produced significant differences [χ^2 (6) = 26.776, p < 0.001]. Junior High School respondents displayed the highest motivation (mean rank = 192.04), whereas Master's degree holders recorded the lowest (mean rank = 120.47). This outcome implies that participants with lower formal education may place greater emphasis on the heritage and quality aspects of the festival, perhaps due to stronger cultural rootedness, while more educated groups may evaluate the festival differently, focusing on experiential or enrichment dimensions, the data show a statistical association between lower formal education and higher mean motivation scores for festival quality and heritage, but cultural rootedness itself was not directly measured in this study. This observation is supported by Edeoja (2024); Kapelari et al. (2020) research found that education influences how individuals interpret the cultural significance of heritage events, with higher-educated participants often approaching them through more critical or comparative lenses.

Again, the results on motivation factor "Festival Quality and Heritage" across different places of residence of the respondents using the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated a statistically significant χ^2 (6) = 67.242, p < 0.001 difference. The mean ranks show motivation for festival quality and heritage varies significantly across different places of residence, with the highest (mean rank = 200.49), motivation observed in the Greater Accra region and the lowest (mean rank = 110.45) in the Western region as shown in Table 8. This result is particularly interesting given that the Masquerade Festival is hosted in the Western Region. It may reflect a sense of novelty and cultural attraction among outsiders, while local residents perhaps more familiar with the event show relatively lower motivation tied to heritage. Previous studies highlight this "outsider effect," where visitors often attribute greater cultural value to local traditions than the host community itself (Terruhn, & Cassim, 2023). Generally, these findings suggest that motivations for festival quality and heritage are strongly shaped by age, education, and residence, while gender plays little role and marital status shows only weak influence. Younger respondents, less formally educated groups, and residents outside the host region appear particularly motivated by heritage and quality considerations, underscoring the festival's role as a cultural learning platform and a symbol of identity preservation.

5.4.4 Socio-demographic Characteristics by Identity and Experiential Value

Using non-parametric tests, the impact of socio-demographic characteristics including, gender, age, marital status, level of education and place of residence on the motivation factor "Identity and Experiential Value" among participants in the Masquerade Festival in Sekondi-Takoradi was explored. Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the levels of motivation for identity and experiential value between male and female respondents. The results indicated no statistically significant difference [U = 11507.500, p = 0.877] between the two genders. The mean rank for males was 156.12 and 154.61 for females. This suggests that both genders exhibit a similar level of motivation related to identity and experiential value in participating in the festival. This outcome aligns with Aguirre-Rodriguez et al. (2023)'s position which emphasizes that identity-based and experiential motivations are deeply rooted in cultural belonging, and are less influenced by gender differences.

Table 9. Socio-demographic Characteristics by Identity and Experiential Value

Socio-demographic Characteristics	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	P-value
Gender				
Male	183	156.12	11507.500	0.877
Female	127	154.61		
Age	N	Mean Rank	Kruskal Wallis Test	P-value
Below 18	63	179.25	$X^2(5) = 33.293$	**0.000****
19-23 years	97	128.55		
24-28 years	70	133.65		
29-34 years	52	190.07		
35-39 years	14	167.04		
40 years and above	14	204.64		
Marital status				
Single	163	158.70	$X^2(2) = 2.731$	0.255
Married	118	157.11		
Others	29	130.95		
Level of education				
JHS	68	187.47	$X^2(6) = 15.606$	**0.016****
SHS	57	144.72		
Diploma	44	141.20		
HND	66	141.00		
Degree	43	145.27		
Masters	19	174.45		
Others	13	163.69		
Place of residence				
Ashanti	17	230.79	$X^2(6) = 142.460$	**0.000****
Central	55	185.02		
Eastern	34	214.16		
Volta	21	183.98		
Greater Accra	59	206.46		
Western	103	87.85		
Western North	21	82.40		

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

In another vein, a Kruskal-Wallis test was performed to assess the variations in the motivation factor "Identity and Experiential Value" across different age groups. The results revealed a statistically significant difference χ^2 (5) = 33.293, p < 0.001 among the age groups. The mean ranks for each age group show: Below 18 years (mean rank = 179.25), 19-23 years (mean rank = 128.55), 24-28 years (mean rank = 133.65), 29-34 years (mean rank = 190.07), 35-39 years (mean rank = 167.04), and 40 years and above (mean rank = 204.64). These results suggest significant differences across the various age groups, with the highest motivation observed in the 40 years and above age group and the lowest in the 19-23 years age group. These findings suggest that older participants place stronger emphasis on identity affirmation and cultural experiences, while younger groups may be motivated by entertainment or social interaction. This observation is consistent with Lichy and McLeay (2018) argument that motivations evolve across the life course, with older adults often prioritizing cultural heritage and experiential depth over leisure-oriented motives. However, marital status did not significantly affect motivation [χ^2 (2) = 2.731, p = 0.255]. Although mean ranks varied slightly (Single =

158.70; Married = 157.11; Others = 130.95), the differences were not statistically meaningful. This indicates that appreciation for identity and experiential aspects of the festival transcends household arrangements. Similar findings in festival research highlight that identity-driven motivations are collective and cultural in nature, and therefore less sensitive to marital status distinctions (Li et al.,2024).

Education, on the other hand, showed a significant effect [χ^2 (6) = 15.606, p = 0.016]. The strongest motivation was recorded among Junior High School participants (mean rank = 187.47), while Higher National Diploma holders scored lowest (141.00). Interestingly, Master's degree holders also exhibited relatively high motivation (174.45). These results imply that both lower and higher levels of education are associated with strong identity and experiential motivations. Though for different reasons, less formally educated participants may draw more directly from traditional roots, while more educated groups may consciously engage with the festival as a platform for cultural identity reinforcement. Gómez-Ullate and Saraiva (2024) noted a similar duality, where festival motivations reflect both grassroots cultural attachment and critical cultural appreciation among the highly educated.

Lastly, using Kruskal-Wallis test with the motivation factor "Identity and Experiential Value" across different places of residence of the respondents showed a statistically significant difference χ^2 (6) = 142.460, p < 0.001. The mean ranks of the motivation factor identity and experiential value varies significantly across different places of residence as shown in Table 9, with the highest (mean rank= 230.79) observed in the Ashanti region and the lowest (mean rank = 82.40) in the Western North region. Interestingly, the high motivation among Ashanti participants underscores the interregional cultural appeal of the Masquerade Festival, demonstrating its role as both a local heritage practice and a broader cultural attraction. Prior studies support this pattern, showing that regional identity and cultural embeddedness strongly influence how participants evaluate experiential value in heritage events (Fu & Luo, 2023; Yang et al., 2023).

6. Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that the Ankos Festival in Sekondi-Takoradi is a vibrant cultural event whose motivational structure has clear relevance for domestic tourism. Given the study's cross-sectional, self-reported, and convenience-sampled design, these findings are best read as evidence of motivational patterns among the sampled Ankos participants rather than as a demonstrated causal effect on domestic tourism development or sustainability. Participation in the masquerade festival is influenced by a variety of motivational factors that can be broadly categorized into cultural and social connection, personal enrichment, festival quality and heritage, and identity and experiential value. The study likewise revealed that entertainment, colorful costumes, stress relief, a sense of community, and good organization are the strongest motivators for participants. However, the socio-demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, education level, and place of residence significantly influence the various motivational factors. Despite the festival's strong cultural and entertainment appeal and ability to attract participants from across the country, certain regions such as Ashanti, Volta and Western North, remain underrepresented and motivations differ across demographics. The study emphasizes the need for a more targeted and inclusive approach to marketing and event organization, which takes these variations into account. With the motivational factors of the masquerades identified, serve as open doors for various strategies and promotional efforts to be invested in the festival's promotion, as they appeal to domestic tourists across various socio-demographics. Furthermore, incorporating these motivational findings into marketing strategies may help sustain participation in the festival and, by extension, support domestic tourism and its associated benefits to the host community, although this potential benefit was not directly tested in the present study.

7. Limitation

Several limitations should be acknowledged in interpreting these findings. First, the quantitative sample of 310 masquerades was obtained through convenience/accidental sampling, which does not guarantee representativeness of the wider population of festival participants and limits statistical generalisation. Second, the study was geographically confined to the Ankos Festival in Sekondi-Takoradi, Western Region, so the motivational patterns identified may not transfer directly to other masquerade or festival contexts in Ghana or elsewhere. Third, motivation was measured through self-report, which is susceptible to social desirability and recall bias. Fourth, the qualitative component was based on only five purposively selected stakeholders, which constrained the extent to which interview data could explain or triangulate the survey findings; a larger and more diverse qualitative sample would strengthen future iterations of this research. Finally, the cross-sectional design captures motivation at a single point in time and cannot establish causal relationships between motivational factors and domestic tourism development or sustainability, nor can it capture how motivations might change across festival editions or over participants' life course. Future studies should consider

probability sampling, multi-site comparisons, a more substantial qualitative strand, and longitudinal designs to address these constraints.

8. Recommendations

Tourism marketers and event organizers should design segmented promotional campaigns tailored to the specific motivations of different demographic groups. For example, youth-targeted campaigns can highlight entertainment and socialization, while older demographics may be attracted through cultural heritage and relaxation themes. It is required or recommended of the event organizer, destination mangers and service providers to promote the festival beyond its traditional catchment areas, especially in regions like Ashanti and Eastern, which show lower participation rates. Partnerships with local tourism boards and schools could help in this outreach.

Again, improving transport systems, accommodation facilities, security, and event scheduling will make the festival more attractive to potential participants, especially those from distant regions. Well-coordinated logistics also encourage repeat visitation. It should be noted that transport, accommodation, security, and scheduling were not directly measured in this study; this recommendation is a broader policy suggestion consistent with the general event-management literature rather than a direct implication of the survey data. Workshops on costume-making, music, dance, and storytelling about the history of the masquerade can enhance the festival's experiential value and attract creative tourists and families.

Building on the push-pull and tourism motivation frameworks discussed earlier, recommendations for the Ankos Festival can usefully be separated into push-oriented and pull-oriented strategies. Because push factors are internally generated needs that exist independently of the destination, marketing communications aimed at stimulating these needs, for instance messaging that foregrounds stress relief, social bonding, prestige, and a sense of belonging, as reflected in the Personal Enrichment and Cultural and Social Connection factors, are likely to be most effective at generating initial interest in attending the festival, particularly among populations who have not previously considered masquerade festivals as a leisure option. Pull-oriented strategies, by contrast, should focus on strengthening the festival's own attributes, its organisation, costume artistry, historical authenticity, and the quality of its cultural programming, which loaded strongly on the Festival Quality and Heritage and Identity and Experiential Value factors, since these are the attributes most likely to convert generalised travel motivation into a specific preference for Ankos over competing cultural events.

In line with Yoon and Uysal's (2005) motivation-satisfaction-loyalty model, festival organisers are further encouraged to introduce simple post-event satisfaction measures, for example brief exit surveys or digital feedback forms, that track whether the motivational appeals used in promotion are matched by attendees' actual experience. Systematically monitoring this motivation-experience fit would allow organisers to identify which push and pull strategies are translating into genuine satisfaction and repeat attendance, and would provide the festival with an evidence base for refining its promotional and programming strategies in future editions, rather than relying solely on the cross-sectional motivational profile established in the present study.

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