

# The Rock in Rio extraordinary consumer experience journey: a value-based approach

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – This study aims to propose a framework for understanding the construction of extraordinary consumer experiences in events from a multidimensional and longitudinal value perspective.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The main research site was the Rock in Rio Brazil VI festival, an extraordinary consumption experience. The study takes a phenomenological interpretative approach, for which input was obtained using multiple data collection techniques (in-depth interviews, diaries and photographs) in a longitudinal study that took place over 18 months. The study also includes the first author's observations and interactions with the event organizer and its partners during the same period, and post-pandemic complementary data that were collected in 2021.

**Findings** – The research findings demonstrate the integrative potential of concepts and theories that are analysed in the light of a longitudinal perspective for understanding value formation for consumers in their experience of extraordinary events. It also indicates that the construction of experience involves a high level of interaction and a high degree of engagement with the consumer in order to foster the development of an affective relationship between the service provider and the user that is based on a co-created experience.

**Originality/value** – The study answers call for more research into understanding consumer value, and how it is created, delivered and developed over time (Helkkula *et al.*, 2012). It also expands our understanding of consumption experiences and the consumer journey (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). It encourages longitudinal qualitative studies to be carried out and analyses value in the consumption experience in the field of events.

**Keywords** Consumer experience, Extraordinary experiences, Consumer journey, Value creation, Longitudinal study

**Paper type** Research paper

## 1. Introduction

It's a unique experience, a unique emotion in your life, it's where you make new friends, where you listen to the songs you like, you see new things . . . It's surreal, so I tell everyone they should go there for at least a day . . . (a post describing the Rock in Rio VI experience).

The experiential aspects of consumption, in particular hedonistic ones, and the pursuit of a more in-depth understanding of consumer experiences were addressed by [Holbrook and Hirschmann \(1982\)](#) almost four decades ago. Nowadays, consumer experiences are being analysed from a broader, holistic perspective, arising from some elements that are controlled by service providers and others that are beyond their control ([Holbrook, 1999](#)). In this sense, the consumer experience has been noted to be one of the most important research challenges in recent years, involving especially service sectors, such as tourism and events ([McCull-Kennedy \*et al.\*, 2019](#); [Van Winkle and Bueddefeld, 2016](#); [Goolaup and Mossberg, 2017](#)).

From an experiential angle, value is conceived as an emerging process involving consumers' cumulative histories and ecosystems. Value must also be analysed from a temporal perspective of a longitudinal and multi-contextual nature, encompassing several reference frameworks for personal values and experiences that must be socially interpreted and lived on an experimental-phenomenological level ([Helkkula \*et al.\*, 2012](#)). Value, therefore, is "always to some extent collective and shared, being multi-personal in its



nature” (Heinonen *et al.*, 2013, p. 105). In the perspective of various authors, the appraisal of perceived value is not a specific phenomenon, nor should it be analysed transversally (Gallarza and Gil-Saura, 2006; Mathwick *et al.*, 2001), since it arises from a continuous process that is intrinsic to the on-going consumer relationship (Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007; Helkkula *et al.*, 2012).

Few studies have so far analysed a consumer value-based approach in the tourism and events sector. Exceptions to this were Bradley and Sparks (2012) with their study into the antecedents and consequences of the change in consumer values that are based on self-reports, and Gallarza *et al.* (2013) on the value dimensions experienced by volunteers at a religious event. In relating to value creation and consumer experiences, Andersson and Armbrrecht (2014) analysed the so-called use-value, which is referred to as the total experience of a visit to an event. Relating to perceived value and music festivals, Aşan *et al.* (2020) examined the mediating effect of perceived festival value on the relationship between satisfaction and experiences, while Oklevik *et al.* (2021) looked at engagement in an event visitor’s experience and satisfaction. Lin and Lee (2020) studied the relationship between the authentic experience and festival identity, with value as a mediator.

These studies, however, were unsuccessful in capturing the broader, multidimensional, individual, collective and longitudinal essence of consumer value as something that is shaped in the course of the consumption experience. There are also differences between everyday (ordinary) experiences and occasional (extraordinary) experiences, which also point to different approaches to value formation (Arnould and Price, 1993). Drawing on two distinctive concepts of consumer behaviour research in events, experiential marketing and consumer value, this study seeks to understand how multiple value dimensions emerge in the customer journey over time and interact to form the concept of value for consumers in extraordinary consumer experiences. The main research site was the Rock in Rio (RR) Brazil VI festival, with additional post-pandemic data collected in 2021. Over the years, the festival has managed to develop an affective relationship with many of its consumers through their construction of and connection with extraordinary experiences. This study adopts a phenomenological and interpretative approach that is based on a qualitative study that used different sources of data, which were collected from both the event’s providers and consumers. Our literature review is followed by a description of the research methodology. We then present, discuss and interpret the qualitative empirical results and finalise our conclusions.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Consumer experience

Since Holbrook and Hirschmann (1982) published their article on experiential aspects of consumption, the consumer experience has attracted increasing attention from both companies and researchers (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016), thus enhancing our understanding that an experience arises from the interaction with several elements that are present in the environment (Luonila *et al.*, 2019; Oklevik *et al.*, 2021), and by way of a multiplicity of actors (Goolaup and Mossberg, 2017; Luonila *et al.*, 2019). In this sense, an experience is understood as a construction of a holistic nature that the service provider creates from controllable and uncontrollable elements (Verhoef *et al.*, 2009; Roy, 2018). Studies that emerged in the past decade sought to understand these experiences and focused mainly on three elements that seem to be common in all studies: the individual customer, the interaction with the product/service and the time element (Roy, 2018). Although this subject has constituted a consistent study path, the literature reinforces the existence of a gap in our understanding of the construction of experiences in festivals and events (Van Winkle and Bueddefeld, 2016; Werner *et al.*, 2020).

In recent years, some authors have begun analysing the experience from the perspective of a journey, which implies looking at the experience from a processual viewpoint rather than a

static viewpoint (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Neuhofer *et al.*, 2020). In this most recent standpoint, experience is “a multidimensional construct focusing on customer’s cognitive, emotional, behavioural, sensorial, and social responses to a firm’s offerings during the customer’s entire purchase journey” (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016, p. 71).

Consumer experience focusses mainly on the specific social context of the market in which consumers live their experiences, indicating a need to learn more about the differences that exist between ordinary and extraordinary experiences. Extraordinary experiences are those “with the primary intention of acquiring an experience of life: an event or series of events that are lived” (Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003, p. 1,194). For this reason, they are striking, which persist for a significant length of time in an individual’s memory and contribute to their personal development (Gilovich *et al.*, 2015) as a “transformative experience” (Neuhofer *et al.*, 2020). In the case of the consumption experience in concerts, we see that it permeates the consumers’ daily lives well before the actual event – attending the concert. In this sense, Aşan *et al.* (2020) propose that in the context of festival attendance four dimensions of the consumer experience occur: educational, aesthetic, entertainment and escape. The consumer’s experiences of temporality are expressed from the planning stage through to the post-consumption phase. Experiences are recorded in the memory and are easily remembered by consumers for their own personal delight and become the basis for conversations with family and friends.

## 2.2 Value for consumers

A seminal book by Zeithaml (1988, p. 14) looks at the trade-off that contains the most universally accepted definition of value for consumers, which constitutes the “global assessment of a product’s utility based on the perceptions of what is received and what is given”. More recently, the understanding of value has been based on the dominant-service logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2008; Heinonen *et al.*, 2013) and the consumer experience approach (Holbrook, 2006; Helkkula *et al.*, 2012). Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo (2007) also mention the situational and context-dependent nature of value formation, arguing that the nature of a specific value situation results from the rules and standards present in the society. In turn, the relationship between experience and value in festivals was explored by Aşan *et al.* (2020), who considered value as being composed of the dimensions of time, money and effort.

The cultural perspective of value worked out by Arnould (2014) suggests that value domains are not separate and exclusively economic or hedonic but interrelated and co-generative. In this sense, the value of experience has been understood as transient, multidimensional and complex (Holbrook, 2006; Helkkula *et al.*, 2012; Heinonen *et al.*, 2013). In this respect, Helkkula *et al.* (2012) suggest that since experience is an interactive process, the value of service experiences is affected by previous experiences and future expectations, as well as by perceptions of the service at the time it is consumed, and after it has been delivered, including elements that are offered by the service provider, such as the service interface, meeting environment, range of products, services and price (Holbrook, 1999; Verhoef *et al.*, 2009). Goolaup and Mossberg (2017) highlight the social value in constructing a sense of belonging to a particular community as central to the experience itself. Similar results were found by Werner *et al.* (2020). Therefore, previous studies of value add different dimensions to our view of how value is formed, as shown in Table 1.

Helkkula *et al.* (2012) suggest an analysis of value from the perspective of the “hermeneutical spiral”. The VALEX (value in the experience) framework is based on four propositions for understanding the value created in an experience: (1) it is individually intra-subjective and socially inter-subjective; (2) it can be both lived and imaginary; (3) it is constructed on previous, current and imaginary future experiences and is temporal in nature;

Dimension	Description	Authors
Hedonistic	Emotional and sentimental aspects; related to pleasure itself in experiences appreciated for themselves and in themselves	Holbrook (1999, 2006), Goolaup and Mossberg (2017), Oklevik <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Social	Perceived utility of association with one or more social groups, as well as choices that demonstrate the sharing of values through products or services	Heinonen <i>et al.</i> (2013), Helkkula <i>et al.</i> (2012), Goolaup and Mossberg (2017), Werner <i>et al.</i> (2020)
Excellence	Reflects the valorization of a service provider to fulfil its promises through proven experience and task-related performance	Holbrook (1999), Mathwick <i>et al.</i> (2001), Luonila <i>et al.</i> (2019)
Visual appeal	Driven by design and the physical beauty inherent in the retail environment	Mathwick <i>et al.</i> (2001), Neuhofer <i>et al.</i> (2020)
Atmosphere	Tangible environmental stimuli that affect the emotions consumers experience in an environment, such as spatial layout and functionality, symbols, quality of facilities, perception of food, souvenirs, convenience and information	Lee <i>et al.</i> (2008), Luonila <i>et al.</i> (2019)
Entertainment	Consumer experience acts as a stimulus for enjoying entertainment, appreciated in all its nuances	Mathwick <i>et al.</i> (2001), Oklevik <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Escapism	Pursuit of distraction, fantasy or entertainment, to remain far from real life	Mathwick <i>et al.</i> (2001), Neuhofer <i>et al.</i> (2020)
Utility	Extent to which goods or services possess the desired characteristics and are useful or perform a desired function, thus reflecting task-related values	Oklevik <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Perceived price	Related to valuing the cost and sacrifice required to purchase a product	Mathwick <i>et al.</i> (2001), Gallarza and Gil-Saura (2006), Goolaup and Mossberg (2017)
Sacrifice	Related to non-monetary costs: Time, effort and assumed risk associated with a purchase	Dodds <i>et al.</i> (1991), Oklevik <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Esteem	Relates to how possessions may reflect a person's identity and thus provide consumers with a positive sense of themselves	Holbrook (1999, 2006), Neuhofer <i>et al.</i> (2020)

**Note(s):** Designed by the authors based on literature review

**Table 1.**  
Aspects of value and  
marketing studies

and (4) it emerges from individually determined social contexts. Considering these mutable individual and social contexts, Helkkula *et al.* (2012) point out that it is important to recognize that “pure” experience will never be fully accessible to the researcher, since thoughts and explicit discourse are only part of the sense of value but do not fully reveal the experience itself. They emphasize, however, that adopting a phenomenological approach and longitudinal studies can help improve the understanding of value in the consumer experience.

### 3. Research strategy

This qualitative study is anchored by the phenomenological interpretative paradigm using a longitudinal approach.

#### 3.1 Data collection

We used several means to collect data for the main event that we analysed, RR VI, which occurred in 2015; this was the first round of data collection in this study. For six months

(five months pre-festival and one-month post-festival), we monitored 11 consumers with ages ranging from 22 to 48 years old (their ages at the time of the 2015 data collection) who came from different regions in Brazil, based on the following complementary data collection procedures:

- (1) In-depth interviews before and after the festival (identified in the results as I1 and I2). Eleven consumers were interviewed several months before the festival (with the aim of getting to know their stories, prior expectations and previous experiences), and seven of them one month before. We reinterviewed all 11, previously interviewed festival attendees after the event and evaluated their experiences and the whole consumer journey, which supported the longitudinal data collection process. All interviews in this phase occurred between April and October 2015, took around an hour each, and were mainly conducted by Skype. We selected the participants by invitation on the official RR Facebook page and its official website.
- (2) A weekly consumer diary: built using photographs submitted by the respondents and by monitoring their social network posts. We used photographs as a resource to guide the respondents when they were explaining their experience behind the image.

These multiple sources of data collection enhanced our comprehension of value construction through experience formation in RR I to VI. In September 2021, we collected additional data with the goal of understanding value formation in RR VII and VIII, and also how the COVID-19 pandemic had affected consumer intentions for RR 2022. Five participants identified as Bianca, Beto, Simone, Fábio and Ester, from the 11 who took part in the first part of the study, agreed to participate in this second round, and we interviewed them via Skype (45 min each). All respondents in this study were anonymised and interviewed individually.

### 3.2 Analysis

Analysis followed procedures described by [Bardin \(2011\)](#). During fluctuating text reading, we coded based on the value dimensions presented in the literature but always leaving open room for any new dimensions that might emerge from the data. There were, however, no new codes. The process was carried out individually for each of the consumption phases we analysed, including all the materials (interviews/diaries/photos and social media) that came from the consumers, as follows: (1) Fluctuating text reading of the material; (2) Coding based on value dimensions, using MAXQDA 11 software; (3) Thematic grouping of codes based on value dimensions, creating the analysis categories that are described in Section 4; (4) Creating a framework to demonstrate the categories visually on the consumer journey, clarifying those that had a primary or a secondary effect.

During our second round of data collection in 2021, we continued with the floating text reading and data coding and subsequent thematic grouping in the dimensions previously worked on and identified, noting that no new dimensions emerged from the data.

As new interpretations of the interview results arose, we observed that some of the theoretical constructs were determinants and guided the analysis process in a more decisive way, and so these became the primary dimensions of this study. The notion of value in experience according to [Helkkula et al. \(2012\)](#) guided our thinking about how the elements/dimensions of value are formed in the course of the RR experience. Other previously studied dimensions of value that are reported in [Table 1](#) helped with this categorization.

A large amount of information – more than 400 pages of transcripts, 50 photographs, social network posts and the service provider's website – enabled us to shape our interpretation of the data for individual aspects of consumption and the relationship between the respondents and the experience provider.

### 3.3 Experience provider

The primary service provider in this study was the RR Brazil VI (2015) music festival, which is organized by Rock World S.A in Rio de Janeiro, and features 150 attractions and over 90 h of music. Data collected from the experience provider were part of this research by way of the participant-observer approach that was adopted by the first author for constructing the RR experience. Several interviews were conducted with the marketing team from RR during this process, and the service provider's publications and actions were monitored over an 18-month period. The first author also attended the festival and the RR Academy (an event promoted by HSM Executive Education, a Brazilian educational entity that is related to HSM Management Review and RR). This event enabled us to identify what the provider calls "RR's DNA" in the form of three aspects of its organizational culture: co-authoring, belonging and complicity with consumers and business partners. The first author took a part in this workshop with the aim of getting to know the RR experience in more depth through the eyes of the service provider, and also to visit the event's installations and structure before it took place. The evidence we collected at this point was important for understanding how value is co-created by way of the extraordinary experience we studied.

## 4. Results

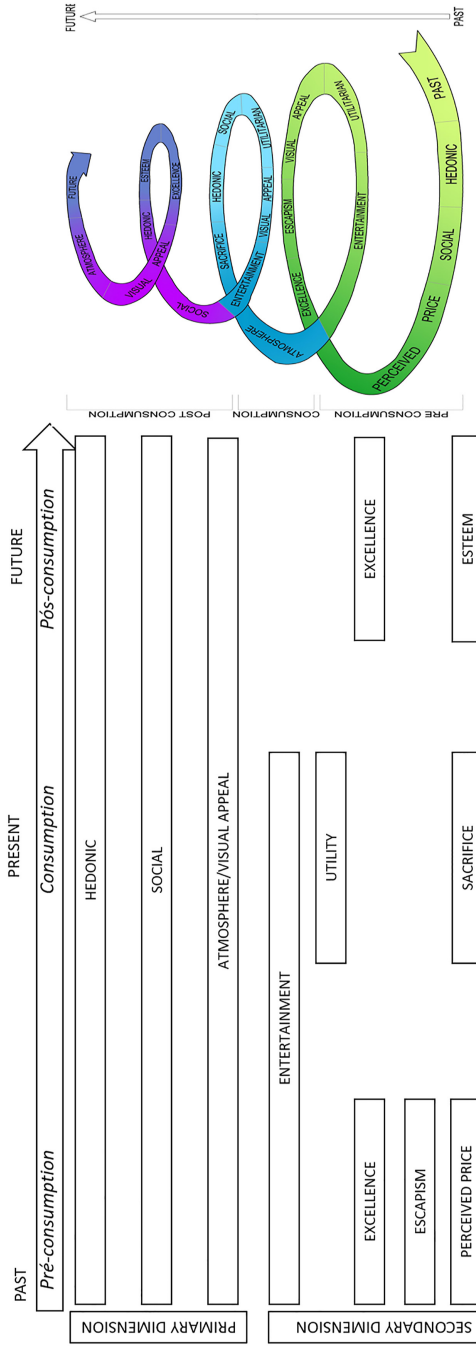
The many different forms of data collection, the respondents who took part in this study and the sources that we used enabled us to draw up those dimensions that create value in an extraordinary consumption experience. We assumed that value in this study is multidimensional and constructed in an "iterative and cumulative process" (Helkkula *et al.*, 2012, p. 68); value dimensions may be combined with others so that more than one dimension may be acting at the same moment as a source value for consumers. This flow is shown in Figure 1 in two forms: as a spiral of value construction and as an observable table design of the occurrence of value dimensions during the various phases of the festival that were experienced. Considering their relevance to the creation of value through experience, we divided our dimensions into primary and secondary. We considered primary dimensions to be those that occurred in all phases of the consumption experience (pre-consumption, consumption and post-consumption), while secondary dimensions are those that occurred only in one or two phases. These results add to the hermeneutical spiral concept for value analysis that was initially proposed by Helkkula *et al.* (2012) and enrich the discussion on how the dimensions of value mentioned previously in the literature interact in the spiral throughout the experience.

### 4.1 Primary dimensions for the construction of value in the festival experience

As observed in Figure 1, we describe and detail the primary dimensions in the following sections.

**4.1.1 Hedonistic dimension.** This was the predominant dimension in the pre-consumption phase, since memories of past experiences awoke emotions, proving that the value of the previous experience spiralled into the present and the future (expectations) (Helkkula *et al.*, 2012). We also observed this dimension in the consumption phase as a reaction to discovering the City of Rock (a surprise in the new edition), as well as appearing in many of the reports on consumers' involvement with the music, being in contact with their favourite artists and being able to share this moment with their friends. In the post-consumption phase, the dimension is present in reports of joy, pleasure and a feeling of esteem for having experienced such unique moments.

The fact that the service provider works on elements that make consumers recall past experiences (a space for testimonials on the festival website, mass media campaigns and



Note(s): Study results

Figure 1.  
The hermeneutic spiral  
of consumption  
experience

campaigns for sharing memories of the festival) was key to intensifying the elements of this dimension in the pre-consumption phase. The following quote is evidence of this:

[It was] 1985 and I had just turned 15, with all that revolution going on [Brazil coming out of its dictatorship period]. I told my father that my dream was to go to RR [...] and then, one day, he said to me: "I couldn't give you a 15th birthday party, I'm never going to let you go to RR on your own, but I'll take you" [...] And so, off we went, an old man, a 15-year-old girl and my cousin to see AC/DC, Ozzy Osbourne, Whitesnake and the Scorpions. [...] Well, it was the greatest emotion of my life, I can still smell the mud from that day. So, 30 years later I'm going back with my two kids aged 16 and 11. (Simone, 46, I, II, VI, VIII—Posted on the "I was there" space on the RR website)

Hedonistic elements are prevalent in extraordinary consumption experiences and are linked to emotions like ecstasy, joy, nostalgia, escapism and happiness, which, because they are difficult to describe, can sometimes take on magical characteristics (Arnould and Price, 1993; Bhattacharjee and Mogilner, 2014), as in the interview excerpt referring to the consumption phase shown as follows:

First it was peoples' vibes, right? Happiness like this, you realize that [it's] something that generates happiness – everybody happy, everybody drinking, laughing, taking pictures of everything. So, the first thing that struck me was, like, you were going to a place where people are happy. I saw something like that, my first impression is that there were a lot of people going to a place where they were going to be happy, you know? So, people smiling. (Lucas, 48, II, VI)

Remarkable lifetime experiences were also a reason for the hedonistic feeling. Even though these experiences may or may not have been supplied by the service provider, they are related to the human relationships that were facilitated by the festival atmosphere:

The most remarkable thing was meeting my wife, because it brought us together and now we're married. It was 10 years ago, in 2011 [...] we even became quite a point of reference with regard to RR for our friends, because we've been to so many editions. Each year is marked by new people, moments are marked by the people who joined us [...] this is what makes RR unique, and going to RR for us is like renewing our vows; we've been to every one since we met. (Beto, 26, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII)

After more than a year and a half of the Covid pandemic and with tickets now on sale for RR 2022, people report a need to bring the hedonistic sensation back into their lives by way of a new RR Experience: "I really enjoyed being there in 2015 and want to have all that emotion again" (Ester, 42, VI).

Replicating an emotion, feeling back to life, escaping from the hard reality that has happened to everybody; these are the main reasons for jumping back into pleasurable hedonic experiences again for music lovers, like RR 2022, and experiencing a new pre-consumption phase that is even more full of anticipation, as is evident in the following quote:

I'll buy them (the tickets), I'm excited to go, I want to experience that again, even as justification. We're so tired of this situation. It's going to be two years next March. I want to do everything that's different. I want to live [...]. The sensation I had in 2015 and then everything I've experienced until now has just proved that it's life. We need to live while we're here. I like music, I breathe music, I joined a choir in this period. (Ester, 42, VI)

Bringing people back to life is a very strong hedonistic aspect, as it is more than just a consumption event; it is a life happiness event. Positive and meaningful emotions are transformative experiences (Neuhof *et al.*, 2020), as reported by one of those attending:

[...] RR allows that. There are so many things going on, so much happiness. Of course there are bad things, like having to stand all day. But even more so now after the pandemic, having a day like that, enjoying, switching off, it's going to be great [...] and even more so now, after all we've been through. I don't want to miss the opportunity to experience it, to experience things that make me happy ... I



want to enjoy it as much as possible, because you never know if it's going to be taken away from you again. (Barbara, 22, VI, VII)

*4.1.2 Social/collective dimension.* The social dimension was prevalent in the three phases of the event, together with the hedonistic value. The social dimension emerges from interaction or the expectation of interaction in the pre-consumption phase. It comes from the joy and the possibility of sharing these magical moments with people who are important in the respondents' lives and with others who share the same love for music. No matter how subjective and individual the experience is, it is affected by the context and the possibility of sharing, recognizing that other people's values and emotions boost the value of the experience (Arnould and Price, 1993; Goolaup and Mossberg, 2017). Danilo says this about his social experience:

I just can't compare it with any other music event [...]. It's really cool, like people from all over Brazil . . . Because people are in that spirit of interaction, they're receptive to new friends, open to happiness. I think it's awesome, I think everyone should try going to RR. (Danilo, 35, III, IV, V, VI)

When the companion is someone important, or a family member, the social dimension intensifies, as in the description offered by an interviewee who was going to the festival for the second time with his son: "I get goosebumps, to be honest. Besides being an event, a festival, the cool thing is [that] we're going to travel, my son and I, and that's really cool." (Fabio, 35, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII)

Whether sharing the festival experience with a family member or not, several participants reported how family-friendly the festival environment was, with children, babies and pregnant women attending. This atmosphere made people who took their families feel even more comfortable. Studies like those by Bowen and Daniels (2005) discovered that creating the atmosphere of fun and partying that is found at music festivals – which provide an opportunity to socialize and enjoy new experiences – was just as important as choosing the right acts for the main stage.

Then I met Daniel, I met the other guy from Minas when I got back from the trip. It's like that, right. You're at the camp site. Camping is something that's even more so for people to go to the show, so you, you, you finish. It's a funny thing, right? Me, I've made a lot of friends at shows. [. . .] And, o, and this is the best thing, I tell you, that I've made more friends, [formed] stronger friendships from going to shows than actually with the people I live with, or with people I know from where I live. (Nelson, 41, III, IV, V, VI)

This opportunity to interact, create new ties with family or make new friends through the experience was also verified by Goolaup and Mossberg (2017), in which festival days contrast with everyday life and provide sensations of fantasy and fun. These elements corroborate what Heinonen *et al.* (2013) point out: value formation must be seen as an emerging process, one that is created from the consumer's accumulated history and ecosystem and that needs to be socially interpreted and tried out in an experimental-phenomenological manner.

*4.1.3 Visual appeal and atmosphere dimensions.* These dimensions arose in the pre-consumption phase, so much so that in the interviewees' descriptions of magical and indescribable moments there were a lot of elements associated with the atmosphere. Taken as a whole, these elements created an atmosphere of enchantment, with countless attractions and activities that "only experiencing them can explain", as we have seen in other papers that analyse extraordinary experiences (Arnould and Price, 1993; Bhattacharjee and Mogilner, 2014) and music festival experiences (Ballantyne *et al.*, 2014).

The discovery of the City of Rock, or rediscovery, for those who had attended previous editions, became evident in the consumption phase, because of contact with new elements of the festival and the recognition that it improves with each edition. The RR atmosphere is also something you experience during the whole RR year:

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[. . .] each month is something else. The ticket arrives one month, then there's booking the transport, looking at the website [. . .]. This (RR) is the one that gives the public the most attention of all the festivals I've been to. They publicize the event week all year. (Alice, 27, VI)

After consumption, this dimension was described with even greater intensity, when the interviewees emphasized the size of the space, the stage and the various attractions which, taken together, delighted them. The existence of a surrounding environment was clear in the researcher's contact with consumers during the festival, when they described how the surroundings and the entire layout involved them, describing each of the attractions and pointing out the effort put into the layout so it would create an unforgettable experience. The interview below describes this process:

You go there [and] it sort of comes as a shock, it's a very organized event nowadays . . . The beauty is in the structure, the location. And I mean beauty . . . The structure, you know, it's like something I'm not familiar with in any other place in Brazil. Nowadays, RR is better formatted, more like Disney . . . like the standard of the toilets, not chemical toilets, for example . . . The men's toilet, first: part of the toilet bowl is porcelain. There are, like, porcelain stalls .... Employees are always cleaning the toilets, know what I'm saying? (Danilo, 35, III, IV, V, VI)

This quote is evidence of the importance of the providers delivering information to consumers, maximizing security and making room for creativity and co-creation (Luonila *et al.*, 2019).

#### 4.2 Secondary dimensions

Secondary dimensions are those that are not present in all consumption phases, with some occurring in just two of them. One of the dimensions we studied (Entertainment) occurred in the pre-consumption and consumption phases, while another (Excellence) occurred in the pre-consumption and post-consumption phases. The other five (Escapism, Perceived Price, Sacrifice, Esteem and Utilitarian) occurred in only one consumption phase. In this sense, we will discuss the secondary dimensions in the phases in which they occurred in the consumption experience.

*4.2.1 Pre-consumption and post-consumption: the excellence dimension.* Elements of this dimension arose from the perception that the festival is different from others. Given the history of the festival itself and what we know about it, the participants we interviewed created great expectations with regard to the quality of the structure and everything else that would be offered to them, indicating their appreciation for the service provider's ability to keep its promises and offer a satisfactory event (Mathwick *et al.*, 2001). The following quote is evidence of this in the pre-consumption phase:

Wow, [we were] really anxious, but they did a good job in the tracking [of tickets], didn't they? I think I checked it nearly every hour . . . When it arrived, wow, it was really cool, really exciting, you know? It seemed like I was getting a gift from a secret admirer, and the ticket is very pretty, really, it's really pretty, it makes you want to keep it . . . (Alice, 27, VI)

Respondents reporting on the post-consumption experience compared the RR experience with Disneyland, which offers countless attractions and exceptional experiences. This shows that the customers' value experiences of the service can frequently fluctuate between current, past and future experiences, in a hermeneutical spiral, in which value is being constantly constructed in a non-linear manner (Helkkula *et al.*, 2012). In the case of this study, this dimension was most striking in the pre- and post-consumption phases; in the consumption phase, it was linked to aspects such as the atmosphere of the festival, and the entertainment, which was excellent. With regard to expectations related to holding the 2022 post-pandemic festival, the respondents had confidence in the provider, since they believe that the event organizers will take all necessary care and adopt all the required procedures. Their only

insecurity resides in the level of restrictions that may be imposed by government during the event for health reasons.

*4.2.2 Pre-consumption and consumption: the entertainment dimension.* The elements involving entertainment were linked to recollections of the festival (pre-consumption phase), the music and the ambience of the event. This reflects the fact that what consumers are searching for is the opportunity to experiment, as well as being entertained, which goes beyond the show or the top-billed band of that day (consumption phase). This is also reflected in the festival servicescape elements, which include the attractions put on by the sponsors that were the most interactive, the social aspects of consumption and the possibility of escapism that the layout affords. The expectation of this experimentation is described in the consumer's diary, as follows:

Yesterday, through the Facebook group, I found out about the app that we can use to book attractions, such as zip lining, the rollercoaster, etc. Now, with the possibility of reserving [an activity] and wasting less time, I've booked to go zip-lining, which sounds like fun. I'm listening to Katy Perry's music now. (Barbara, 22, VI, VIII)

The perception of value during event consumption can be seen in the following post-event interview:

On the left was Rock Street and then, right ahead, the Ferris wheel and those attractions that are more for having fun, amusement-park type. Well, it was a moment that really meant a lot to me, it was when we – when the shows began on the main stage, it was already getting dark, or it was night already. And we were leaving Rock Street and heading for the main stage when the fireworks started, the night was just beginning. It was beautiful because we were walking around . . . You know, that thing, like it seemed it was put on just for us, it was right there (laughter). (Luana, 38, V, VI)

In the context of the pandemic, the entertainment dimension is even more important, as people want to have fun and celebrate life, as reported in the following:

I really want to be able to go again, we need to have joy, to celebrate the end of the pandemic with my son and friends, but I'm still afraid of what it will be like until the day of the event. (Simone, 46, I, II, VI, VIII)

The role of entertainment in value formation is very strong. Studies such as those by [Aşan et al. \(2020\)](#) showed that loyalty is only affected by the entertainment and aesthetic dimensions. In an extraordinary consumption experience, like RR, the strength of these dimensions in forming relationships is even greater.

*4.2.3 Pre-consumption: escapism and perceived price.* *Escapism* is a dimension linked to hedonism. It only arose in the pre-consumption phase and involves recollections of experiences, and how the ambience and music of festivals afford an ideal atmosphere for “disconnecting” from reality ([Ballantyne et al., 2014](#)). Unlike what [Bhattacharjee and Mogilner \(2014\)](#) found, older consumers appear more likely to acknowledge the happiness of these extraordinary experiences.

*Perceived price* also arose in the pre-consumption phase and refers to the cost of buying tickets. After consumption, the cost-related value dimension turned out to be linked to the perception of quality, as already suggested by other studies ([Dodds et al., 1991](#); [Mathwick et al., 2001](#)), but is losing force in this phase.

Both dimensions were present in the reports of those surveyed in 2021, some wanting to experience new moments of living something surreal, and others suggesting that the price is significant, but worth it, especially after all this time of isolation because of the pandemic.

*4.2.4 Consumption: utility and sacrifice dimensions.* Elements of the *Utility* dimension were present in the case of experienced consumers when they analysed those services that were

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auxiliary to the main event, such as buying the tickets, ticket delivery and the transport services (supplied by the festival, in addition to public transport), which were all seen as being a responsibility of the provider, even though some of them were sold by partners (tickets), as evidenced in the following quote about tickets:

Buying tickets [RR Card, in November 2014] was crap. The website selling the tickets is crap! (Daniel, 35, IV, V, VI editions). And also with regard to transport: “This second time round I enjoyed the shows more than the festival itself, despite the partially frustrating experience of getting around [buses].” (Luana, 35, V, VI)

*Sacrifice* refers to moments before arriving at the festival, which involves non-monetary costs, such as the time and effort associated with consumption (Dodds *et al.*, 1991). When this is not offset by a subsequent positive experience, the sacrifice can be perceived as huge when compared with the benefit obtained, thus reducing the value perception of the experience. In this sense, for Ester the day of the event was a busy one: “Good things don’t happen without sacrifice” (Ester, 42, VI).

*4.2.5 Post-consumption: esteem.* The *Esteem* dimension was associated with a self-overcoming feeling for having created the opportunity to experience something considered “crazy” by their peers but that produced a positive feeling about themselves because they were able to transcend limits:

So there was this thing about overcoming my limitations on account of my slipped disk, and I want to live this experience again, although I’ll be two years older and people say I’m crazy to have gone. Someone posted on my Facebook, “you’re a warrior, two days of RR, you’re a warrior.” (Ester, 42, VI)

The findings referring to this dimension show that service experiences are open to positive reinterpretations, represent a significant part of the identity (Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003) and are acknowledged as a source of happiness by those surveyed.

## 5. Discussions and conclusions

This study proposed a framework for understanding the construction of extraordinary consumer experiences in events, from a multidimensional and longitudinal value perspective. Our analysis offered an understanding that the experience takes place on a continuum, as in the spiral proposed in Figure 1, in which value is constructed in an iterative and cumulative process. We also discovered that not all value dimensions have the same power or relevance when it comes to constructing an extraordinary experience, as some will be more permanent and prominent during all the consumption stages, those we call primary dimensions, while others will be accessory to one or two of the phases, called secondary dimensions. In this sense, both the research approach we used, and the results we achieved indicate the singularity and relevance of the present study.

### 5.1 Theoretical implications

This study adds to existing literature, by showing that the construction of a relevant consumption experience is intrinsically associated with different spheres of the consumer’s life, including their social and family contexts, lifestyle and their own history. Furthermore, the experiential value perceived by the consumer over time becomes even more significant as different components proposed by the company interact with and integrate the consumer’s own life story. We conclude, therefore, that the experience at a given moment in time is inseparable from the experience lived in a previous period, which generates successive experiential spirals, in which each moment results in new meanings, emotions and expectations and, in certain cases, anxiety with regard to the next moment.

This study has, therefore, advanced our understanding of value construction by accompanying consumers on their journeys, analysing how the value-forming dimensions

emerged and interacted at each phase in consumption and verifying that the experience is reconstructed and reinterpreted by the individual over time. These findings converge with the proposal of Helkkula *et al.* (2012), whose framework that is characterized by the hermeneutic spiral allows for a more complete understanding of experiential value. This is also enhanced by understanding the role played by the primary and secondary dimensions we studied.

The study responds to calls for more research for expanding our understanding of consumer value, how it is created and how it develops over time (Bradley and Sparks, 2012; Helkkula *et al.*, 2012; Aşan *et al.*, 2020) while addressing those demands that seek to increase our understanding of consumption experiences (Bhattacharjee and Mogilner, 2014) and the consumer's journey (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).

### 5.2 Practical implications

This study shows that, unlike an approach that has a transactional focus, where the moment of purchase or use of a service has a limited level of interactions, managers should look at constructing an extraordinary experience considering the frequency, sequence and intensity with which the interactions occur. In this sense, value is not limited to the choice of concerts, or the act of attending them, but relies on the different touchpoints that constitute the consumption journey as a whole. We proved that co-creation was prevalent and relevant to value construction, because the festival has been adapted as successive editions have been held, based on consumers' demands and an understanding that the RR experience "is what it is" because of the relationship of belonging that has been established. In this sense, this research can be used by festival organizers for planning events and enhancing the construction of the consumption experience. Paying attention to the primary dimensions we identified is very important, as they are the core element for creating value in the consumption experience.

The fact that experience value is highly dependent on both its value proposition and the level of consumer engagement may be perceived as a potential risk from an organizing company's point of view, but as Vargo and Lusch (2008) point out in the perspective of the dominant service logic, the co-creation of value is a central component for constructing positive experiences. This notion, that the perceived value of a festival enhances consumption experiences as satisfaction, is also confirmed by Aşan *et al.* (2020) and Lin and Lee (2020). It is up to the company to understand the mechanisms that enhance the experience. It was clear that the construction of a (virtual and physical) environment, in which the company, in this case, the provider of RR, keeps in touch with the consumers, is a differential that allows the service provider to extend the consumer's experience; in other words, what might only be a biennial, the seven-day experience becomes the experience of a more constant and enriching relationship for both parties through the understanding that experience and value are built longitudinally.

### 5.3 Limitations and future research

Some of the study's limitations must be considered, such as: (1) the way in which each experiential dimension emerges and contributes to the consumption experience cannot be considered as being static, even in similar events; (2) constructing value from the service provider's point of view was not the focus of the study, so it was not fully explored. New research could provide, for example: (1) a more extensive analysis of those elements that comprise the consumption experience, without limiting itself to a single type of extraordinary experience; (2) a comparative study of the primary and secondary dimensions that help create value in the experience in different age groups; and (3) above all, the study of value creation from the premises of the hermeneutic spiral to broaden our understanding of the dynamics of value dimensions for other consumption experiences.

The implications of this study underline the extent to which the experiential nature of consumption constitutes a fertile field for both academic and managerial development. The study also contributes empirically and methodologically. It encourages qualitative longitudinal studies to be conducted that have more frequent intervals, especially for analysing the value and experience of consumption in the tourism and events sector.

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