Evaluation Model of the Roles of Festivals in the Internationalization of Performing Arts: Evidence from Flamenco Festivals

María-Angeles Rastrollo-Horrillo 1,* and Lourdes Navarrete 2

1 Department of Economics and Business Management, University of Malaga, 29071 Malaga, Spain
2 Department of Economic Theory and Economic History, University of Malaga, 29071 Malaga, Spain;
lnavarrete@uma.es
* Correspondence: marh@uma.es
Received: 1 November 2020; Accepted: 11 December 2020; Published: 12 December 2020

Abstract: There are hardly any studies that address the study of performing arts (PAs) festivals from the perspective of internationalization. Using the case of flamenco festivals as a case study, this paper determines the role of PAs festivals in the internationalization of the PAs. In the last three decades, a large number of flamenco festivals have proliferated and consolidated both in Spain and abroad. These two types of festivals (domestic and abroad) play different roles in the internationalization of this PA. Therefore, for the first time, and in line with the proposals for measuring results of the Socio-Economic Management Model (SEAM) approach, we propose to offer an evaluation model to guide the analysis and measurement of the role of festivals in the internationalization of the PAs that includes the tangible and intangible resources and capabilities necessary for the achievement of their role(s). This study contributes to the debate on the efficiency of cultural policy by proposing a qualimetric system of indicators that evaluate their achievement, differentiating between the immediate results achieved by the festival and the results in creating potential that will facilitate the achievement of sustainable results.

Keywords: internationalization; performing arts festivals; flamenco; roles; impacts; qualimetric

1. Introduction

Performing arts cultural festivals have become an important instrument for the sustainable development of territories. Authorities of different administrative levels (local, regional, and national) subsidize cultural events—like the PA festivals—to achieve various economic, social, and cultural objectives [1–4]. There is a growing interest on the part of governments to promote the internationalization of PAs for several reasons, e.g., to achieve social cohesion and understanding of other cultures (diffusion, diversity, education, etc.), to foster artistic freedom; and for its possible impact on the economic sustainability of the performing arts, in the face of decreased public support [5,6]. One of the main problems for this promotion is precisely the lack of knowledge on how to overcome the barriers to internationalization of this sector, and the challenges it poses from a perspective of sustainability [7,8].

While it must be remembered that cultural policy-makers have historically fostered arts festivals for a host of artistic reasons as literally stated by [3] (p.168), and while many of them have achieved high international status, there are hardly any studies that address the study of festivals from the perspective of internationalization [8–10] when they are used to attract foreign tourists and professionals, and festivals held abroad are an entry point to foreign markets for the artistic companies of a given country [7,11]. Two important angles exist in this internationalization perspective: the domestic festivals in a country that contribute to the internationalization of the PAs, attracting international
audiences who then consume and become acquainted with the artistic manifestation of this country, and the artistic companies who travel to festivals held in other countries, which then become modes of entry to those markets. This double flux of exchange is especially worthy of interest and study.

A comprehensive analysis of the existing scientific literature shows that this type of debate has not taken place [1,3,12–14] and that scientific studies on the role of festivals in the policy of internationalization of culture would be necessary. This discussion is useful and would precede the evaluation of its results in order to guide the definition of a policy of explicit and efficient internationalization in its administrative practices and in the allocation of monetary resources to the different events. One of the important gaps is the study of the determination of the role of the PAs festivals in the internationalization of the PAs that also serve for and in the internationalization of the image of the country/region/city. There is evidence to suggest that internationalization is among the objectives of festival organizers and the governments that support them, but there is no evidence of whether they are achieving that objective and through which mechanisms it is realized. There seems to be a need for research to help understand how to achieve these desired benefits [15]. Which resources, both tangible and intangible, do festivals mobilize and how do they contribute to the internationalization of PAs?

In order to inform the allocation of public resources to promote the internationalization of culture through grants for cultural events held abroad, existing event evaluation models are not useful [16–18]. In order to understand the success of events such as festivals, researchers have generally surveyed visitors/participants and focused little on the perceptions of event organizers [19]. The event organizers, however, are responsible for design, planning, coordination, and evaluation, including taking the risk and coordinating other stakeholders (sponsors, programmers, etc.). Therefore, we believe it is important to make research dedicated to studying the international flamenco festivals celebrated in Spain and abroad, using the first-hand accounts of festival organizers to gain insights into: (1) the evaluation of their roles in the internationalization of flamenco, (2) which variables are the ones that determine that these roles are developed effectively, and (3) how to measure the success of a festival in relation to internationalization.

In light of the deficiencies in the models of impact evaluation of events to measure the role of festivals in internationalization, a strategic management approach is used, integrating the concepts and principles of sustainability with tools and techniques for the evaluation of strategic actions [20]. Specifically, the Socio-Economic Management Model (SEAM), created and developed by [21], is a strategic management and change management model that provides a methodology for analyzing organizations and their value creation processes, both internally and in situations of cooperation with other stakeholders. It is a sustainable management approach that integrates economic, social-cultural, and environmental variables in order to investigate, together with companies, the levers of improvement of their sustainable socio-economic performance [22]. The qualimetric approach suggested by SEAM is a different way of thinking about the analysis of organizations, which combines qualitative, quantitative, and financial information in the analysis of organizational dynamics [23]. So, in line with the proposals for measuring results of the SEAM approach [23], we propose a qualimetric system of indicators differentiating between the immediate results achieved by the festival and the results in creating potential that will facilitate the achievement of results in the future.

In this research, SEAM is used to identify the roles played by the PAs festivals in the sustainable internationalization of PAs and to propose a model to measure their effective exercise under the sustainability paradigm. Indeed, SEAM facilitates the methodological framework to create a model of evaluation of roles of festivals in the internationalization of PAs that explains the resources and capabilities that favor the exercise of their roles and a system of indicators that makes visible, annually, the economic results obtained in the short term, as well as the results in terms of creation of potential, that is to say, the investment made in the current year to generate economic results in the future. In this way, the effective exercise of the roles of the festivals in the internationalization is measured under a perspective of sustainability, integrating the short and the long term, as well as the strategic actions...
that they carry out in order to create value, taking advantage and managing the inherent risks of the economic, social, and cultural development [24].

This work responds to the need to develop a PAs internationalization policy under a sustainability perspective. We are applying a sustainable strategic management approach to create a model of evaluation of the festivals in the promotion policy of the internationalization of PAs. The utility of this model lies in its use for decision-making, as it enables users to verify whether strategic actions are delivering the expected results, and, if not, to take corrective actions.

From a public perspective, given its role in supporting culture, this study contributes to the debate on the efficiency of cultural policy by providing indicators of how to measure the degree of internationalization of a festival, which is useful for policy, using it as an instrument for the creation of value for all stakeholders through their interactions. Deficiencies in governance have an impact on the economic and social sustainability of culture.

2. Theorical Underpinnings

2.1. Performing Arts Festivals, Roles, and Impacts

In the scope of this research, PA festivals were considered to be special events of live shows, with a detailed artistic programming, limited and minimum duration (of at least 2 days), and regularity (a minimum of three editions) [25]. These special events attract the attention of audiences and media [26] so cultural policy makers have recognized the value of festivals and promoted them as a means of strengthening cultural and national identity [27]. Over time, they have become a major attraction for the development of cultural tourism [3]. These events have also become an instrument of city marketing to promote place identity and to reestablish a positive image of the host community [28].

The purposes and typologies of PAs festivals vary, in venues (ranging open spaces to theatres), revenue mix, and aims [13]; we can guess that each type of event will also have a different role and impact. For example, pop or rock music festivals are massive events that are held outdoors and attract large numbers of attendees; while classical music or dance festivals are held in theaters, so they may attract fewer people but more attention from professionals, critics, and performing arts experts.

One of the most developed discourses in the area of festival studies is that of the roles and impacts of festivals [29], with a predominance in research on the impacts of festivals that show economic benefits, as opposed to those that evaluate socio-cultural and environmental impacts. Traditional models used for forecasting and evaluating the economic impacts of tourism are used here, with input-output analysis based on the application of expenditure multipliers and cost-benefit analysis [30]. In these economic impact analyses, the size of the event plays a major role [20]: the larger the size, the higher the income and the less social and ecological performance (less involvement of the local community and more pressure on the territory, for example). But the methodologies to evaluate the complexity of the socio-cultural impacts of a festival are still considered insufficient [18,31].

2.2. Internationalization of Performing Arts and Festivals

In the literature on festivals, there are hardly any references to internationalization as a field of study; [32] examined the internationalization of a festival overtime, and the recent works of [11], when studying the internationalization of creative industries, use two PAs festivals in Canada as a case study; [7] also identifies the strategic decisions that stimulate the internationalization of the PAs and its sustainability using a longitudinal case of a Spanish cultural entrepreneur that organizes two international flamenco festivals. But as a field of study, it cannot be said that internationalization exists in the literature on festivals. Despite this, we believe that it is a necessity, given the growing interest in internationalizing festivals by attracting tourists [11] and the difficulties that may exist, as expressed by [15] when studying the creation of value from a case of an arts festival in Taiwan, and exposing the difficulties in achieving the value of internationalization.
Public policy dedicated to fostering and promoting a country’s culture and heritage has looked beyond its borders, through initiatives that promote the presence of the cultural sector in international forums such as artistic festivals. In this way, they aim to highlight culture as an essential part of a country’s reality and image. At the same time, they contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the country’s artistic companies by providing revenues and thus overcome the financial sustainability problem of many organizations in the sector \[33,34\].

This growing interest in using festivals for the international dissemination of a country’s culture has increased the need for a common understanding and for a basic knowledge about the roles of festivals in the internationalization of PAs. Yet there are hardly any references in the literature on this subject, and we do not believe that this is due to lack of interest, but rather to the scarcity of existing literature on the process and keys to the internationalization of performing arts \[7\] and because the existing impact evaluation models are not useful.

2.3. The Need for a Qualimetric Approach to Role Evaluation under a Sustainable Perspective

There is a whole area of research regarding event impacts, which have mostly focused on valuing their economic benefits measured in monetary terms, direct and induced, and more recently incorporating to some extent the social, cultural, and environmental dimensions to offer a more holistic approach \[18,20,35,36\].

The literature about evaluation is polarized at one extreme with purely quantitative evaluations \[16\], and highly qualitative evaluations at the other \[37\]. But, \[23\] believe it is appropriate for management research to embrace a qualimetric approach, aggregating qualitative, quantitative, and financial data on the evaluation of performances to better represent complex objects observed from a managerial perspective.

The evaluation methodologies of cost-benefit analysis such as those used by \[20\] are insufficient, given that we do not want to evaluate the impact of the event on the host city, but rather its contribution to the internationalization of the PAs sector, and to the international diffusion of the artistic manifestation. The leveraging of intangible resources is essential for the festival to attract the attention of the audience in a market of growing competition \[7\], and international positioning requires a long-term perspective for results. For this reason, a methodology is required that proposes indicators aligned with the keys to the internationalization of the sector in accordance with the principles of sustainability of cultural management.

Therefore, in line with the proposals for measuring results of the SEAM approach, we propose to offer an evaluation model to guide the analysis and measurement of the role of festivals in the internationalization of the PAs that includes the tangible and intangible resources and capabilities necessary for the achievement of their role(s). The measurement of the performance of the festivals in internationalization under a sustainability perspective must be done annually, differentiating between immediate results and the creation of future potential. As immediate results, we measure the economic results that the festival provides annually to the internationalization of the PAs. These results inform about the capacity that the festival has shown to generate economic performance in the sector. To promote sustainability, it is important to adopt a strategic vision that allows a combination of immediate results in the short term with the creation of potential to ensure economic results in the future. By including indicators that focus on the creation of potential, the negative impact on sustainability of favoring short-term objectives rather than anticipating future needs is neutralized. Internationalization can generate threats to culture, such as cultural homogenization or denaturalization of local identities \[38\]. The sustainability of the internationalization of PAs is enhanced by investing in the development of new products and new markets, for example, or in the development of educational activities among the population of the destination country.

We propose indicators that evaluate their achievement, differentiating between the immediate results achieved by the festival and the results in creating potential that will facilitate the achievement of results in the future. Furthermore, following the proposal of \[18\], we incorporate intentionality
to assess whether the impact is considered intentional or not by the organizers or supporters of the event. The objective of the proposed evaluation model is not to rank the festivals but to provide a guide for decision-making, and intentionality adds a functional perspective related to the effectiveness of the festival.

3. Methods

As discussed above, the role and impacts of festivals on the territory in which they are held has been widely studied; but the literature has ignored the study of the role of festivals in the internationalization of performing arts. Due to this lack of previous studies, this paper takes an exploratory approach and adopts a subjective inductive approach based on case studies. Using a case study research design is relevant when exploring new areas of research [39] and is particularly useful in addressing the study of current real-life phenomena, answering questions such as how or why. In addition, there is a growing demand for the use of qualitative studies to generate actionable knowledge [40], useful for informing policy and practice. Promoting the sustainable internationalization of the performing arts is a complex task, with a shortage of scientific publications, but which the festivals analyzed have been doing in a recurrent way.

Therefore, this work has resorted to qualitative research, based on the analysis of multiple cases and the use of SEAM methodology as an action research methodology that has guided us in the direct and deep scientific observation of the real situations in which the festivals studied act to facilitate the internationalization of flamenco. The SEAM protocol evaluates the effectiveness of the organization’s strategy in relation with its objectives; to do this, it examines the alignment between the stated strategy of the management and the data collected [41,42]. SEAM’s protocols have been used in the negotiation with the Association of Flamenco Festivals to ensure their interest and commitment to provide information and share their experiences in international markets, and to structure the protocol for information collection and analysis.

3.1. Research Context

This study is developed in the field of flamenco festivals. Flamenco is a musical art expression in three modalities: singing, dancing, and guitar, included in 2010 in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity [43]. Flamenco is considered the most important cultural manifestation of intangible cultural heritage in Andalusia (the majority of renowned flamenco artists come from the South of Spain), and is also a unique symbol of Spanish culture in the world. Flamenco has become a tourist attraction for international tourists, and a source of economic impact generation [44,45].

But in flamenco, there is another unstudied reality: the existence of flamenco festivals developed in other parts of the world, and destined to make this artistic manifestation known [31,46]. This reality is interesting, because if we compare it with the internationalization of other products, this would be considered export, in addition with exclusivity, which would differ from multi-theme festivals. What do we know about the festivals that focus on flamenco in exposing the culture of a foreign country, how do they contribute to the internationalization of that culture, to reinforcing the image of that country, to developing the cultural industry? Nothing has been studied about this matter.

In the last three decades, a large number of flamenco festivals have proliferated and consolidated both in Spain and abroad, which are serving as a showcase for the internationalization of flamenco, among other aspects. For this reason, both the Spanish government and the governments of Andalusia and Catalonia have programs to support the internationalization of the flamenco performing arts sector, and, in particular, have a system in place to support international festivals.

To conduct this research, a proposal was made to the Association of Flamenco Festivals (AFF) in February 2019. The Association had just been created the previous year, formed by 19 of the most important and consolidated flamenco festivals in the world, with the aim of designing strategies to position flamenco festivals in the international cultural scene, in view of the challenges they face in
the 21st century. AFF was willing to collaborate in this research by being interested in the results of a scientific study that will determine how to evaluate the role of festivals, both Spanish and foreign, in the internationalization of flamenco. We established an agreement with AFF to open a dialogue with festival directors and make visible the knowledge they have accumulated over the years about the internationalization of flamenco.

3.2. Data Collection Approach

This study collected the vision and perception of the festival organizers, whose expertise may provide a better understanding of the connection between the perceived impacts of special events, as argued by [19]. In an activity as little studied as the internationalization of the PAs, the knowledge that the actors of this activity have is crucial. The organizers-directors play an important role in coordinating the different stakeholders that participate in it, and in successive editions it is required that the director understands the needs of his audience and the functioning of the market. In fact, organizers evaluate their event, for example, with satisfaction surveys to the audience; they collect information about the impact in media and social networks.

The sample formed by 9 festivals is of convenience, and includes one of the emblematic Spanish festivals with an international vision and a sample of 8 festivals held outside Spain that are representative of the geographical diversity and recognition that exists in the flamenco sector. Table 1 shows the basic data of the 9 participating festivals celebrated in several countries: Spain, France, the Netherlands, Germany, England, Luxembourg, Italy, Mexico, USA. One prevalent feature among the festivals is the number of accumulated editions. The cases sampled in this investigation are not intended to be representative of flamenco festivals, but have been chosen to illustrate their diversity. There is great variety in the organizational structures—foundations, theaters, associations, public or private foreign and Spanish entities (only two are owned by a Spanish cultural entrepreneur).

Case analysis usually requires the use of multiple forms of evidence [39,47]. These case studies were compiled from a triple data collection approach:

1. Collection of documentary evidence such as festival websites and newspaper articles.
2. The semi-structured qualitative interview method was used to explore the organizers’ vision of the roles their festival plays in the internationalization of flamenco and of the tangible and intangible resources and capabilities that allow them to achieve this. In this way, the interviewer can gain insights into the emotions, experiences, opinions, and expectations of the person being interviewed. In spite of having an interview guide, “going off-script to stimulate rich and detailed responses” was encouraged. Due to the geographical distance, there were difficulties in making the appointments with the organizers of festivals to make them face-to-face, so 2 interviews were conducted in September 2019 and the rest in February 2020 (right at the beginning of the pandemic), and only 1 by videoconference in April 2020.
3. Subsequently, an online questionnaire was sent to them requesting data from the last three editions of the festival, 2017–2019, structured in 3 parts: general data on the festival, information on the organization of the festival (activities, networks, audiences, economic and human resources information, promotion of the festival), and opinion on the impacts of the festival in the internationalization of flamenco and on the issues of the foreign cultural promotion policy of flamenco.

In total, we interviewed 9 people face-to-face (one of the organizers directs two of the international festivals, and in another festival two people were interviewed, one of the founders who provided the vision and the artistic director who best knew the current operation) and they are the ones who answered the questionnaire. In addition, at the beginning of the investigation, two interviews were conducted with three people from the Flamenco Festival Association’s Board of Directors.
Table 1. Characteristics of the Flamenco Festivals in the sample.

| Festival | Country of celebration | Year of constitution | No. of editions | Legal Status | Periodicity | Days with performances | No. of cities | No. of spaces | Person interviewed/questionnaire |
|----------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| A        | Spain                   | 1997                  | 24             | Public       | Annual      | 15                    | 1             | 8             | Director                        |
| B        | France                  | 1989                  | 32             | Public       | Annual      | 5                     | 1             | 8             | Founder                        |
| C        | Mexico                  | 2007                  | 7              | Foundations  | Biennial    | 14                    | 1             | 25            | Founder                        |
| D        | Italy                   | 2008                  | 12             | Lucrative private | Annual | 10                    | 1             | 6             | Founder                        |
| E        | Germany                 | 1996                  | 23             | Association  | Annual      | 10                    | 1             | 6             | Founder                        |
| F        | Luxembourg              | 2006                  | 14             | Association  | Annual      | 15                    | 1             | 3             | Founder                        |
| G        | U.S.A.                  | 2001                  | 20             | Lucrative private | Annual | 35                    | 8             | 40            | Founder                        |
| H        | United Kingdom          | 2004                  | 16             | Lucrative private | Annual | 12                    | 1             | 4             | Founder                        |
| I        | Netherlands             | 2006                  | 7              | Foundation   | Biennial    | 23                    | 11            | 28            | Founder                        |
3.3. Data Analysis

Reference [23] provide a model of knowledge structuration that is useful for classifying each information into themes, sub-themes, and key ideas, and offer precautions to be taken in the production of knowledge of scientific intent. Special attention is given to the significance and validity of research results. The interviews are not recorded, but rather comprehensive notes were taken, which were later imported into NVivo 11 and coded using thematic analysis.

Reducing the possible researcher bias was achieved through intensive ongoing discussion between the researchers regarding the coding and interpretation of the data. In addition, the use of theory-driven codes and recurrent contrasting between the findings and the theory enhanced the validity of the study. We propose the qualimetric system of indicators to assess the role of festivals in the internationalization of flamenco PAs, which should be used as an important tool for improving decision-making and guaranteeing the sustainability of the internationalization PA festivals.

4. Results

We present the collected vision of the organizers of flamenco festivals about their roles and the resources and capabilities considered relevant for the effective exercise of those roles. This allows us to connect the objectives and characteristics of the festivals (tangibles and intangibles) with their outcome in internationalization distinguishing between immediate results—in the short term—and results in creating potential—which will generate immediate results in the medium or long term.

Two categories of festivals have been analyzed to present the theoretical evaluation model that allow to assess their roles in the internationalization of this type of cultural manifestation: domestic (Spanish, in this case) and foreign ones.

4.1. Festivals Celebrated in the Domestic Market

These festivals can play two roles in the internationalization of the PAs (see Table 2).

Table 2. Theoretical evaluation model of the roles of Festivals in the internationalization of Flamenco performing arts (Pas). Flamenco Festivals celebrated in the domestic market.

| Roles                              | Intentional | Festival Characteristics | Performance                          |
|------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                    |             | Tangible                 | Intangible                           | Immediate Results                | Potential Creation                  |
| 1. Attraction of international audiences | Yes or no   | Size of the festival: no. of shows, no. of spaces, no. of cities, total budget, marketing budget | Prestige of festival Marketing capabilities of artists | International Audience: % of foreign attendees Attendance at the festival is the main motivation to travel | International orientation Visibility on foreign international ticketing portals Investment in networking with international tourism agents or flamenco academies-agents |
| 2. International influence in programming | Yes or no   | Marketing budget Public support | Prestige of festival Marketing capabilities of networks and of the festival | Number of international programmers attending the festival | Number of reviews in nationally/internationally relevant media Geographic diversity of programmers attending the festival |

4.1.1. Role 1 Attraction of International Audiences

Every year, flamenco attracts international tourists to Spain, and particularly to Andalusia, to attend flamenco festivals, flamenco concerts, and participate in music and dance courses, which seek the authenticity of this cultural legacy [44]. In addition to the spectators whose attendance at the Festival is the main motivation for the foreign visitor to choose the destination, the festivals attract tourists who are in Spain for other reasons and who carry out cultural activities to enrich their tourist experience, thus generating new audiences for flamenco. Therefore, Spanish festivals can contribute to the internationalization of flamenco: instead of displacing artists, international audiences move.
The number of foreign attendees at Spanish flamenco festivals would be a telling indicator of the internationalization of the festival and the PAs sector; for example, in Jerez, 60% of the audience is foreign, which amounts to about 11,000 spectators. If attendance to the festival is, furthermore, the main stated motivation for tourists to make the trip, then the festival is very clearly contributing to the internationalization of tourism and of the region or country. However, this information is not available, so it will be difficult to assess this level of achievement. Another good indicator of the success of a festival in this regard would be their visibility on foreign international ticketing portals (in English or other languages), which would signify their international orientation in attracting audiences [9].

4.1.2. Role 2 International Influence in Programming

The most relevant Spanish festivals, such as the one surveyed, play an important role in the international projection of flamenco in existing markets. In line with the findings of the Uppsala Sequential Approach [48], shows that are successful in the domestic market are more guaranteed to be exhibited in international markets [7]. Flamenco programmers around the world use the success of the shows presented at these Spanish Festivals to make programming decisions, and they often personally attend the festival to book the shows directly during their visit to the festival. For example, the 8 festivals analyzed usually attend some of the festivals annually in what some call research and development trips to define the program for their upcoming festivals.

They can also attract international agents who are not regular flamenco programmers. It is usually the public administrations that promote this type of assistance as a reverse promotion measure in new markets. The number of premieres and the ability to attract international programmers could be two of the indicators to measure performance in this role. The geographic diversity of programmers attending the festival could be considered as a measure of potential for creating new markets.

4.2. Festivals Celebrated Abroad

The flamenco festivals developed in other countries, contribute to the internationalization of flamenco because, in principle, all the audience and media coverage has an international scope; the artistic company moves to different countries which generates foreign income and personal and artistic enrichment, developing new capacities that facilitate the process of internationalization. Figure 1 shows the wide variety of objectives expressed by the international festivals: beyond attracting audiences to share the richness of flamenco culture, the festivals express the intention to support innovative projects, the artistic creation of emerging artists through residencies, and to increase the international prestige of flamenco PAs. Table 3 presents the results of the proposed evaluation model explaining five roles that these festivals play in the international projection of flamenco.

4.2.1. Role 1 Attraction of International Audiences: Increase and Diversification

Festivals have been introducing new strategies to reach more audiences and diverse profiles to increase their audiences.

Festivals held abroad are an important way of entering foreign markets. The size of venue and the scope of a festival (number of days, of shows, of cities, of used spaces, total budget, marketing budget) determine the maximum volume of spectators that can be reached, and the occupancy rate will depend on more intangible characteristics such as the prestige of the venues and artists, the marking capabilities of the venue and festival, or the fit of the program to the audiences. These characteristics all have an influence in the attraction of audiences and explain ex-ante the relevance that the festival may have for the internationalization of the flamenco in terms of demand. The effective exercise of this role can be measured with ticket office incomes and attendance numbers. In the long term, indicators of audience satisfaction and the success of the show could be used to help generate immediate results in successive editions.
Attracting new domestic audiences can also be achieved when the main artistic genre is fused with others (e.g., fusion of flamenco with jazz, violoncello, classical dance, or other artistic genres), or when bringing shows to non-traditional spaces for classical PAs. For example, the New York Festival began to tour the United States, taking advantage of the fact that they were bringing artists from Spain to the USA [7]. The Dutch festival also contributes to the development of flamenco audiences by holding the festival in 8 cities, with more rural areas alongside Amsterdam and The Hague. At the same time, the performance spaces have been expanded with more alternative venues and less conventional spaces, examples of which are Joe’s Pub in New York, and some others in Holland and Germany which have specified it as an attribute of theirs. This results in new audiences being exposed to flamenco who would otherwise not be flamenco consumers. In this way, potential is created in the long-run, as it helps to eliminate stereotypes and increase the prestige of flamenco as an universal artistic manifestation, which could translate into more investments in new fusion shows and/or shows in new venues and cities.

Figure 1. Objectives of the International Flamenco Festivals. (Note: Own elaboration based on the information of the 8 international festivals).
Table 3. Theoretical evaluation model of the roles of Festivals in the internationalization of Flamenco PAs. Flamenco Festivals celebrated abroad.

| Roles                                           | Intentional | Festival Characteristics | Immediate Results | Performance                                                                                   | Potential Creation                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Attraction                                   |             | Tangible                 | Intangible        |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |
| 1.1 Attraction of international audiences       | Yes or no   | Size of Venue            | Prestige of venue | Ticket revenues: Total amount of box office                                                   | Reduction of cultural discount in the destination as consumption and quality lead to knowledge of flamenco. Audience satisfaction surveys |
|                                                |             | Size of festivals: no. of days, no. of shows, no. of spaces, no. of cities; total budget; marketing budget | Marketing capabilities of venue y del festival | Audience: no of performance attendees                                                        |                                                                                      |
| 1.2 Attraction of new audiences                 | Yes or no   | Fusion of flamenco with other artistic genres | Innovation in shows | New audiences (non-consumers of this PAs in the country, people attending a flamenco show for the first time): no. of attendees in non-traditional flamenco venues and shows | Elimination of stereotypes and increase in the prestige of flamenco as a universal artistic manifestation: investment of the festival in new fusion shows and/or shows in new venues and new cities-villages |
|                                                |             | Non traditional venues for flamenco | Passion of founders-managers |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |
|                                                |             | New cities               |                   |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |
| 2. Dynamization of international resources to generate activity in the domestic cultural sector | Yes or no   | Income structure: financial results obtained abroad (public and private) | Value of the networks to overcome the liabilities of foreignership and outsidership | Employment creation abroad: no. of Spanish technical artists and administrative staff: nº and duration. | Sustainability of the international activity of the flamenco sector: |
|                                                |             | Seniority of the festival guarantees stability |                   | Revenue generation: Volume of income generated abroad for Spanish artists, technicians, administrative staff, and profit for Spanish enterprises (be it festival organizers or artistic companies) | No. of performances that maintain themselves annually |
|                                                |             |                          |                   |                                                                                               | Agreements with stakeholders for future editions of the festival                                                                 |
| 3.1 International positioning in existing flamenco markets | Yes or no   | Export of shows produced in Spain | Prestige of venue | Visibility in the media (regional or national): Reviews in nationally relevant media (number of reviews, diffusion, and prestige of the medium) |                                                                                      |
|                                                |             | Prestige of artists      | Marketing capabilities of networks and of the festival |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |
|                                                |             | Marketing budget         |                   |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |
| 3.2 International positioning for spreading markets | Yes or no   | Venue size               | International prestige of the medium | Visibility in the international markets: Reviews in internationally relevant media (number of reviews and prestige) |                                                                                      |
|                                                |             | Artists’ prestige        | Networking capacity of the festival |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |
| Roles | Intentional | Festival Characteristics | Performance | Potential Creation |
|-------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------|
|       |             | Tangible | Intangible | Immediate Results | - Learning innovation and professionalization: No. of residencies No. of participants Improvement of emerging artists’ prestige: No. of young artists granted access to an audience as they share the stage with renowned artists |
| 4. Expansion of artists’ vision and artistic freedom and launching young artistic careers | - Yes or no | - Residencies - Mix of flamenco with other styles - Program mixes celebrity artists with emerging ones (queue effect) - Passion and engagement of founders-managers | Extend the time of visibility of flamenco: No. of posts in social media Activities and participants outside the festival period | Social understanding acceptance of flamenco culture. Rooting and greater socio-cultural sustainability contributing to the authenticity of representations abroad: No. of participants in parallel activities and number of projects |
| 5. Socio-cultural and educational effects in international markets | - Yes or no | - Parallel activities: projects using flamenco as personal development, entertainment, education, cultural diffusion. - Maintaining social media and some activities throughout the year (in organizations that are temporary) - Passion of the founders-managers | - Extend the time of visibility of flamenco: No. of posts in social media Activities and participants outside the festival period | Social understanding acceptance of flamenco culture. Rooting and greater socio-cultural sustainability contributing to the authenticity of representations abroad: No. of participants in parallel activities and number of projects |

Note: Own elaboration based on the information of the 8 international festivals.
4.2.2. Role 2 Dynamization of International Resources to Generate Socio-Economic Results in the Domestic Cultural Sector

For many artists and art companies, working internationally ensures them a financial income that allows them to amortize the investment in the development of new creations. In the context of reduced public support in Spain, it is also an opportunity for economic sustainability. Many international festivals work with the same artists, but they give space to program more established artists with new promises. Some respondents even complained about the difficulties they sometimes have in getting recognition for their contribution to emerging artistic careers, as illustrated by the following sentence from one of the organizers: “Some artists forget that they came to our festival at the beginning of their career. Some came when they didn’t even have a manager, others first performed here, and now they are recognized internationally.”

Flamenco festivals have managed to mobilize external financial resources; 93% percent of the financial resources are foreign, which shows the important leverage of the festivals in the international positioning of flamenco, which as a cultural manifestation has been assigned by the government of Andalusia and Spain (see Figure 2). Sometimes, to be able to get these resources, they have to mobilize many sources of public funding, with small subsidies from different local, regional, and national public administrations both in Spain and in the country where the festival is held. And all of this implies a great cost for the organizers and a greater financial risk, taking into account that they are not always received in advance. Some of the phrases heard, that illustrate this are: “I have to constantly beg for public and private funds”; “Eighty percent of my time is spent applying for grants so that Spanish artists can have an income...”; “The Spanish public administrations do not realize the risk that we take every year when doing the festival, and sometimes they do not confirm the support (or the denial of it) until after it has been held.”

![Figure 2](resources_mobilized_abroad_by_international_flamenco_festivals.png)

**Figure 2.** Resources mobilized abroad by International Flamenco Festivals. (Note: Own elaboration based on the information of the 8 international festivals).

Mobilizing strategic resources derived from their networks contribute to overcoming foreign liabilities and outsidership, because they bring knowledge in international markets, they succeed in mobilizing a broad network in the destination country [49]. This can lead to employment creation, requiring more Spanish artists, administrative staff, and technical staff. These Spanish enterprises then have revenue generation abroad. This also contributes to the sustainability of the activity in the flamenco sector, which can be indicated by the number of shows in the whole of international festivals that maintain themselves year after year, as well as the seniority of the festival, which guarantees stability.
The functioning of the PAs sector and the tastes of audiences vary greatly from country to country, and here that knowledge and the capacity to match audiences with shows is key [7]. Depending on the level of professionalization of the festival organizers, they can carry out more market promotion work, facilitating the booking of more shows for the artists, and hopefully the establishment of tours, which decrease the average cost of putting on each show. Some small festivals, for example, told us that they would like to do this, but they need skills to do so: this would allow them to attract better artists by optimizing their cache and thus enriching their festival.

4.2.3. Role 3 Image Effect: International Positioning for Existing Markets and for Spreading Markets

The product that is exported has an important effect on image creation. As flamenco has become more professional, it has gone from exporting “the artist” to exporting shows produced in Spain with the contributions of experts in the different artistic and technical aspects, providing a higher artistic quality.

Hence, the visibility and number of reviews in the media with influence in the country where the festival has been held is a good indicator of success in this regard. If the festival is especially successful in achieving this, it could also attract or influence flamenco programmers from other countries, including some in Spain, who want to offer more innovative shows. In the end, this consolidates the prestige of flamenco as a high-quality artistic manifestation.

But theaters that do not program flamenco do not resort to it as a source of inspiration for programming. They often turn to another circuit, that of the theaters of the world that have a good reputation in their eyes (it is worth noting that the historical colonial influence still prevails in the influence that Paris exerts over other French-speaking countries, Spain in South America, and New York and London in the Commonwealth). This circuit is even wider than the previous one. Here, the work of cultural intermediaries is key to opening new markets in the world.

The size of the venue, the prestige of the individual artists, the prestige of the international media, and the critics that echo the festival (according to the ranking of influence of those media), as well as the ability of the festival to network are all liable to open up venues and opportunities that were not previously open for flamenco.

For some organizers, for instance, the main indicator that a festival contributes to international promotion is the ability to attract international press. Some of the media have an impact on their environment (local, regional, national) and serve to attract audiences in that market and to promote flamenco there; and others that also have an impact beyond the environment, in other parts of the world. For example, The New York Times or Le Monde spoke of a flamenco festival, and that has influence in English-speaking and French-speaking countries, respectively. In this regard, it could be interesting to create a hierarchy of media in terms of the extent of their influence on the different PAs.

Media interest is often connected to the city and the theater. But we must also recognize that not all artists are at a level of maturity in their artistic career to perform in the best theaters in the world, or certain shows fit better with a certain audience that is reached in other spaces, or simply that the flamenco market is distributed geographically, and the presence of festivals contributes to create those markets dispersed in the global geography.

4.2.4. Role 4 Expansion of Artists’ Vision and Artistic Freedom and to Initiate Young Artistic Careers

The residency programs abroad are becoming a parallel activity of the festivals and an essential element of internationalization of the cultural sector. It is the instrument by which festivals contribute to artistic creation by providing participating artists with the space and means to experiment and incorporate new perspectives into their creations; 75% percent of the international festivals analyzed have carried out artistic residencies (see Figure 3), although a lower percentage perceive it as a goal of the festival, perhaps because it is an activity that they are recently incorporating, and whose possibilities they are still just exploring. As one interviewee said, “I have promoted two residencies between flamenco artists and cellists, to create a production that will be represented in the next edition of the
festival.” Residencies and fusion contribute to building relations of cultural exchange and support creativity in creation.

| Activity                                      | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|
| Film and/or documentary series                | 86.2%      |
| Workshops or artistic courses /masterclasses   | 87.5%      |
| Artistic residencies                          | 75.0%      |
| Conferences                                   | 75.0%      |
| Exhibitions                                   | 62.5%      |
| Educational projects (high schools, children,...)| 37.5%   |
| Performances, flash mobs, ...                 | 25.0%      |
| Gastronomic tasting sessions/events           | 25.0%      |
| Social projects                               | 22.2%      |
| International meetings of dance groups and academies | 11.2% |
| Fashion shows                                 | 11.1%      |

**Figure 3.** Complementary activities. (Note: Own elaboration based on the information of the 8 international festivals).

Artists do not just internationalize to survive, or to earn income and prestige. The PAs industry has been able to perform in good international theaters, and carry out intercultural collaboration. Quantitative indicators provide empirical evidence to define or identify the level of internationalization of festivals, but are insufficient to offer a clear perspective of the value to the sector of “generating international markets.” Beyond economic considerations, artist residences and the fusion of flamenco with other international artistic styles leads to the expansion of the artistic vision and artistic freedom of the people in the sector [49]. Furthermore, the very nature of festivals, which often unites celebrity artists with emerging ones (queue effect, in which young artists are granted access to an audience as they share the stage with big artists), helps initiate young artists’ careers, which then promotes increasing artistic innovation. This consolidates the artistic relevance of flamenco and its prestige as a high-quality artistic manifestation, while contributing to learning, innovation, and professionalization of this art, helping the prestige of emerging artists.

4.2.5. Role 5 Socio-Cultural and Educational Effects in International Markets

But the social aspect is equally important. In the face of internationalization, they are helping to change the image of flamenco, creating and promoting a more current image.

Festival organizations who also offer parallel activities besides shows, who maintain their social media throughout the year, and who offer some activities throughout the year (even though the festival in itself only happens for a short period of time each year) are especially valuable in this regard. Figure 3 shows the wide variety of parallel activities carried out by international festivals. Social projects using flamenco and the values associated with it as therapy (e.g., psychiatric hospitals, prisons, nursing homes...), entertainment, education, and cultural diffusion activate and expand that community. These have an impact on the destination territory. Therefore, they are also dependent on the public policy objectives of the destination countries. For instance, some have a more territorial approach, promoting the access of their population to the art of flamenco, such as the one realized in a rural area of France. In the end, these efforts all lead to the social acceptance and the increase in cultural capital of flamenco, and to the rooting and higher social sustainability of this art form, which is key to maintaining the authenticity of the art, and contribute to the cultural sustainability of flamenco.

Of the 8 international festivals in the sample, all of them perceive that they play the 5 roles, although from the information provided it is concluded that not all of them reach the same level of results in each role. There are festivals that are more committed to positioning flamenco in the global
hierarchy of the performing arts and are held in large prestigious theaters in PAs; others that are oriented towards creating the context for artists to take artistic, innovative, and disruptive risks and also stimulate the development of new and different audiences, and others with a greater penetration of the territory in which they are held, more committed to the long-term achievement of social and cultural objectives in their territory.

The objective of the proposed model is not to make a hierarchy of the festivals according to the set of roles, but to have qualimetric information about the level of performance that they achieve in each of the roles. The festival organizers stated that, regardless of their size (which is usually one of the traditional criteria for measuring impact), each festival can be important in the internationalization strategy, because it facilitates the entry into a specific market, because of its innovative orientation that internationalizes a category of artists that otherwise would not, because it is consolidated and guarantees stability, etc. In immediate results, the result obtained during the festival edition is measured. Higher quantitative immediate results do not necessarily mean that their impact on the creation of potential for the international promotion of flamenco PAs is relevant. For example, a festival with smaller audiences this year but in a market where there is little penetration of flamenco can have a more important medium-term impact by creating cultural capital, or can be held in a theater that attracts international press.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The aim of this paper has been to make an exploratory analysis of the role of PAs festivals in the sustainable internationalization of artists and artistic manifestations rooted in specific countries/regions, based on the perception of the organizers of flamenco festivals. A theoretical evaluation model with four parts/dimensions has been elaborated: (1) identification of the relevant roles of festivals in the internationalization of PAs, attending to the artistic, economic, and social dimensions; (2) intentionality of the festival in the performance of the role; (3) characteristics of the festival (activities and tangible and intangible resources) that determine the performance of that role; (4) finally, we propose themes of quantitative and qualitative indicators that help to evaluate the contribution of each festival to the internationalization of the PAs, differentiating between the immediate results achieved during the year in which the festival takes place, from the results of creation of potential, which stimulate the creation of immediate results in the future.

It is the first work on the evaluation of the role of festivals in the internationalization of PAs, so the contributions from the theoretical and practical perspective are multiple. As it is an exploratory analysis based on the study of flamenco cases, the results are not automatically generalizable, but we do believe that the model is useful to explain the role of specific festivals in the internationalization of other artistic genres of PAs.

In a competitive world market, the festivals analyzed play a role in:

- Programming flamenco in non-traditional and high-status venues in the international hierarchy of performing arts
- Attracting new audiences
- Promoting the intercultural dialogue of flamenco with other manifestations
- Spreading the values of flamenco in other societies with different cultures and use it as therapy and/or to solve social problems
- Improving the image of PAs in their actual and potential markets
- Mobilizing strategic resources derived from their networks

This last role of mobilization of strategic resources is recognized by the social capital approach as a valuable asset for small companies because it allows the enterprise to access the resources that its social network possesses [50,51]. The social capital derived from local networks in which the enterprise participates can have positive effects providing knowledge, complementary resources, and identification of new opportunities [52]. Most investigations about festivals and social capital have focused on
analyzing the development of social capital across the community and the involvement of that social capital in the sustainability of the festival [53]. This study shows that in the field of internationalization of culture, mobilizing governments, businesses value chain agents, and civil society make possible the celebration of festivals in their territories contributing to the benefits of internationalization generating artistic, socio-cultural, and economic benefits. These results are in line with the international network approach [54,55], showing that, for PAs festivals too, the strategic resources obtained from their relationships are important, both for festivals in Spain (e.g., foreign tourists) and abroad [56].

Activities and resources are critical dimensions affecting the impacts of festivals. Although there is a certain homogenization in the activities they carry out, their characteristics and the deployment of strategic resources depend on their commitment and degree of professionalization, on their networks—mainly the venues and the media, on the objectives and activities of the festival, and on the financial resources they manage to mobilize. Flamenco festivals, both those held in Spain and abroad, have shown an important customer orientation in a sector where artist-creators tend to focus on the symbolic value of the product [57,58], in line with the current literature that shows the important role of intermediaries in connecting producers of cultural goods with their audiences [59].

It allows us to conclude that there is a varied typology of festivals that contribute to the international projection, and to the artistic-social and economic sustainability of the flamenco sector. Distributed in different countries of Europe and America, the flamenco festivals form a stable “circuit”, in which Spanish flamenco artists of all styles (dance, singing, guitar, and other instruments) can offer an important number of stable shows abroad. They are an easy way for artists from Spain to enter foreign markets (where most flamenco artists are located), because they eliminate liabilities of foreignership [49,60] and because their stability encourages them to create shows by guaranteeing a number of performances abroad each year.

But festivals also do an important job in the international development of flamenco, because of their ability to negotiate with prestigious venues and to attract the interest of cultural critics from influential international media. This is a valuable intangible for the development of markets, encouraging programming in prestigious theaters that are looking for good shows, and not specifically for flamenco. This is explained by the high symbolic value of the cultural products [61] which determines that they are experience goods: the audience is looking for an aesthetic experience, charged with meaning and emotions. Being experience goods, the a priori quality assessment of the product is difficult (for both the programmers and the audience), but also during the performance, when the product is very innovative and uses codes that the audience cannot appreciate. The valuation of the quality of the show depends to a large extent on the degree of knowledge and experience of the consumer (cultural capital), as well as on the assessment made by expert critics and/or mouth-to-mouth recommendations. Previous research has shown that networks with media facilitates, for PAs companies, the access to large venues and customer awareness [8]. Our results support the inverse relationship: the agreements to hold the festival in important venues attracts the attention of the critics and facilitates the media coverage, suggesting the existence of a reciprocal relationship.

The model incorporates available knowledge about the key factors of competitiveness in international flamenco PAs markets, thus providing important insights for international cultural policy to guide its formulation and implementation. The role of festivals in the internationalization of cultural policy does not seem to be clear: neither at a theoretical level nor on the political agenda.

Policy makers need to consider a wider variety of issues when deciding on putting incentives in place. The usefulness of the proposed model lies in the detail provided in the definition of the characteristics and indicators that allow to value the variety of roles that the festivals can play, and depending on the objectives of the public policy, the decision-makers could decide what type of roles they want to promote. Policy makers can request information from the festival organizers and make an evaluation, giving each indicator a weight according to their cultural policy objectives. Moreover, policy makers and cultural agents need to trust the validity of impact evaluations [62] to effectively use them in decision-making. The results of this work are a starting point to encourage
the policy makers in charge of the internationalization of culture to initiate a serious discussion with the stakeholders of the sector about objectives, and the evaluation systems that are more appropriate to gauge the fulfillment of these objectives as proposed in the field of impact evaluation of events in tourist destinations done by [16].

The cooperation of the public authorities with these festivals can be a valuable instrument for the policy of internationalization of culture. In a highly competitive market such as the PAs and with high barriers to internationalization, the work of the flamenco festivals in facilitating the access of Spanish companies abroad can be evaluated by the short-term and long-term results. In each edition, they contribute to the generation of economic activity and employment, but also to the creation of potential by promoting the generation of intangible assets directly related to the sustainability of flamenco. International festivals mobilize external resources, so the leverage effect of incentives is very important, but above all, the model can be used to calculate the return it generates.

The festivals analyzed are not multitudinous, and can not only be an instrument for economic sustainability. There is still ample space for innovation, learning, understanding of other cultures, etc. The artists grow professionally, and their creations become more universal and, finally, internationalization is not incompatible with socio-cultural sustainability. In line with the SEAM’s findings, this research shows that a festival can both perform well economically and be socially and culturally sensitive [24,63]. The results of this work show that there is a way to internationalize performing arts from a sustainable approach, understanding sustainability as (1) a way of defending local cultural values [2,38]; (2) a way of efficiently entering international markets, facilitating the competitiveness of artistic companies and the stability and quality of employment; (3) a continuous means of development and innovation in artistic expression [7]. Achieving sustainable internationalization is a continuous process, which requires annual monitoring of impacts, in order to introduce the necessary preventive and corrective measures.

We encourage this model to be tested in other artistic manifestations. In the same way, the model could be enriched by including the perception of the artists and the public authorities.

**Author Contributions:** M.-A.R.-H. and L.N. conceived the paper and designed the research, carried out the case study and analyzed the data. M.-A.R.-H. carried out the literature review and wrote the manuscript. L.N. helped in editing the final version of the manuscript. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** This research was supported by University of Málaga.

**Acknowledgments:** We would like to thank Gadea Méndez Grueso for her valuable support and insights in editing the manuscript into English, which has greatly improved the manuscript.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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