

Investigation on The Customer Journey of Music Festival Attendees in Sweden

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ABSTRACT

People nowadays are preserved to focus more on 'why' they are doing things rather than 'what' they are doing. Experience has become the focal point when the products or services are consumed and evaluated. The purpose of this paper is to outline the customer journey for music festival attendees and explore the enablers and barriers that may occur during the journey. A qualitative study with an inductive approach using a cross-case analysis has been applied. Semi-structured interviews were implemented to collect primary data from music festival attendees. Results show that the customer journey for music festival attendees may be presented in a conceptual model of eleven stages. Each stage intends to satisfy customers' need that will make them proceed the customer journey. The stages implicit enablers and barriers that may affect the customer experience.

Keywords: customer journey, consumer behaviour, customer experience, music festivals.

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour and advertising have been changing drastically over the past decades followed by an emotional appeal (Krishna, 2012; Randhir et al., 2016). During a transition from a service economy to an experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), the experience is preserved as the focal point of the consumption, rather than the end result (Leenders, 2010). People are looking into 'why' they are doing things rather than 'what' they are doing and identify themselves with lifestyles and interests (Wessblad, 2010). Generation X (1966-1976), Y (1977-1994), and Z (1995-2012) are looking at individualism as a lifestyle, hence, there is a need for a more personal and emotional approaches towards the customer (Hultén et al., 2011). Further, the event industry is booming and tends to be a social platform attracting a certain segment (Wessblad, 2010). People attend an event to break their daily life and integrate with like-minded people (ibid.). Music festivals with numerous activities often have great attraction and effect on the customer experience (Bowen & Daniels, 2005; Zubeck, 2014).

Customers base their decisions on the perceived value that the experience of the product will deliver to them (Kotler et al., 1999). There is an increasing need for an experience-focus when designing a product and marketing messages (Randhir et al., 2016; Hultén et al., 2011). The competition among music festivals has escalated remarkably over the past years (Koranteng, 2004; Wessblad, 2010). Although the demand has also increased, some music festivals are struggling to attract more visitors (Koranteng, 2004). It is increasingly significant to understand the customers' preferences throughout their full journey due to the lessen focus on the end result as a value-creator. However, the customer journey of music festivals has not yet been studied to a great extent in existing research. In order to bring greater insights of how the attendees perceive their festival experience, this paper has been conducted to outline the customer journey of music festival attendee and explore the enablers and barriers that may occur during the process.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Customer Journey

Scholars have been studied to a great extent on the concept of customer behaviour (Howard & Sheth, 1969; Kardes et al., 2011; Pieters, 1993; Kotler, 1994, 2001; Kotler & Keller, 2012) and customer journey (Skinner, 2010; Gerritsen et al., 2014; Rawson et al., 2013; Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). It is

suggested that the customer journey is the sum of different experiences that a customer goes through integrating with a brand, product, or company (Skinner, 2010). Kankainen, Vaajakallio, Kantola, and Mattelmäki (2012, p.221) further explained the customer journey as "the process of experiencing service through different touch points from the customer's point of view". Gerritsen et al. (2014) proposed a conceptual customer journey as a guiding model for customer experience in in-mall stores (Figure 1).

The customer journey comprises *customer needs*, *subprocesses*, and *touch points* (Gerritsen et al., 2014). The subprocesses are all actions customers take to satisfy the needs that may occur during the customer journey. Each subprocess contains potential touch points, which are interaction possibilities between companies and customer. When customers have satisfied a need, they are ready to move to the next stage of the customer journey. According to Gerritsen et al. (2014), these needs are; *need for orientation*, *need for information*, *need to experience*, *need to purchase*, *need to pay*, and *need to consume*. The subprocess according to this model are: *search for information*, *experience the product*, *buying the product*, *paying for the product*, and *collecting the product*. The touch points are described as interaction possibilities between the company and the customers. These are considered as key building blocks of customer journey firms may try to influence on the customers. From the customer perspective, the touch points can be defined by what interactions the customer need from the firm to proceed throughout the customer journey. Firms should keep in contact with the customer even when the journey is completed in order to remain loyalty (Gerritsen et al., 2014; Nathan & Hallam, 2009). Poor communication throughout the customer journey may result that customers drop out of the journey early (ibid.). In the context of events, Bohlin (2000) and Clawson (1959) discuss five different stages an attendee may go through; *anticipation*, *travel there*, *on site*, *travel back*, and *recollection of memories*.

2.2. Decision Making Influencers

Scholars have been discussing factors that may influence a customer's decision making (Faulin et al., 2012; Kardes et al., 2011; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). These influential factors may be categorised into three groups: *personal*-, *psychological*-, and *social factors* (Juan et al., 2012; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). *Personal factors* consider what identify an individual's life-situation (Falun et al., 2012).

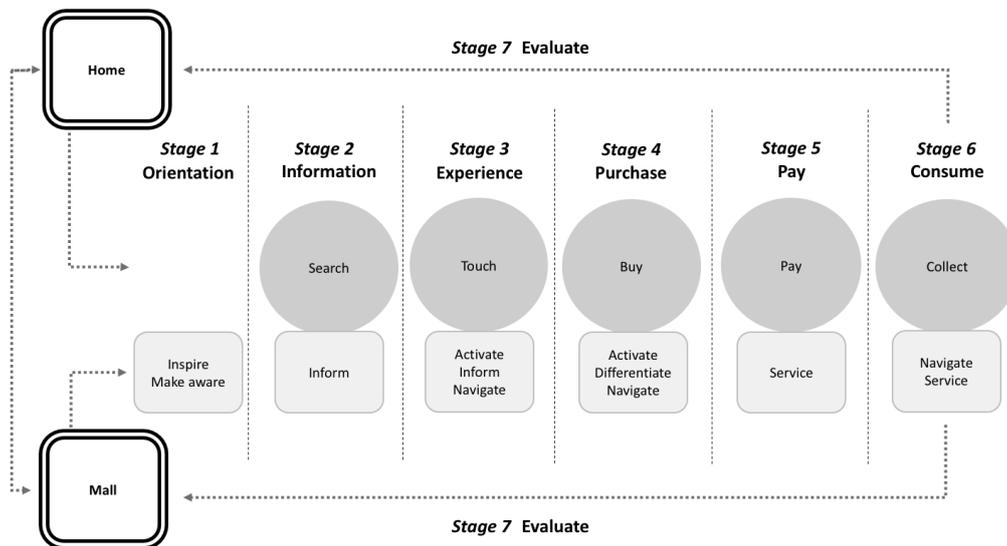


Figure 1. A customer journey model in in-mall stores (Gerritsen et al., 2014).

These factors may be; *age, sex, occupation, economic situation, lifestyle, and personality* (Barone & Miniard, 2002; Solomon, 2004; Plummer, 1974; Ramya & Mohamed Ali, 2016; Ryckman, 2004). A customer’s decision making is further influenced by four key *psychological factors; motivation, perception, beliefs, and attitudes* (Engel et al., 1995; Kotler & Armstrong, 2000; Armstrong, 2001). *Social psychology* concerns how people behave in groups and how trends and reference groups influence an individual (Getz, 2007). Bearden and Etzel (1982) further suggest that *reference groups and opinion leaders* have a significant impact on an individual’s decision making.

2.3. The Conceptual Model

Based on existing theory regarding the customer journey related to the event industry and particularly music festivals, a conceptual model was identified. The author initially explains the decision-making influential factors that may affect the customers’ behaviour. These factors include *personal-, psychological-, and social factors* (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). In accordance with Gerritsen et al. (2014), the

author organised the customer journey in stages that includes *customer needs, subprocesses, and touch points*. The customer needs in the conceptual model for this study are; *orientation, information, purchase, collected needs on site, and evaluation*.

It is the needs that motivate the customer to move to the next step of the journey (Maslow, 1970; Ramya & Mohamed Ali, 2016). The subprocesses are the actions that the customer takes in the customer journey, they are; *search, buy, and experience on site, and evaluation*. The touch points are the interactions between the event organiser and the customer. There are four touch points identified in the existing literature through the purposes for interaction: *inspire & make aware, inform, service & communicate, and service*. The customer may choose to proceed from one step to another but may also drop out of the customer journey at any point. The conceptual model (Figure 2) lays as a foundation for the collected empirical data, that aims to outline the customer journey for music festival attendees and explore the enablers and barriers that may occur during the process.

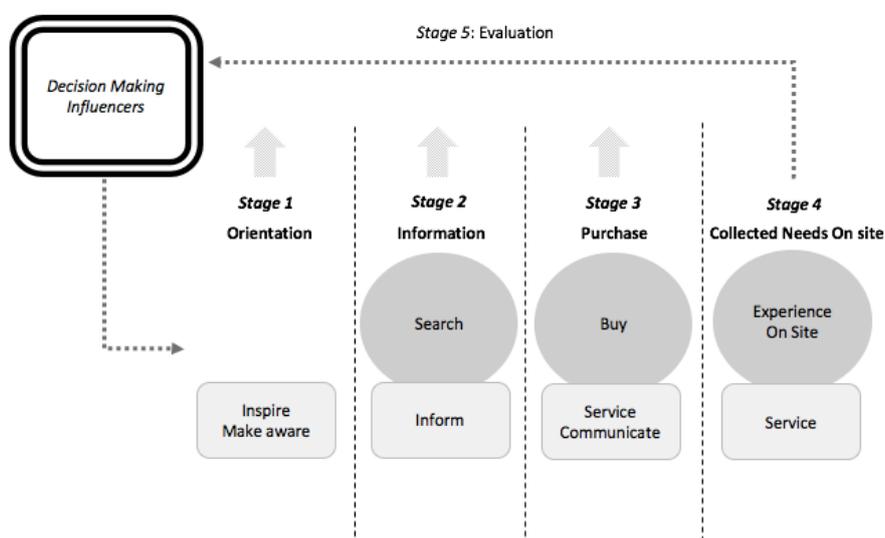


Figure 2. A conceptual model of the customer journey for music festival attendees (based on reviewing existing literature).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Method

3.1.1. Research Approach

An inductive approach has been applied in this study as the purpose is based on an empirical problem. In the process of collecting primary data, new understandings were found by explaining the empirical phenomena theoretically.

3.1.2. Epistemological Considerations

The hermeneutic view was used in this study in order to interpret and reflect over the social factors in the empirical findings. The hermeneutic view proposes a way of understanding the meaning of textual data and is suitable for explorative research as it studies subjective facts and phenomenon (Ezzy, 2002). A hermeneutic view allowed the author to observe and interpret the respondents' behavioural patterns that would be excluded by mathematical equations.

3.1.3. Ontological Considerations

Constructionism ontology consideration is seen as a source of the postmodern movement (Galbin, 2014). That social phenomenon is "in constant state of revision" (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.22). As the context of this study is dependable on the views of the respondents, and how they interpret and perceive the customer journey of music festivals, the social phenomena will develop with cultural aspects; hence, the author has adapted to the constructivist consideration.

3.1.4. Research Strategy

Due to the nature of the research questions, which are exploratory, the qualitative research method was applied in this study. This study used open questions to explore the perceptions of music festival attendees. Additionally, to understand the complex social phenomenon that the practical problem of this study is based upon, an in-depth qualitative approach is applied.

3.2. Data Collection

3.2.1. Secondary Data

The secondary data in this study includes both quantitative and qualitative data. The author has critically evaluated and collected secondary data from books, scientific articles, reports, and Internet sources in order to obtain insights of the steps of the customer journey, and specifically in events and music festivals. The author used the databases *Web of Science*, *Emerald*, and *Scopus* while conducting the study.

3.2.2. Primary Data

In this study, the primary data was collected from semi-structured interviews with Swedish attendees of music festivals. The sampling method used in this study was *convenience sampling* with certain restrictions and guidelines for the respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2005). The limitations that the author based the sampling upon was that they had to have attended a music festival within the last five years. *Quota sampling* was used in order to get personal interviews that are representatives of relevant segments. Barone and Miniard (2002) suggest several factors that can

impact the customer behaviour and its decision making; these factors are; *age, sex, occupation, economic situation, lifestyle, and personality* (ibid.). The quota sampling criteria are based on these factors (Table 1). In this study, the personality has not been studied as the author is limited to only study the conscious attributes. In this study, as unconscious attributes are excluded, the factors that are considered within the lifestyle of the attendees are therefore limited to *music preference* and *festival frequency*.

Bryman and Bell (2011) explain that the subgroups should be representatives in terms of the sample size. The author included representatives from each segment. Respondent 1 (R1) is male, generation Y, and goes frequently to festivals. Respondent 2 (R2) is female, generation Y, and goes to festivals less frequently. Respondent 3 (R3) is female, generation X, and goes frequently to festivals. Respondent 4 (R4) is male, generation Z, and does not go to festivals frequently. Etikan and Bala (2017) further explain that respondent segments that already fulfilled the quota will not be approached, and will not be included in this study. The author only interviewed a fixed number of respondents from each specific target group. All interviews in this study were conducted *face-to-face with open questions* to obtain more in-depth responses and allow the respondents to answer in their own words and avoid uncomfortable moments while their knowledge and understanding of the issues could be exploited (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Fisher et al., 2007).

3.3. Method Critique

In order to enhance *the reliability* of the theoretical framework, only peer reviewed articles were used. Additionally, a detailed methodology has been developed. Further, the respondents were neither paid nor volunteer respondents to ensure *the validity* of this study. Regarding *ethical considerations*, the author follows ethical principles suggested by Bryman & Bell (2011), Diener and Crandall (1978), and Lichtman (2013). They are given as follows; (i) In any case every respondent feels that any harm might come from the release of their opinions, the interview will be suspended and not be used in the research. (ii) To avoid any problems in terms of privacy and anonymity, special care is taken when findings are being published to make certain that the respondents are not identified or identifiable. (iii) All respondents were ensured that their profile will not be exposed unless they agree to reveal their profile after being explained all the details of the study. (iv) All respondents in this study were informed at the beginning of the interview about the author' identity information, the purpose of this study in detail, how the data collected from the respondents will be proceed and that recording equipment were used. (v) Additionally, all respondents' information was treated in a confidential manner and only the author of this study has access to that information.

	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3	Respondent 4
Generation	Y	Y	X	Z
Sex	Male	Female	Female	Male
Occupation	Student (homeopathic medicine)	Real estate manager (economic engineer)	Physiotherapist	Student (technology)
Annual Income	180 KSEK	380 KSEK	400 KSEK	180 KSEK
Music Preference	Rock	Pop, rock, & house	Pop, soul, reggae, & rock	House & pop
Festival Frequency	Frequent (1-5 annually)	Random (last festival 4 years ago)	Frequent (2-4 annually)	Random (attended 1 festival in total)

Table 1. Quota sampling segments.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This exploratory discussion is developed as a cross-case analysis and is structured in accordance to the proposed customer journey for music festival attendees that is visualized in the end of this chapter. The enablers and barriers in this study refer to the factors that may improve (enablers) or decrease (barriers) how a customer value the experiences within the customer journey. As this study focuses on the customer perspective, the touch points are purely identified by what the customers demand from the event organiser in order to proceed the customer journey.

4.1. The Customer Mindset

Customers perceive things differently and make decisions based on *personal*-, *psychological*-, and *social factors* according to Falun et al. (2012). These factors are the foundation of how a customer journey may plan out and can be referred to as the *customer mindset* (Table 2).

Barone and Miniard (2002) suggest that *occupation* and *economic situation* are behaviour determinants. R1 and R3 operate in social and humanitarian occupations, while R2 and R3 operate in more strategic and technical fields. The respondents with humanitarian occupations tend to be influencers and initiators in social groups that they belong to. Scholars further indicate that the income level affects what a customer can afford and the view upon money (Barone & Miniard, 2002). However, results show that the income level does not affect the decision to attend a festival. The customers' buying behaviour, on the other hand, seems to be dependent on how they value the experience rather than the ticket price. The respondents with the highest level of income, R2 and R3, are less willing to offer their personal resources. The personal resources, in this case, refer to time and money. As R2 and R3 are less willing to give up time than R1 and R4, they do not prioritise the festival experience to the same extent.

Customers' lifestyle is strongly connected to perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes as explained by Armstrong (2001). This may be because of results of *past experiences* that the attendees base their lifestyle choices upon. R1 emphasises that he learned from his previous mistakes and become more prepared before the festival. R2 elaborates that she bases her expectations on her previous festival experiences. R3 stresses that she hopes to gain as much new

experiences as possible, and therefore pursues all experiences with an open mind. R4 does not have much experiences from music festivals, but explains that he has encountered that the media perceives the festivals incorrectly and he therefore bases his decisions on reference groups of friends instead. Ramya and Mohamed Ali (2016) explain that motivational factors are based on the lifestyle individuals pursue. These motivational factors conclude why attendees want to attend festivals (see 4.2 Orientation).

William (2002) explains that attendees may be affected by *reference groups*. R1 is strongly affected by idolised artists, which can be referred to as an *aspirational reference group* (While & Dahl, 2006; Solomon, 2011). R1 is greatly affected by the opinions of artists, which may be connected to his great interest in music. Both R3 and R4 tend to read reviews from people who has participated in the festival before. This is referred to as *brand communities* by While and Dahl (2006), where R3 and R4 put their trust in a group that they can relate to. Neither R3 and R4 express that they are motivated to join a festival due to the music and are instead purely looking to gain new experiences. Music performances may not be a determinant to attend a festival for individuals who are part of brand communities.

R2 and R4 are influenced by their friends' opinions about festivals. These friends are considered experts and can be referred to as *opinion leaders* (Solomon, 2011). Both of the two cases concern *informative reference groups* as none R2 and R4 tend to search for information by themselves, but instead trust their friends' opinions (William, 2002). In contrast, R1 and R3 have been to many festivals and tend to take upon the role as initiators to the festival visit and persuade others to join; these are typical characteristics of *opinion leaders* (Lamb et al., 2011; Solomon, 2011).

Although R3 may be considered to be an opinion leader, it is possible to see tendencies that she bases her decisions on *comparative influences* (William, 2002), as she is strongly motivated by belongingness and considers her peers' opinions to a great extent. R1 is the only respondent who mentions similarities among the attendees. He means that when attending events with *normative reference groups*, it creates a sense of belongingness by meeting people with the same interest in music and aesthetic appearance (William, 2002).

		Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3	Respondent 4
Personal Factors	Generation	Y	Y	X	Z
	Sex	Male	Female	Female	Male
	Occupation	Student (homeopathic medicine)	Real estate manager (economic engineer)	Physiotherapist	Student (technology)
	Annual Income	180 KSEK	380 KSEK	400 KSEK	180 KSEK
	Music Preference	Rock	Pop, rock, & house	Pop, soul, reggae, & rock	House & pop
Psychological Factors	Festival Frequency	Frequent (1-5 annually)	Random (last festival 4 years ago)	Frequent (2-4 annually)	Random (attended 1 festival in total)
	Motivation	Experience music live	Experience music live & belongingness	Belongingness & self-development	Belongingness
Social Factors	Perception, Beliefs, & Attitudes	Learn from mistakes	Expectations based on experiences	Gain as many new experiences as possible	Expectations are based on reference groups
	Group Constellation	>2	2-10	5-10	4
	Role	Influencer, planner, initiator	Follower	Influencer & initiator	Follower
	Influencer(s)	Acting opinion leader, influenced by reference groups	Influenced by opinion leaders and reference groups	Acting opinion leader, influenced by reference groups	Influenced by opinion leaders and reference groups

Table 2. The customer mindset of the respondents.

4.2. Stage One: Orientation

In the *orientation* stage, the event organiser aims to get both attention and attraction to an event (Gerritsen et al., 2014; Getz, 2007). Results show that attendees' awareness towards a festival are formed in this stage. R1, R2, and R3 notice the festivals through social media and *aspirational reference groups*, consisting of idolised artists. The two female respondents, R2 and R3, further get informed through local news, including TV, radio, and newspapers. This may be as both R2 and R3 are working, while R1 and R4 are adapted to a student-lifestyle with a more flexible schedule.

The two respondents R2 and R4 become aware of the festival through their *informative reference groups* (WOM) and outdoor advertising campaigns conducted by the organiser. It can be argued that the attendees get inspired and become aware of the festival in the orientation stage. The author refers to this subprocesses as *desire* the product, as this is where the interest of attending a specific festival is developed for the first time. In accordance with Gerritsen et al. (2014), it can be argued that the touch point in this stage of the customer journey is to *inspire* the attendees and *make* them *aware* of the festival. Further, the channels used to communicate are *WOM, social media, local news, and outdoor commercials* (Table 3). These channels can be seen as enablers for the attendees to become aware of the festival, and may increase the customer experience. However, the respondents express their annoyance due to some promotional behaviours. Accordingly, poor communication may influence attendees' experience negatively and may drop out early from the customer journey (Nathan & Hallam, 2009). Results further show that anticipation takes part in all stages leading up to the festival. As an initiator, R1 hypes the festival to generate anticipation among his friends. R2 and R3 also emphasises the importance of the anticipation before attending the festival.

The orientation stage is where the customer's needs and wants are developed (Belk et al., 2003; Zeithaml, 1996; Ramya & Mohamed Ali, 2016). Scholars also argue a variety of motivational factors that affect an individual's decision to attend events. They highlights the influence that individuals and groups have over others within their reference groups (Crompton & McKay, 1997), as also discussed in 4.1. In addition, R3 is also motivated by her curiosity to try new things and gain as much new experiences as possible. She expects to encounter something beyond her daily-life (Getz, 2007; Tarssanen, 2009; Wessblad, 2010) and value things from different angles (Packer & Ballantyne, 2011; Tarssanen, 2009). Further, it is possible to see that the attendees are strongly affected by social factors and less by the organiser. This may be due to previous experiences that has developed into a mistrust in promotion (R4).

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers	Attendees' motivations are created as they become aware of the festival			
	Attendees are strongly inspired by social factors and less by the event organizer			
	Social media	Social media, local news, outdoor adverts, WOM	Social media, TV, radio	WOM, face-to-face, outside commercials
Barriers	Negative media		Too much commercials	Negative media

Table 3. The enablers and barriers of the orientation stage for music festival attendees.

4.3. Stage Two: Information

As Gerritsen et al. (2014) mention, when the customer is interested in an event they proceed to search for information. It is evident that, although to different degrees (Kardes et al., 2011), the respondents always express their willing to search for information; hence the subprocess in this stage is to *search* for information. Results show that R2 and R4 are considered as followers, who listen to their friends' opinions, and have a low level of processing information while R1 and R3 are opinion leaders and tend to search for a lot of information before deciding to attend a festival. One may suggest that respondents who are initiators and opinion leaders may process a high level of information (Kardes et al., 2011). The followers and less frequent festival attendees may process a low level of information, as they tend not to search for much information (R2 & R4).

Kotler et al. (1999) explain that *customer needs and wants, cost to the customer, convenience, and communication* must be considered by the firm when constructing the promotion of a product. This may be connected to what type of information the respondents are looking to find in this step of the customer journey. The 'customer needs and wants' are mainly music interest and belongingness in this study. Results show that the respondents look for information about the playscheme, the location and its accessibility, as well as price and more practical information (Table 4). According to Gerritsen et al. (2014), firms should aim to satisfy the customer's need for information in this stage, therefore the touch point within this stage is to *inform* the attendees. This can be done, corresponding with previous studies (Danaher & Rossiter, 2011; Grate, 2017; Yoo et al., 2015), through various channels such as media, mail, email, WOM, and electronic WOM. However, R4 expresses that he may not always trust the information provided by the event organiser or other media, due to that their information has proven incorrectly in the past. This may also be the case for music festivals as R1, R3, and R4 mention that they have even missed out on a festival because the information was not provided on time.

Regarding the accessibility of information, all of the respondents explain that they look for information at the official website of the festival. However, they also like to get information delivered to them through social media. Accordingly, Mintel (2013) suggests that social media are key delivery channels for the organiser to interact with customers and provide them information regarding festivals. Wessblad (2010) further suggests that barriers to attend festivals that may occur when an attendee is searching for information may be *time, money, or social influences*. R2 mentions that the price is of great importance to her. Both female respondents, R2 and R3, also mention that they are concerned about the timing of the festival. R1 and R4 value the experience while R2 and R3 tend to choose festivals that have a convenient location, that is close to home, and they are less willing to prioritize the festival experience over other activities. The social influencers that Wessblad (2010) mentions, are also visible in the results and may be compared to the reference groups and opinion leaders. These influencers have power to affect the perception that the attendees have of the festival, and are sources of information that all the respondents value. This may create an enabler or barrier depending on the information they receive affecting their experience.

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers	Opinion Leaders, official website, social media, email, post	Reference groups, WOM, official website	Reference groups, WOM, social media, official website	Reference groups, WOM, social media, official website
Barriers	Availability	Reference groups, personal resources	Availability, reference groups, personal resources	Availability, trustworthiness

Table 4. The enablers and barriers of music festival attendees during the information stage.

4.4. Stage Three: Fellowship

It is evident that none of the respondents would attend a festival by themselves (Table 5). The attendees may put different degrees of value on belongingness, but it can be argued that it is a crucial attribute for a festival visit (Getz, 2007; Maslow, 1970; Kotler et al., 1999). R2 and R4 tend to follow reference groups or individuals that may already have gone through the orientation and information stage. R4 barely had any information when he decided to join the festival, but trusted his friends who had done the research. Although the attendee may talk to their friends about a festival already in the orientation or information stage of the customer journey (R1 & R3), it is not until the attendees know that some of their friends are joining the festival that they would proceed to buy the ticket. One may argue that the need for *fellowship* is evident in this study, with the subprocess consisting of *forming a group*.

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers	Music interest	Geographic convenience	Geographic convenience	Reuniting
Barriers	Peers' resources			

Table 5. The enablers and barriers for music festival attendees during the fellowship stage.

4.5. Stage Four: Purchase

According to Lamb et al. (2001) the customer decides to buy a product or not after fulfilling the need for information and evaluating alternatives. However, this study shows that the customers also go through a step of forming a group. In this case, the product is the festival ticket; hence, it can be noted that the subprocess in this stage is to *buy* the ticket.

Ashman et al. (2015) stress the importance of shopping experience in the purchase stage that may affect the perception of value and reassure the customers of their choice. R3 explains that the technical failures affected her purchase experience negatively. Accordingly, Engel et al. (1968) argue that how well the product and purchase experience meet the customer's expectations will determine whether the customer is satisfied or not. All respondents tend to buy the festival tickets well in advance. Results show that price is the main factor that drives R2's buying behaviour. R3 on the other hand mentions that it may be difficult for her to plan ahead. It may also be possible to recognize that Generation Y's purchasing power increases with discount (R1 and R2). Besides, the two male respondents who are students with the same income level, R1 and R4, mention the issue of availability of tickets. Accordingly, people who share similar occupations and income level may share similar taste, value, and ideas (Solomon, 2004).

All respondents buy their tickets online; this is also where the touch point is addressed: the festivals *sell* the tickets. The trustworthiness may affect the customer's purchase experience regarding online transactions. R1 and

R4 stress that it is important to see if the website selling festivals ticket is reliable. R3 trusts that official websites are approved and qualified to operate and sell real tickets.

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers	Discounts, computer, personal resources	Discounts, computer	Support, computer	Computer
Barriers	Trustworthiness, availability	Personal resources	Trustworthiness, personal resources, technical failure	Trustworthiness, availability

Table 6. The enablers and barriers for music festival attendees during the purchase stage.

4.6. Stage Five: Preparation

After purchasing the tickets, it can be argued that there is a need for *preparation* in order to have the best experiences when attending or leaving the festival. All of the respondents find information from the festival's official website. The availability of practical information may help the attendees to plan directions to the festival and back home, or to decide if they need to book accommodations. Lack of information can be an obstacle for respondents to plan the festival visit. R1, R3 and R4 stress difficulties of finding sufficient information such as the playscheme so they can plan the festival visits. Practical information can be either enablers or barriers depending on the availability of the information and how it can support the attendees to plan the festival visit. All of the respondents also explain how that they put efforts to plan for the festival visits; hence, the subprocess of the preparation stage is to *plan* for the festival visits.

Packer and Ballantyne (2011) explain that the festival experience starts already, weeks or months, before the actual event. Anticipation and preparation contribute to a build-up for the event itself (ibid.). Results indicate that involvement with a community may create anticipation and improve experience among respondent. R1 hypes the festival with his friends to create a united anticipation. R3 also highlights that the experience of planning with her friends was even more fun than the actual festival. Additionally, R1, R2 and R3 further explain that they get prepared for the festival by listening to the artists as they want to avoid missing out on any performances they would like to see live. All of the respondents expect the festival organisers to provide information and support so that they can plan for the festival visit. One may argue that the touch point in this stage is to *inform* and *support*. In accordance with Wessblad (2010), the remanence of contact between the organiser and the attendees is to build anticipation and create memorable experience before the event.

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers	Music, relax, information availability, strategic packing, community	Music, information availability	Music, strategic packing, cloths, community	Watch official trailers, information availability
Barriers			Information availability	

Table 7. The enablers and barriers for music festival attendees during the preparation stage.

4.7. Stage Six & Ten: Transportation

The results of this study manifest the need for transportation; *travel to the festival* and *travel home*. The attendees' experience during this stage, as well as the full customer journey, can be affected by certain factors.

4.7.1. Subprocess: Travel to the festival

All of the respondents describe their trips to the festival. The two female respondents who work full-time prefer to go to festivals that are close to home and travel by public transport to avoid traffic (R2 & R3). The two respondents from Generation Y, R1 and R2, complain about the traffic jam and long queues that generate annoyance. Further, R4 observes that the organiser’s support makes the traffic circulate and let the attendees easily travel to the festival. It can be argued that the touch point in this subprocess is to *direct* the attendees to travel to the festival. Further, geographic convenience, accessibility, and traffic support can be seen as enablers for the attendees while traffic is the main barrier in the transportation stage.

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers	Shuttle busses, directions, accessible by car	Central location, accessibility, public transport, close to home	Close to home	Traffic support
Barriers	Traffic	Traffic		

Table 8. The enablers and barriers for the attendees to travel to the festival.

4.7.2. Subprocess: Travel home

When it comes to traveling back home, the convenience of the location also affects R2 and R3’s experience. The two female respondents indicate their efforts to avoid traffic. The traffic is also the main barrier that affects negatively the two opinion leaders, R1 and R3. However, R4, as a follower, enjoy being with friends during the trip back home and is not affected negatively by the traffic. It can be argued that a sense of belongingness enhances his experience in this stage of the customer journey.

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers		Accessibility	Accessibility	Belongingness
Barriers	Traffic		Traffic	

Table 9. The enablers and barriers for the attendees to travel home from the festival.

4.8. Stage Seven: Welcome

According to the results, one may argue that the attendees of music festivals are in need of a *welcome* at the entrance. The subprocess in this stage is to *arrive* at the festival. When arriving at the festival R1, R2, and R3 argue that it enhances their experience if they receive practical information from the organiser upon arrival. Kotler et al. (1999) explain that what is included in the price of a product, in this case the festival ticket, must be communicated well to decrease dissatisfaction among customers. Wessblad (2010) and Gnoth and Anwar (2000) argues that it is important to communicate an authentic message that mirror the experience as accurate as possible It can be the element of exceeding or not living up to the expectations of the attendees that decides if a factor will be an enabler or barrier for the customer experience. This argument is also based on that R2 explains that queues are not an issue as long as she knows what to expect, while R1 further explains that he did not expect it to be queues which decreased his experience.

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers	Information	Absence of queues, information	Information, belongingness	Belongingness
Barriers	Queues, extra costs, parking			

Table 10. The enablers and barriers for music festival attendees during the welcome stage.

4.9. Stage Eight: On Site

According to Bohlin (2000) and Clawson (1959), the on site stage, is the actual consumption of the event program. The subprocess in this stage of the customer journey is *experience*. Although this is not to confuse with the customer experience. Packer and Ballantyne (2011) name four different aspects of a festival experience: *music experience, festival experience, social experience, and separation experience*. One may argue that these experiences may be incorporated, however is separated in order to study the elements that the festival experience consists of. These experiences may not only take place during the festival, but also in the other stages of the customer journey.

Packer and Ballantyne (2011) argue that the separation experience set the festival apart from daily routines. One of the reasons R3 enjoys to go to festivals is that she can gain many new experiences in a short period of time. R4 explains that he wants to meet new people. R1 mentions that his main focus is on the music experience, however, he also highlights the social experience to enjoy with like-minded people. All respondents express that people are happy and friendly at festivals, they are open to socialise with people from different ages and social groups. Wessblad (2010) and Pine and Gilmore (1999) also argue that it is the experience outside the everyday life. As people are separated from daily routines, they are also separated from their daily thinking patterns and may act differently. Packer and Ballantyne (2011) indicate that the music experience provides the common ground, upon which the other experiences were built. This may be true for R1 due to his great interest in music and his motivation to attend festivals. However, this is not the case for the other respondents, R2, R3, and R4, as they are motivated by a sense of belongingness and most focused on this aspect at the festival. This has enabled them to have a joint celebration (festival experience) and music experience to a certain extent.

Wessblad (2010) claims that the event organiser should try to communicate an accurate picture of what the attendees should expect when attending the festival. Further, it is important for the organiser to live up to these expectations, and hopefully even exceed them. In this stage, the only physical touch point between the attendee and the event organizer may therefore be to provide the *service*. The result of this study indicates that the respondents concern festival quality attributes during this stage. These attributes, according to Son and Lee (2011), can be *diversity of activities, entertainment sound system, promotion and information, festival atmosphere, entertainment stages, accessibility, safety and security, and food and beverage*.

	Enablers	Barriers
R1	Nature, clean, free parking, relax area, souvenirs, information, sociable environment, like-minded people	Queues, forgot essential personal attributes, extra costs
R2	Nature, information-badges, safety, phone-application, variety of activities, roof, lack of queues, belongingness, unique experiences, decorations	Design of the festival area, food options, dirty, safety, network service
R3	Mix of people, variety of activities, many experiences at the same place, belongingness, phone application, self-development, security, sound, design of the area, relax area	Too many activities, weather, security, underage drinking, positioning of the stages
R4	Various choices of food, nature, fast service, laser & sound performance, like-minded people, clean, accessibility, essential physical needs, safety	Design of the festival area

Table 11. The enablers and barriers for music festival attendees during the on site stage.

4.10. Stage Nine: Exit

The results indicate that there is a need for the attendees to *exit* after taking part in the festivals. During this subprocess, to *exit* the festival, the attendees may perceive the experience differently. Long queues can be seen as the main issue that decreases how the attendees value their experiences. However, the experiences they have gained at the festival tends to induce the respondents to neglect their tiredness to a certain extent even at the exit stage. R1 and R4 emphasise that their sense of belongingness also helps to overcome the barrier of queuing at the exit, as they enjoy sharing experiences with other people in the queue. R3 prefers to meet up with her friends before she exits to say goodbye. In addition, respondents of generation Y, R1 and R2, find it helpful with staff at the exit and the parking, hence, the availability and supportiveness of the staff can be enablers for attendees in their customer journey. Further, it can also be inferred that the touch point in this stage is to *support* and *direct* the attendees to exit the festival.

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers	Belongingness, staff at the exit	Staff at the parking	Belongingness	Belongingness
Barriers	Queues		Queues	

Table 12. The enablers and barriers for music festival attendees to exit the festival.

4.11. Stage Eleven: Digest Experiences

According to Gerritsen et al. (2014), evaluation takes place when the customer finalises the journey. In stead of categorising as either a need, subprocess, or touch points, they rather mean that this is when a firm may learn about the customer experience (ibid.). One may argue that all respondents express a need to *digest their experiences*, in accordance with Kotler and Armstrong (2000) that beliefs and attitudes impregnating the customer behaviour is learned knowledge and perceptions from previous experiences. The author categorises the subprocess in this stage as *evaluate*, as it is evident in literature and the findings that the customers evaluate the experience through different actions. The author further argues that these actions are; *recollection of memories, sharing experiences with friends, comparing experience with expectations, assessing the quality of service, and emotional response*.

In this stage, the attendees recollect past events, behaviours, and experiences (Schacter, 1997; Schacter et al., 2003). One may argue that the recollection of memories determines if the attendees generate positive or negative WOM. Scholars further indicate that satisfactory experience directly motivates the customers' revisit intention and enables positive WOM responses (Ferguson et al., 2010; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). R1, R2, and R3 take advantages of social media to share their stories. R1 and R4 especially like to share their festival experiences with their peers. Scholars also suggest the power of storytelling to generate memorable experiences (Bohlin, 2000; Jensen, 1996). Evidently, all the respondents has stories from the festivals to tell and they tend to recreate with their peers to relive the experiences.

Results show that memorable experiences are both positive or negative surprises; something beyond what the attendees expected. Positive surprises may conclude unique experiences that the respondents did not expect. R1 explains that the weather affected his experience and the artist hyped the performance and crashed his guitar on the ground. However, negative experiences that attendees did not expect may also stay in their memory. R3 mentions underage

drinking and how that decreased her overall experience. In accordance, Wessblad (2010) highlights the impact of the surprise-factor on an event that encourages the attendees to tell their stories after the event. Getz (2007) suggests that festival attendees should have a change in feeling or a certain feel of loss after attending events. Evidently, R4 emphasises his feeling of sadness and lost when he was back to daily life.

Throughout the results of this study, festival quality attributes are continuously evaluated by the respondents. These attributes may include promotion and information, festival atmosphere, accessibility, festival sound system, safety and security, food and beverage, and others. The respondents show their intention to spread WOM and revisit specific festivals by assessing these attributes. The festival quality attributes may have a significant influence on the attendees' behaviour. Mackellar (2009) further suggests that the successful delivery of satisfactory experience is essential for long-term competitiveness of festivals.

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Enablers	Memorable experience, telling stories, social media, face-to-face	Memorable experiences, telling stories, & social media	Memorable experiences, telling stories, & social media	Memorable experiences, telling stories, face-to-face
Barriers				

Table 2. The enablers and barriers for music festival attendees during the evaluation stage.

4.12. The Customer Journey of Music Festival Attendees

As the customer journey concept is closely linked with the use of visualisation, which is referred to as the customer journey map (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2010), based on findings of this study, the author has mapped each individual customer journey of the respondents and conceptualized in a generalized model. The stages in a customer journey include customer need, subprocesses, and touch points.

Maslow (1970) argues that once a need in the lower level of the hierarchy of needs has been fulfilled it is no longer a strong motivator and the next higher level in the hierarchy demands satisfaction. In other words, only unsatisfied needs motivate an individual (Mullins, 2002). The author would like to argue that this is also how the customer journey proceed and the reason why the customer journey is structured by the needs of the customer. Once the first need is satisfied, the customer will move on to the next need. Therefore, the author conclude that the foundation of the customer journey is the needs of the customer. The customer needs are further elaborated upon below (Figure 3), as well as the subprocesses and touch points the customer journey steps are included.

5. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted in order to visualise the customer journey of music festival attendees and show the needs motivating the customer to proceed through the stages (Figure 6). Once the first need is fulfilled, the customer will move on to the following need. The customer needs are: *orientation, information, fellowship, purchase, preparation, transportation, on site, and digest experiences*. These all entails subprocesses, but may not include touch points. The factors influencing an attendee's behaviour throughout the customer journey are generated through past experiences (psychological factors), current situation (personal factors), and social influences (social factors). These factors are referred to as the *customer mindset*.

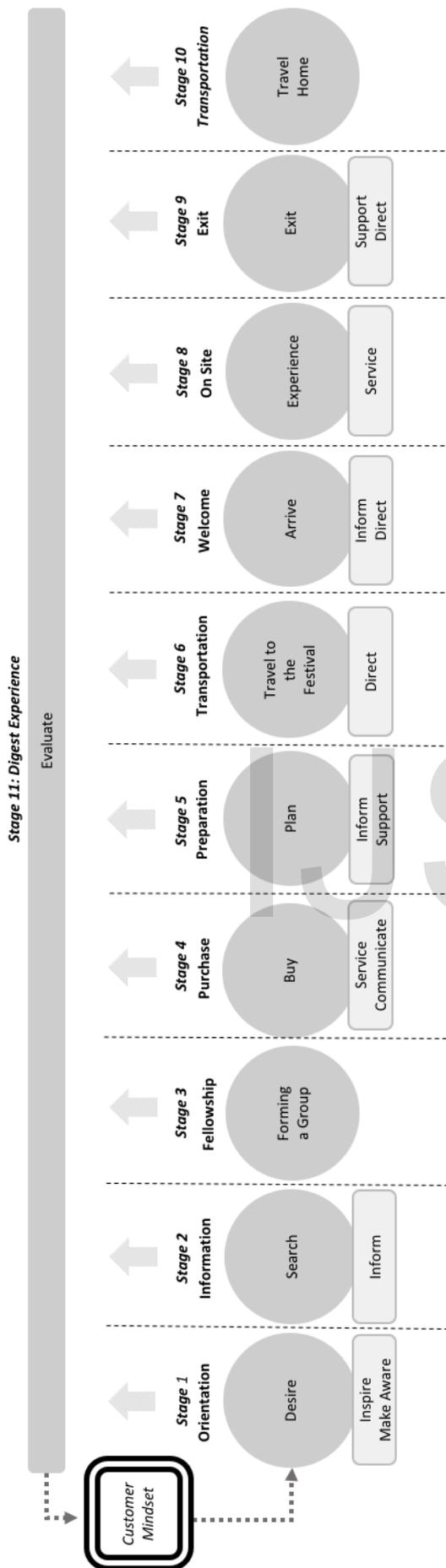


Figure 3. The customer journey of music festival attendees (based on the results of this study).

5.1. Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to theory regarding *customer experience* and *customer behaviour*. Especially, regarding the customer journey of music festival attendees; the processes and the barriers and enablers it may conclude. This has not been elaborated to this extent in previous research. Previous research regarding the customer journey has not considered the set of *personal*-, *psychological*-, and *social factors* that may impact the customer behaviour within the customer journey. The author refers to this as the *customer mindset*, which conclude all attributes that affect the decisions, feelings, behaviours of the attendee.

Existing literature indicates that the income level affects what a customer can afford and the view upon money. However, this study shows that the income level does not seem to affect the decision to attend a festival. The customers’ buying behaviour tends to be dependent on how they value the experience rather than the money they spend on the festival ticket. This study further indicates the attendees’ attitudes towards certain promotional behaviours. The efficiency of communication channels may depend on the content and the communication frequency. Regarding music festival experiences, scholars argue that the music experience establishes a common ground upon which the other types of experiences are built. However, the results of this study indicate that other experiences, such as separation experience, can be the foundation for the attendees that contribute to the unique appeal of attending festivals by creating a sense of belongingness.

5.3 Practical Contributions

Throughout the customer journey, the festival organiser interacts with the customer through different touch points. They should aim to ease the processes and provide what the customers demand to fulfil their needs.

Touch point 1: Inspire & make aware

- Inspire the customer through creating an attractive festival image;
- Take advantage of reference groups and opinion leaders.

Touch point 2: Inform

- Make the information available and easy to access;
- Balance the frequency of the communication;
- Social media is the most preferred channel;
- The attendees look for the attendees look for the location, accessibility, price and further practical information.

Touch point 3: Service & communicate

- Provide good well-structured and trustworthy platform for the ticket purchase;
- Support the customer with issues and communicate with the customer to encourage purchase and ease the process.

Touch point 4: Inform & support

- Provide information needed to go to the festival and make the most of it (practical information and inspiration);
- Support the customers with practical issues.

Touch point 5: Direct

- Make signs on the roads so it is easy for the attendees to know where to go.

Touch point 6: Inform & direct

- Provide information through printed material they may be useful for the attendees during the festival.

Touch point 7: Service

- Provide good service throughout all activities during the festival.

Touch point 8: Support, direct

- Make it easy for the attendees to exit the festival area by having staff at the exit and the parking.

5.4. Limitations & Recommendations

Even though having a small number of participants was appropriate for this study, one could see this as a limitation as experiences and feelings towards the questions may not be an accurate reflection of the whole population. The author would like to encourage quantitative studies on a larger sample. Besides, the study was conducted in the context of

music festivals, which implies that contributions and conclusions may not be applicable to other industries. Future research should seek to overcome this limitation. As this study is exclusively conducted from a Swedish customer perspective, it may be interesting to study the customer journey and customer experience differing among cultures.

This study focuses on the customer's perspective towards the customer journey. Future research may assess the firm's perspective in order to gain a more comprehensive view of the area and identify more characteristics and conclusions. Also, this study focuses mainly on the positive effects of music festival rather than negative sides, such as anti-social behaviours, drug and alcohol abuse, overcrowding, or public health issues. Future research is needed to explore the negative effect of festival and to gain an understanding of the customer mindset and experiences regarding this, hence may support the attendees make healthy choices and lead to meaningful and productive lives.

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