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Consumer decision-making on festival attendance

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Consumer decision-making on festival attendance

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It has been challenging for the festival organizers to sell their festival tickets due to overcrowded festival market. To increase the ticket sale it is becoming more important to know the consumers and their decision making on festival attendance. There are many factors that influence people to make decision over festival attendance and the main purpose of this study was to identify those factors. The research was conducted for GigsWiz.com Ltd. to help the company gather information about festival goers because the company was developing a festival/event planning tool for them. The festival/event planning tool would benefit both the festival organizers and the festival goers. Festival organizers would use the tool to increase their festivals' ticket sale. On the other hand, the festival goers would use the tool for planning festival attendance. The study was used to develop a decision making model on festival attendance and to help the company in the development process of the event/festival planning tool.

The theory covered for this study included consumer behavior and marketing research. The consumer decision making was emphasized in the theoretical part of consumer behavior. The cognitive processing model of decision making was followed while explaining the consumer decision making on festival attendance. In this paper, at first the theory of consumer behavior was briefly described and the theory of marketing research was illustrated in the methodology of this study.

An email survey was conducted for this study and quantitative techniques were followed for analyzing the data. The survey discovered the most important reasons for cancelling a festival attendance such as unsuitable festival date, friends' non-attendance. It also helped identifying the influences or motivators for attending a festival such as festival date, festival line-up, and friends' attendance. Consumers' early and late ticket buying ratios were also discovered by the survey. Based on the survey and theory, the consumer decision making on festival attendance was conceptualized and finally some ideas of features for the festival planning tool were gathered.

Key words: consumer behavior, consumer decision-making, cognitive processing model, festival attendance, marketing research.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The study was conducted for GigsWiz.com Ltd. It was observed from the company's own findings and experiences that most of the festival organizers were having difficulties in selling tickets early which could help them acquire financial stability as early as possible and make the festival successful. Some reports were also found talking about this issue (more in the section: Secondary data access). By realizing this problem in the festival industry, the company started to find a solution which can help bringing early ticket sale. Finally the company decided to develop a festival planning tool for the festival goers which could help them plan their festival with friends. The tool would gather a group of people and help them make the decision on festival attendance early at the beginning when the festival dates are just announced. And when they are able to make the decision early they would eventually buy tickets early. As the tool would help the decision making on festival attendance, it was obvious to know about the festival attendees to find out the most important factors that affect either buying tickets early or attending festivals. So an email survey was conducted to identify these factors as well as some other related issues which might influence the decision making on festival attendance. By combining the theory part of this study and the findings from the research, a consumer decision making process on festival attendance was conceptualized. So the main objective of this research study was to develop a decision making model on festival attendance while the other important objectives of this research were to collect information about the existing tools which were being used by the festival goers and to gather some ideas of features for the festival planning tool/app which was under development.

Another important issue, the information from the research would be used in the marketing materials while contacting the festival organizers. The idea was to start conversations with the festival organizers with some interesting information about the festival attendees. And while having the conversations, the company would get the possibility of talking about the festival planning tool and might sell the product to them.

2 COMPANY OVERVIEW

GigsWiz.com Ltd. is an IT solutions company focusing on festival marketing. The company initially started the business with artist powered ticketing product. The way it was different from typical ticketing company was that the artists performing at the event took part in promoting the event. The company worked closely with artists to generate more ticket sales. The company also provided some compensation to the artists based on the

ticket sale they had generated. Usually the artists received some portion of the revenue gathered from the total ticket sale. (GigsWiz.com - About Us 2011)

After providing the ticketing services for one year, the company decided to develop a festival planning tool for festival goers. The tool would be sold to festival organizers / promoters, who would eventually ask their customers to use the tool for planning the festival attendance with friends. So the customers of the company are the festival/concert/event organizers. The planning tool would be used as a marketing tool for the festival organizer since it would unite a group of people to make the decision for attending the festival which eventually would turn a certain number of prospective customers into real customers of the festival. And this would also lead them buy early tickets which ultimately would help the festival organizer achieve the financial stability at the early stage of the festival's ticket sale round. At the time of conducting this study, the company only concentrated on developing the event planning tool. The next step that would be taken by the company was contacting the customers to sell the planning tool/product to them. The main and initial markets of the company were USA and UK which means that the USA and UK festival organizers were the main customers of the company but in the long run, the company would expand the market in Europe as well.

3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theory needed for this study is described briefly in this section. Actually there are two main topics of Marketing: Consumer Behavior and Marketing research needed for this research. But this section only covers the theory of consumer behavior and the theory of marketing research is covered in the methodology of this study while combining the practical part with the theory. The consumer decision making is emphasized in the theory part of consumer behavior because the research was conducted to understand the consumer decision making on festival attendance. The theory of consumer behavior needed because the festival attendees are the consumers and without knowing them it is quite hard to implement a marketing research, e.g. how they process information, what factors influence them in the decision making process. On the other hand marketing research theory is also needed to conduct the study properly but as it is said earlier, this part is combined in the following section of "Methodology of the study".

3.1 Consumer behavior

This section of this study focuses on the theoretical part of consumer behavior. It is known that consumer behavior is a big subject to cover but in this theory section of the consumer behavior, only certain areas of consumer behavior are described which are basically related with this study. The areas described here are consumer behavior definition, consumer's decision making process (traditional model and cognitive model), influence of social environment, reference groups, and opinion leaders, and finally a general idea of consumer online behavior. Since the main objective of the study was to develop a decision making model on festival attendance so the knowledge in consumer's decision making was needed. But before acquiring the knowledge on decision making, the general idea on consumer behavior was also needed as the decision making is a part of consumer behavior. The social environment, reference groups, and opinion leaders have a significant influence on the decision making, so these would be included in the theory part as well. Finally the online consumer behavior would be described here shortly as the planning tool would be an online product and the decision on festival attendance would be made by using the online festival/event planning tool.

When talking about consumer behavior, generally we think that it is the decision making process of consumers to buy products. But this is not enough to define consumer behavior clearly; basically it involves consumer's whole activities before buying the product, during and after consumption. "Consumer behavior entails all consumer activities associated with the purchase, use and disposal of goods and services, including the consumer's emotional, mental, and behavioral responses that proceed, determine, or follow these activities". (Kardes, Cline & Cronely 2008, 8) The definition indicates that consumers process many thoughts, feelings, experiences when buying products and also consuming products. For example, when someone wants to buy a car for the first time, he would probably first think what kind of car he needs and how much he can afford for it and then he would probably ask some of his friends experiences about cars of different models or manufacturers so that he can gather some information beforehand. He would also look for some information from internet, visit some companies' websites or he might visit some car showrooms personally to gather some information from the sales man. There might be some other psychological issues involved in the buying process, for example he might think of getting a car which is better than his neighbor's, he would also think of getting a car which fits his personality. So all these thoughts and feelings involved in the buying process of a car but this is not the end, there are some other factors while using the car which would affect buying another car for his own or suggesting others who want to buy cars. For example, if he has a bad experience he would probably not go for the same

brand of the car and switch to a new brand which he might think suitable for him. Let's take another example which is more related with this thesis study. People usually go to festival for having fun and enjoying some relaxing free time, beside this there are many other things that effect on making decision for attending a festival. For example, the decision might depend on whether the friends are also going to the festival or not, because generally people tend to attend a festival with friends and family. If friends and family cannot able to attend a festival they might change their decision and not attend the festival that they wanted to go to. The line-up, ticket price, festival environment, festival management, previous experience also have great impact on the decision making process of attending a particular festival. The following figure shows what consumer behavior includes.

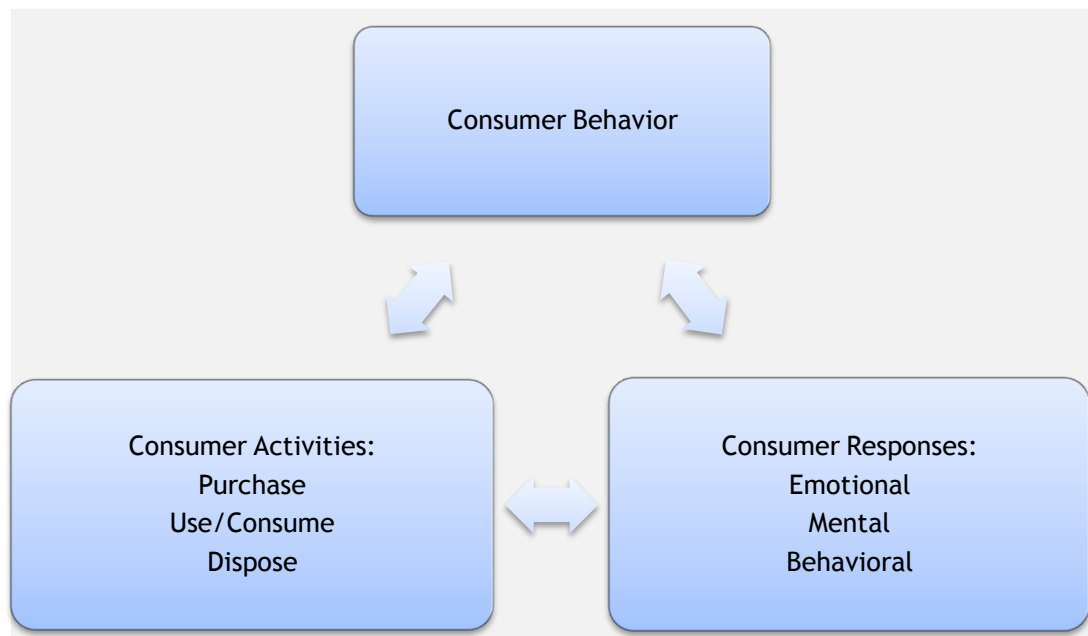


Figure 1: What is Consumer Behavior? (Kardes et al 2008, 8)

Consumers: Consumers can be described in two ways, individual and organizational. Individual consumers are those people who purchase products and services for their own uses or to satisfy others' needs. (Kardes et al. 2008, 8) For example, if someone buys a shirt for his personal use or gives it to a friend as a gift refers him as an individual consumer. On the other hand, "Organizational consumers purchase goods and services in order to produce other goods or services, resell them to other organizations or to individual consumers and help manage and run their organizations" (Kardes et al. 2008, 9) For example, a garments manufacturer buys garments raw materials and produces clothes and sells them to the wholesalers or retailers. In this study festival organizers are the

organizational consumers of the case company because the festival organizers would buy the planning tool from the company and further it would be delivered to the festival attendees who would be the end user of the planning tool.

Consumer Activities: As we can see from Figure 1 consumer activities can be divided into three activity categories: purchase, use and disposal. People act different ways in these three stages of activities. (Kardes et al. 2008, 9)

Purchase activities refer those activities which are performed while purchasing goods and services. Purchase activities can be influenced by a lot of factors. For example, when someone decides to buy an air-conditioner he will first gather relevant information about the air-conditioner and then he will consider where to buy it from. He will also probably check if there is any other additional service that he could get from the company, such as: home delivery, installation, warranties etc.

Use activities are those activities happened during the consumption of a product or a service. This includes where, when, and how consumption takes place. (Kardes et al. 2008, 9) People act differently in this consumption stage of product or service. For example, people usually consume a food product immediately after purchasing, e.g. ice-cream, chocolate, on the other hand there are some other products or services that are not consumed immediately after purchasing, e.g. festival ticket - people usually buy tickets earlier and then they use the tickets when the festival take place. Use activities also include whether the product is fully consumed (e.g. chocolate) or some left unconsumed (e.g. chewing gum). (Kardes et al. 2008, 10)

Finally, disposal activities refer those activities which are done after consuming the products. This includes recycle, reuse, and resale for example, giving outgrown clothing to charity, using paper grocery bags for book covers. (Kardes et al. 2008, 10)

Consumer responses: Consumer responses involve three responses: emotional, mental, and behavioral.

Emotional responses (also called as affective responses) are the emotions, feelings, and moods of consumers towards a purchase of a product or service. For example, lots of excitement and uncertainty occurs when someone buys his first car which can be described as affective responses or emotional responses. (Kardes et al. 2008, 11)

Mental responses (also defined as cognitive responses) are there when someone processes thoughts, opinions, beliefs, attitudes, and intentions while making a decision to purchase something. For example, calculating the expenses of a new car, what kind of attributes

would be good to have in the car, comparing different brands to look for the car which can at least fulfill the most of the needs. (Kardes et al. 2008, 11)

Behavioral responses refer all the actions that a consumer does during the purchase, use, and disposal of the product or service. For example, when buying the car the consumer goes through different advertisements, probably he would go for test drive or discuss with friends before he buys the car, and then after purchasing the car he would maintain the car carefully. These all actions can be referred as behavioral responses. (Kardes et al. 2008, 11)

3.2 Consumer decision making

This section focuses on how consumer make decision and what are the things around him in the environment that ultimately affect the decision making process. At first different types of decision making process would be described, then two models of decision making process would be illustrated briefly, and finally a short description of how the social environment influence on decision making process would be mentioned in this section.

3.2.1 Decision making types

In everyday life people make a lot of decisions from the very silly one to a very difficult and important one. This is actually part of our life. There are many types of decisions people make depending on the issues they face. For example, deciding where to go for Christmas vacation, deciding what flavor of ice-cream to eat and so on. Like the everyday decision making approach, people also make decisions over purchasing products or services. According to Kardes et al. (2008, 64) there are four types of Consumer Decision Making:

		Involvement	
		Low	High
Information processing	Low	1. Brand Laziness Commodity Products e.g. butter, salt, cheese, flour	2. Brand Loyalty Self-Concept Enhancing Products e.g. jeans, shoes, cigarettes
	High	3. Variety Seeking Parity Products e.g. beer, candy, sports drinks	4. Problem Solving Complicated big-Ticket Items e.g. automobile, furniture

Figure 2: Types of Consumer decision making with examples (Kardes et al. 2008, 64)

Brand Laziness: Brand laziness is something when consumers do not spend time to make decisions on purchasing products or services. This includes everyday products like butter, salt, flour, cheese, milk etc. Usually consumers buy the products that they have been using for long time; they generally do not switch to another brand for no apparent reasons. (Kardes et al. 2008, 66) “When both involvement and information processing are low (Figure 2, quadrant 1), consumers typically make choices as a matter of habit, requiring little effort. This is referred to as Brand Laziness, a consumer’s natural inertial movement toward a product or service based on familiarity and convenience, rather than a fundamental commitment to the brand”. (Kardes et al. 2008, 66) Eventually this type of decision is made with little effort or no effort. Even though consumers do not change their decision here but effective marketing can make it happen.

Brand Loyalty: Both Brand Laziness and Brand Loyalty are almost the same thing in a sense that consumer processes little information to make decisions in both cases. Maybe that is why people usually become confuse with these two types of decisions. In case of Brand Loyalty consumers involve more highly when making decision but on the other hand Brand Laziness indicates a little involvement in making decision. Loyal consumers believe that they already have clear idea about the specific brand of a product which they have been using for long time and they are satisfied with the product and usually they do not think of any other brand to change for that specific product. (Kardes et al. 2008, 66-67) If we think about clothing, some consumers are likely to stick with the brand they have

been using for many years and eventually it builds up as one of his personality to use that specific brand.

Variety seeking: When consumers process high level of information with low involvement in decision making, it can be referred as Variety Seeking decision. In this category of decision, consumer might know what kind of product he is going to buy but he still needs to choose the brand for the product and this is why he spends a lot of time on information processing. (Kardes et al. 2008, 67) This type of decision can simply be referred as switching brands. The variety seeking decisions are made for many reasons by the consumers, for example, changing the food habit and buying foods which are good for health, switching to a new brand just for testing how good it is compare to the old brand in terms of any product like, clothing, perfume, etc. Consumers are flexible here in this category of decision making; they look for discounts, offerings, extra benefits from the products. So attractive advertising and promotional activities would be effective for this type of decision making.

Problem solving: This type of decision making refers high involvement with high level of information processing. Generally problem solving decision is made when the product is either unfamiliar, expensive or purchased infrequently. (Kardes et al. 2008, 69) Making decisions of purchasing automobiles, electronics, furniture exemplify the problem solving decisions because these all are meant to solve some problem of consumers, let's say an automobile could solve the problem of easy transportation for the consumer. At this stage of decision making, consumers need to process extensive information for evaluating different brands' attributes. For example, if a consumer wants to buy a laptop to do his personal tasks at anywhere, at first he needs to know what kind of attributes or specification the laptop should have, then he might think of a brand that he is passionate about; also he needs to consider the pricing. This indicates that a consumer must identify one or more determinant attributes (characteristics of a product) which could help him make the final decision of buying. (Kardes et al. 2008, 69)

3.2.2 Traditional model of consumer decision making

The traditional model of decision making was developed based on the problem solving process and it was found in many sources for example, James Engel, Roger D. Blackwell, and Paul W. Miniard, *Consumer Behavior*, 8th ed. (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1995). A problem arises when there is a need that has not been fulfilled yet. For example if someone needs a car that means he needs it because he is having problem without a car

and the car would be the solution. Before he makes the decision of purchasing a car he usually goes through five basic stages which are mentioned in this model.

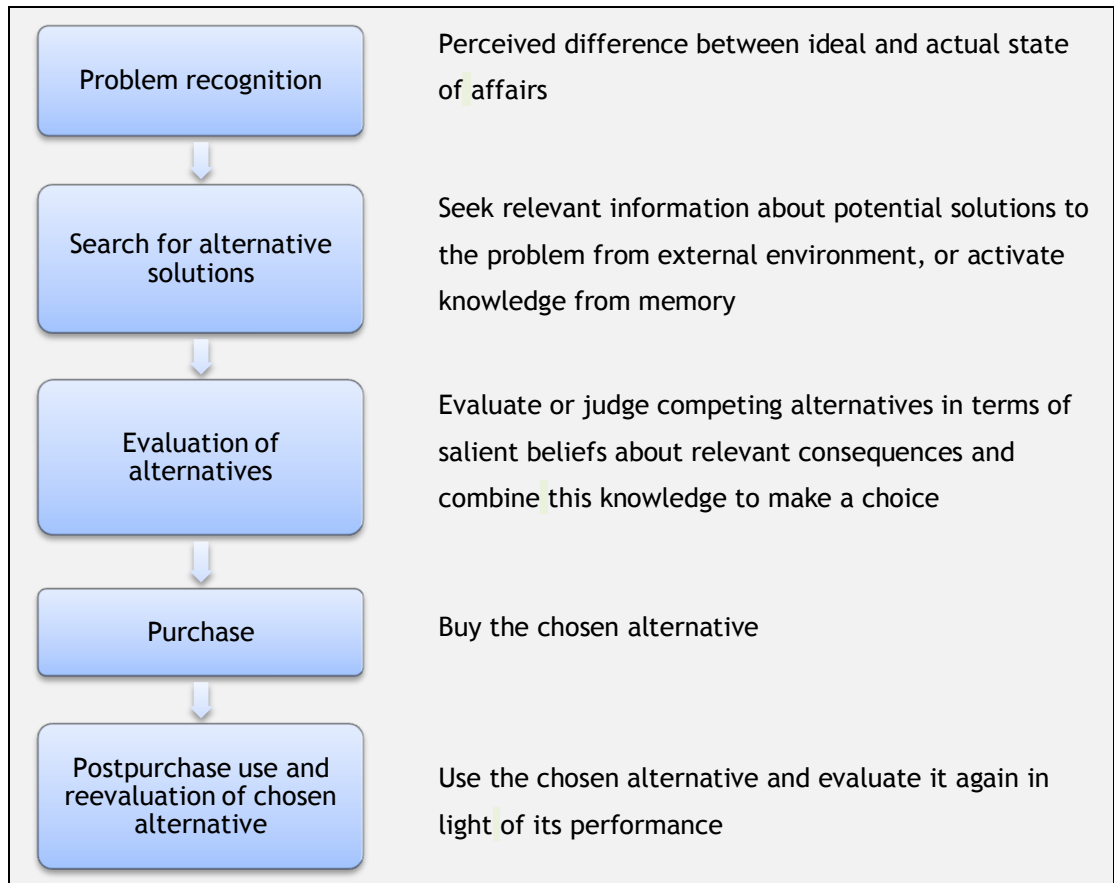


Figure 3: A generic model of consumer problem solving (Peter & Olson 2008, 165)

To explain this generic model of consumer problem solving, we can take the example of “Buying a Used Car” given in the book of Consumer Behavior and Marketing Strategy. (Peter & Olson, 2008, 166) In the example, Megan lost her old car and thus it created a problem for her, so she needed a new car. Then in the next stage of the problem solving process she looked for alternative solutions. At this stage she called and visited some of the car dealers, talked to sales person, discussed with his boyfriend Dave. And in the next stage she evaluated all the alternatives she found and chosen the right one that could solve her problem. In the purchase stage she just did the all the paper works and payment procedure to buy her desired car. After that she used her car and reevaluated whether she made the right decision or wrong. This is how a consumer goes through a problem solving process.

3.2.3 Cognitive processing model

Even though the generic model of problem solving makes it quite clear to understand the decision making process towards solving a problem, still there are some complex situations what the model cannot explain. (Peter & Olson 2008, 166) So there is another model that was developed by Peter and Olson in their book of Consumer Behavior and Marketing Strategy which is like as follows:

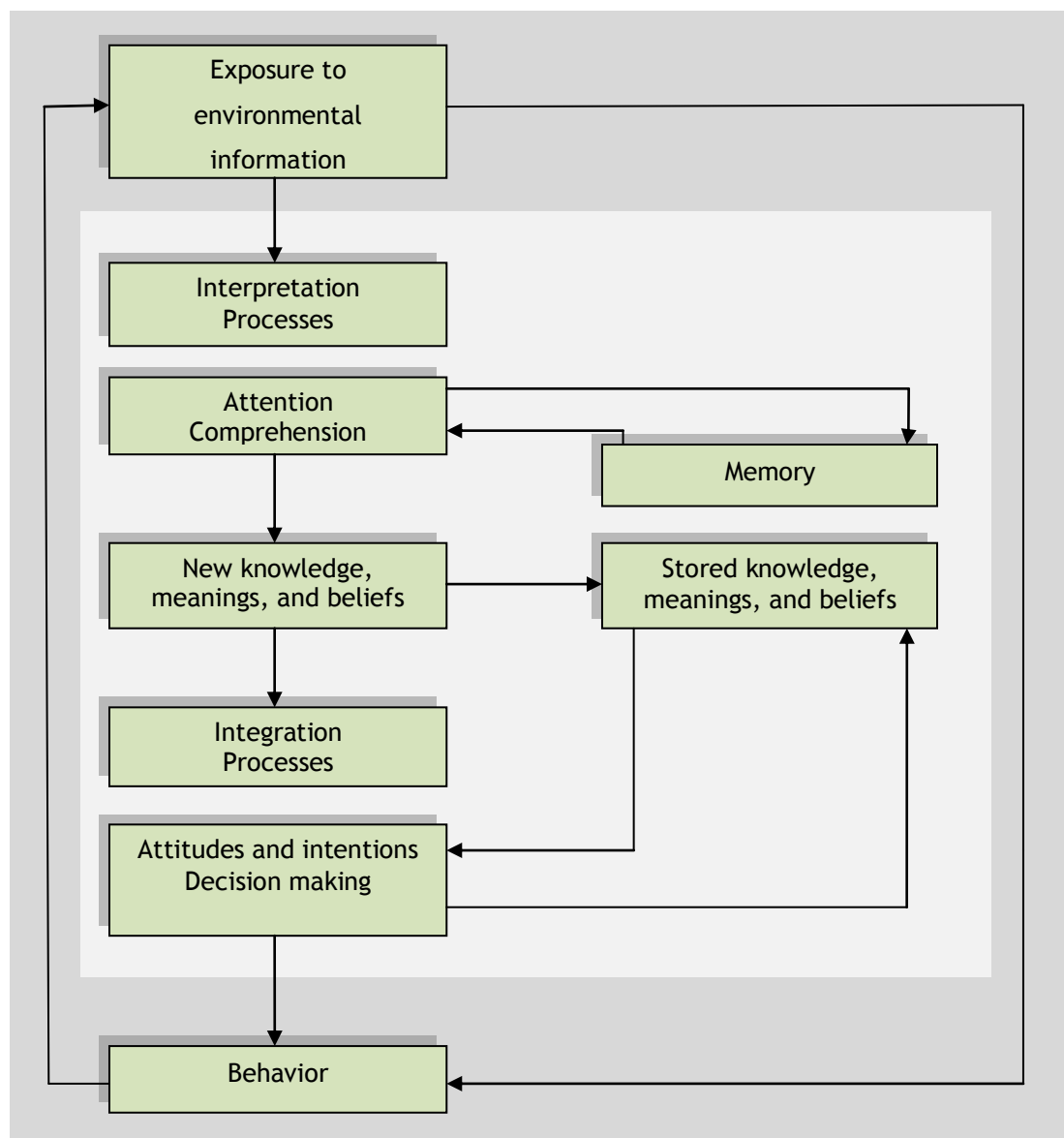


Figure 4: A cognitive processing model of consumer decision making (Peter & Olson 2008, 48)

“Consumer decision making involves three important cognitive processes. First, consumers must interpret relevant information in the environment to create personal knowledge or meaning. Second, consumers must combine or integrate this knowledge to evaluate products or possible actions and to choose among alternative behaviors. Third, consumers must retrieve product knowledge from memory to use in integration and interpretation processes. All three cognitive processes are involved in any decision-making situation”. (Peter & Olson 2008, 48)

Interpretation process: Interpretation processes are referred as processing of information in the consumers’ environment. These processes can be separated into two related cognitive processes: Attention and Comprehension. Attention refers selecting the right information for further processing. On the other hand, Comprehension indicates how consumers find out the subjective meanings of information and develop knowledge, meanings and beliefs which can be stored in memory. (Figure 4) These stored knowledge, meanings, and beliefs can also be used from memory in the integration processes. (Peter & Olson 2008, 49)

Integration process: In these integration processes, consumers evaluate all the products, objects and other behaviors to choose the right product from the alternatives by combining different types of knowledge, meanings, and beliefs. (Peter & Olson 2008, 49)

Product knowledge and involvement: Product knowledge and involvement indicates consumers’ memories where different types of knowledge, meanings, and beliefs about products are stored. (Peter & Olson 2008, 50) For example, a consumer has knowledge about a brand of clothing and he knows the attributes that the brand carries (e.g. reasonably cheap, fashionable, comfortable, etc). The knowledge about the product that were gathered from his personal experience would help him make a quick decision to buy the same brand product or compare with another brand.

3.2.4 Influence of the social environment

The social environment has an influence on consumers’ behaviors, cognitions, and affective responses which ultimately results in decision making process. (Peter & Olson 2008, 256) The social environment is built with all the activities and interactions that consumers do with a group of people. This can be divided into two parts: Macro Social Environment and Micro Social Environment. Macro Social Environment refers to the interactions which are done with large groups of people with indirect and vicarious involvement. Researchers have classified three micro social environments: Culture, Sub-

culture, and Social class. All the people either in three of these large groups have some common values, beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and behaviors which have a great influence on individual consumers. (Peter & Olson 2008, 258) On the other hand, Micro Social Environment is classified with direct or face-to-face interactions among smaller groups of people such as families and reference groups. These social interactions also have a strong impact on developing consumers' knowledge and feelings about products.

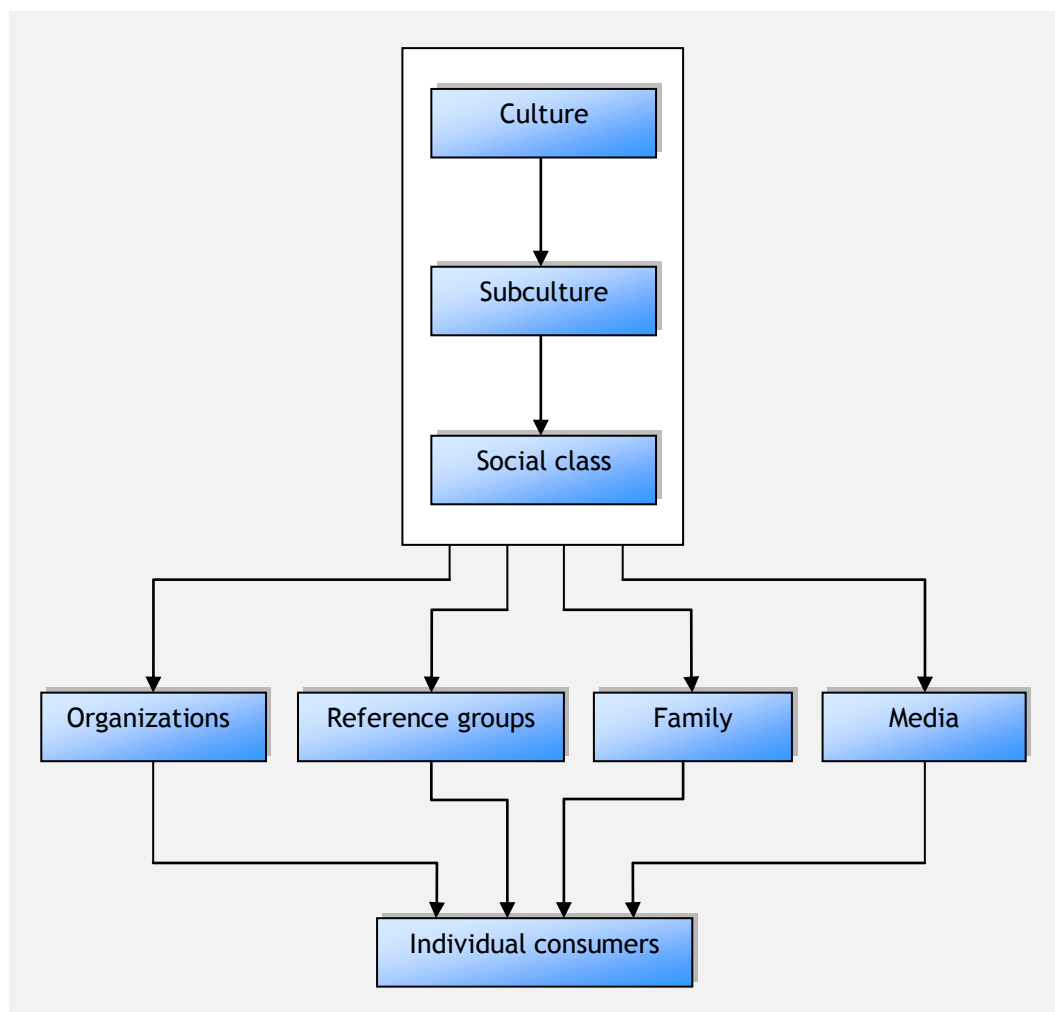


Figure 5: Flows of influence in the social environment (Peter & Olson 2008, 260)

The hierarchical relationship portrayed in Figure 6 indicates how various levels of the social environment can influence consumers. For example, consumers in different sub-cultures reflect the values differently even though they came from one culture. Like this, when we talk about different social classes, we see that consumers in different social classes satisfy a sub cultural value differently. (Peter & Olson 2008, 260) Let's take a wedding ceremony in Bangladeshi culture as an example, it can be held in different ways

depending on whether it is held in rural areas or in urban areas. In rural sub culture people usually arrange it in the yard of house by making a temporary big tent; on the other hand, in urban sub culture it is done in a community or a club center since people usually do not have yard or space to do the tent. The social class also has a great impact on organizing the ceremony. People in high class society usually make the ceremony big and luxurious on the other hand the low class society people are happy with a small and less luxurious arrangement. These all macro social influences are filtered by micro social influences like Family situation (family's financial situation and expectations) and reference groups (e.g. how the friends arranged their wedding ceremony). The reference groups are important for this study and it is described briefly in the next chapter.

The other social entities like media (TV, newspapers, magazines, movies, etc.) and organizations (marketing firms) are also involved in transferring meanings, values, and behavior norms from macro social environment to individual consumers. (Peter & Olson 2008, 260)

3.2.5 Reference groups

People are somehow involved with some groups while living in the society and they are continuously influenced or motivated by certain groups that they are living with while making decision on something. This is also true for consumers when they make decision on purchasing products or services. So reference groups are those groups of people who possess influential impact on individual's decision making process. There are different types of reference groups. For example, brand communities and consumer tribes: this is a group of people who use same kind of products or services and build up a relationship among them even though they do not live near each other which makes them different from other group. Sometime the company organizes some get-together events for the brand community and eventually it helps the company make the consumers loyal to the products or services. (Solomon 2011, 412)

Another type of reference group is aspirational reference group: in this type of group, people are likely to be successful in their respective fields such as business, sports, media, etc. Many marketers apply the technique of using these reference groups for promoting their products or services as people tend to follow their favorite star or idol's activity. (Solomon 2011, 413) For example, Gillette uses Hollywood stars, football players in their advertisements so that they can capture the fans of the stars.

Membership reference group consists of people who live near each other and build up relationship among them. This can also be happened when people see each other very often and start liking each other. Later on, they build up a relationship among them and start to share same kind of feelings and values.

When the group is comparatively smaller and the group members become attracted to each other and value the membership in the group so much, it can be referred as group cohesiveness. (Solomon 2011, 414)

There are also some reference groups who have either positive or negative influence on buying decisions. People usually avoid the things done by the group that they dislike. For example, one would not buy the kind of clothes that have been used by the group who he does not like. (Solomon 2011, 414)

3.2.6 Opinion leaders

There are a lot of things that people want to do together within a group and there is someone in the group who influences others and eventually take some sort of responsibility to lead the whole group. This kind of person can be defined as opinion leader. (Solomon 2011, 414) For example, people usually want to attend a festival with friends but not all of them are good planner or motivator to make it happen. But at least there would be one person in the group who is a communicator, motivator and a good planner and he connects with every single friend and makes all the arrangements to attend the festival with all friends. Opinion leaders possess expert power by using their technical competencies, they also possess some knowledge power by prescreening, evaluating and synthesizing product information in an unbiased way, and moreover they are active and highly interconnected within social communities. (Solomon 2011, 418) Marketers always look for opinion leaders so that they can reach some certain groups even though the groups are quite small compare to the fan groups of celebrities.

Three different types of opinion leaders are mentioned by Mr. Solomon (2011, 419-421) in his book of consumer behavior: innovative communicators, market maven and surrogate consumer. Innovative communicators are those people who usually like to take risks and try different things, they are socially active, fashionable, involved in rock culture, heavy readers of magazine and they generally have more collections of their personal things like clothing, shoes, perfumes etc. People surrounding these innovative communicators are likely to follow their styles and influenced by them when making purchasing decisions. (Solomon 2011, 419-420)

Market mavens are those people who keep themselves up-to-date with recent market situation which gives them the solid knowledge of certain products. They also like to provide information about new brands and products to their friends. People use opinion leader as a good source of information when they need to purchase new products. (Solomon 2011, 420-421)

There are also other kinds of opinion leaders who need to be paid for the opinions or suggestions that they make on a product to make the purchasing decision easier for the actual consumers. For example, Interior designers, college consultants, etc. (Solomon 2011, 421)

3.3 Online behavior

Nowadays, information is available and easily accessible via internet. Consumers can easily find the information about product or services from internet. Marketers also put much effort on online marketing than any other traditional marketing tools like TV, radio, newspapers, magazines. Marketers are increasingly moving to online marketing because the traditional marketing tools only provide one-way message to consumers but internet marketing is a two-way interactive communication between marketers and consumers. The communication is very fast and the response rate is also high and this benefits both marketers and consumers. By using the benefit of interactive communication e-tailers (electronic retailers) are now able to provide the information that the consumers wish to receive about products and services. (Kardes et al. 2008, 335)

There are significant differences between an online shop and a physical shop. The online shop enables consumers access a lot of information within a short time and on the other hand the sellers also have the possibility to provide as much information as they wish about their products or services. “In recent study of 755 e-tailers from Bizrate.com, it was found that online business success depends on brand name reputation, the type of products sold by the e-tailer, and the ease with which consumers could navigate the website.” (Kardes et al. 2008, 336)

Promoting festival online is getting more and more importance to the festival organizers, because it is a good way to keep festival goers up-to-date about the festival. Festival goers usually search for the festival website or the Facebook page of the festival to get the latest updates of the festivals for example when the line-up will be announced, when the ticket will go on sale and so forth. People also share the festival info to their friends

and thus the festival info will go on viral. One good looking website would make a good impression to the festival goers about the festival. A Facebook page or a Twitter account of the festival would be useful to connect the festival fans or the followers with the festival organizers.

3.4 Summary of the theory

Consumer behavior refers all the activities done by a consumer before purchasing the products, purchasing, and after purchasing. While involving with these activities, the consumer actually pass through some emotional, mental, and social responses which possess significant influences on the consumer behavior. The consumer decision making process was emphasized in the theory part since a decision making model would be developed during this study. At the time of decision making process a consumer processes a lot of information concerning the product or service. The processing of information is influenced by the social environment which includes culture, sub-culture, social class, family, reference groups, organizations, and media. These influences would also be taken into consideration while developing the questionnaire for the research. For example, what would be the alternative answers of the question in the Likert-scale to find out the reasons for cancelling a festival attendance? The knowledge acquired from the consumer decision making process would be used to develop the consumer decision making model on festival attendance while the survey results would be useful as well for further structuring the model.

4 THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This section focuses on the marketing research which was implemented as a part of this study. The theory part acquired for marketing research is also shortly described here with applying it in practice.

4.1 Marketing research and its classifications

Marketing research is a systematic process of finding out problems and identifying the possible solutions to make the marketing tasks easier for the companies. "Marketing research is the systematic and objective identification, collection, analysis, dissemination, and use of information for the purpose of improving decision making related to the identification and solutions of problems in marketing. (Malhotra 2010, 39) As from the definition it is mentioned that marketing research can be done for two main

purposes: one is to identify marketing problems and the other one is to find solutions of the problems.

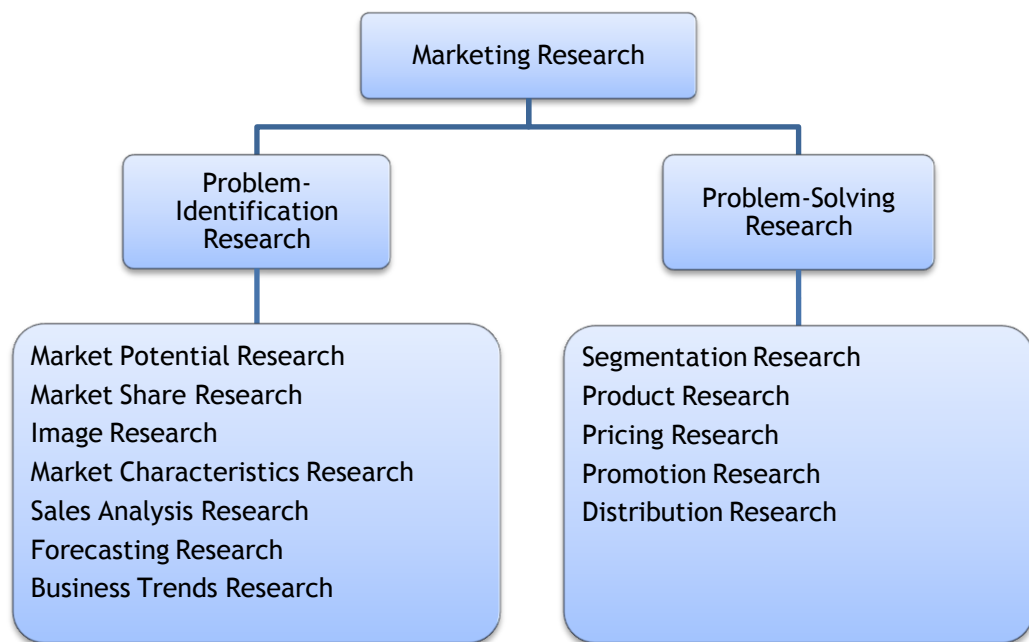


Figure 6: A classification of marketing research (Malhotra 2010, 40)

This research study is mainly focused on identifying the problems but also slightly focused on generating some possible solutions. The research was done to understand the consumer behavior on festival attendance, the reasons for cancelling attending a festival, and gathering some ideas that could be helpful for developing the event planning tool.

4.2 Research Process

There are 6 steps in a marketing research process mentioned by Malhotra (2010, 41-42) in his book of Marketing Research:

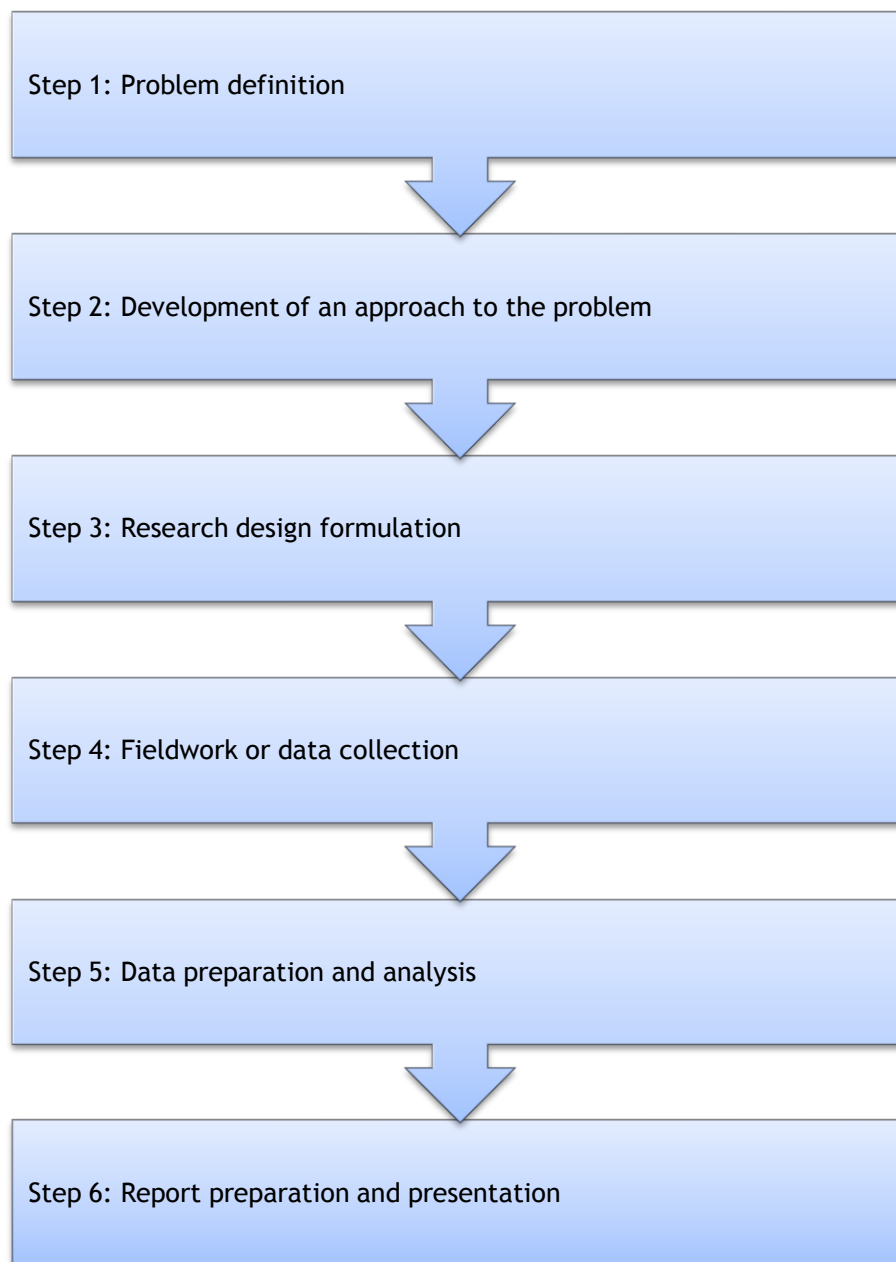


Figure 7: 6 steps in the marketing research process (Malhotra 2010, 41-42)

4.2.1 Problem definition

When the managers need more information to make marketing decisions, they decide on doing a marketing research. The need for doing a marketing research was felt when the company was developing a festival planning tool for the festival attendees. And the idea of creating a festival planning tool was came into mind when the company experienced there was no such tool or product for the festival attendees that could help them plan

their festivals that they wish to attend. There were two main research needs identified while developing the festival planning tool. First one, the company needed to know what are the important factors behind cancelling a festival attendance and later on, the information would be used in the marketing materials while conducting festival organizers to sell the festival planning tool. Second one, the company also needed some ideas for the festival planning app from the consumers.

4.2.2 Research objectives

As it was mentioned earlier in the introduction the main goal of this study was to identify the consumer decision making on the festival attendance, so the main research question of this study was, “how consumers make the decision over festival attendance?” This research question was titled as “Consumer decision making” in Figure 9. To find the answer for this research question and to develop the decision making process, the following objectives were focused mostly:

1. To find out the most important factors for not buying tickets early
2. To figure out the most important reasons for attending or not attending a festival

As the company was developing the product for event/festival planning, there was a need to know what customers really wanted to have for planning an event/festival to go with friends. And also it was important to know what kind of tools or services they usually used for festival/event planning. So the other research question which was relatively smaller than the main research question was “what product would be good to have for festival planning”. In the Figure 9 the question was titled as “Product information”. The objectives under this title were like as follows:

1. To collect information about existing products which were being used for festival/event planning
2. To gather ideas from the respondents about the festival planning tool - what would be good to have for festival planning

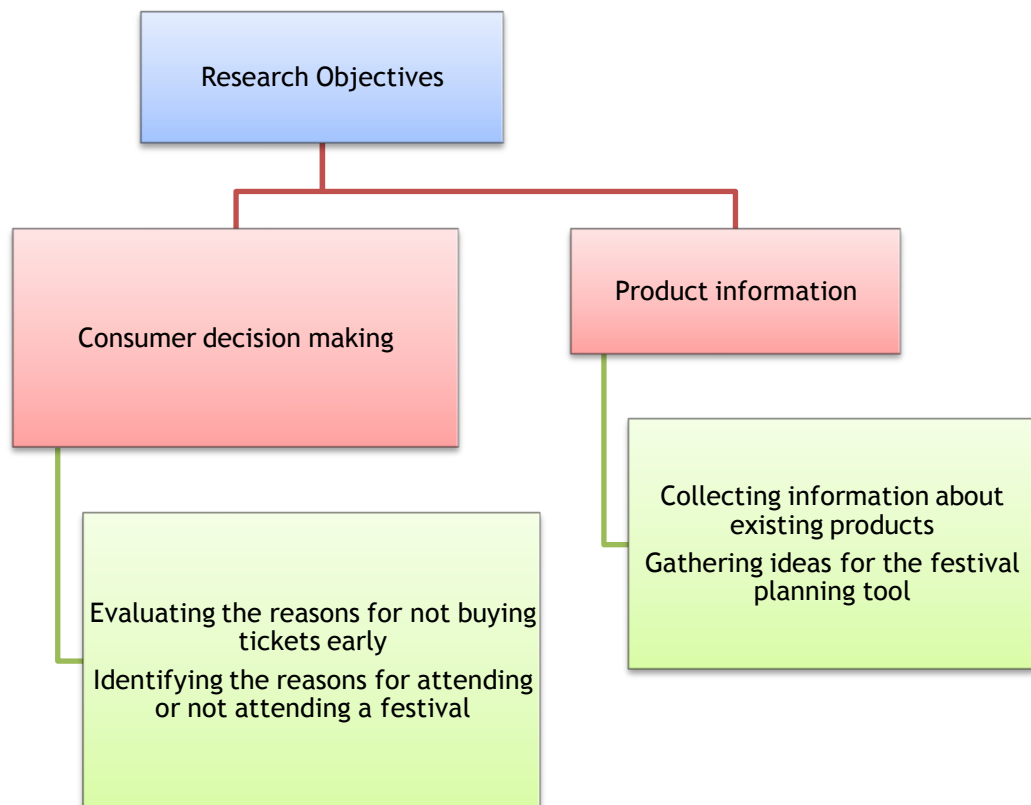


Figure 8: Research objectives

4.2.3 Research design

After defining the research objectives clearly it is now time to design the research: how it should be done, what method would be used in collecting and analyzing data and so on.

“A research design is a set of advance decisions that make up the master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information” (Burns & Bush 2010, 143) There are mainly three research designs: exploratory research design, descriptive research, and casual research design. A comparison table of basic research designs mentioned by Malhotra (2010, 104) briefly describes the differences among the three research designs and their methods.

	Exploratory	Descriptive	Casual
Objective	Discovery of ideas and insights	Describe market characteristics and functions	Determine cause-and-effect relationships
Characteristics	Flexible, versatile Often the front end of total research design	Marked by the prior formulation of specific hypotheses Preplanned and structured design	Manipulation of one or more independent variables Measure the effect on dependent variable(s) Control of other mediating variables
Methods	Expert surveys Pilot surveys Case studies Secondary data: qualitative analysis Quantitative research	Secondary data: quantitative analysis Surveys Panels Observation and other data	Experiments

Figure 9: A comparison of basic research designs (Malhotra 2010, 104)

The research design followed in this study was descriptive research design because it was preplanned, the objectives were clearly defined and there were some hypotheses that would be proved. So it was just needed to collect and analyze the data to obtain the research objectives. There are two types of descriptive research: Cross-sectional studies and longitudinal studies. Cross-sectional study refers the study which is done within a sample group of total population and it is done for only one time. On the other hand longitudinal study is done for several times within the sample units which are referred as panels. (Burns & Bush 2010, 150) This study was mostly related with cross-sectional study because the respondents were not contacted again for any other information.

There are some methods of conducting a survey depending on what suites the best for the research process. Malhotra (2010, 212) classified the survey methods into four major modes according to their administration procedures: telephone interviews, personal interviews, mail interviews, and electronic interviews. Telephone interviews can be done

either with the traditional way of interviewing or computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI - refers using computer and headphone as the replacements of paper and pencils and telephone). Personal interviews can be referred as interviews which are done with face to face interactions between interviewer and interviewee. These types of interviews can be done as in-home interviews, as mall-intercept interviews, or as computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI - refers a touch screen for the survey powered by computer program). Mail interviews are done by following the traditional mail surveys or with the use of mail panels (a large number of samples of households who are used for periodic mail surveys). Lastly, electronic interviews which are basically done by email or over the internet. (Malhotra 2010 ,212) The way that has been followed in this research was electronic interviews via email which can be simply referred as email survey. These four types of survey methods and their different ways of conducting the surveys can be picturized as follows.

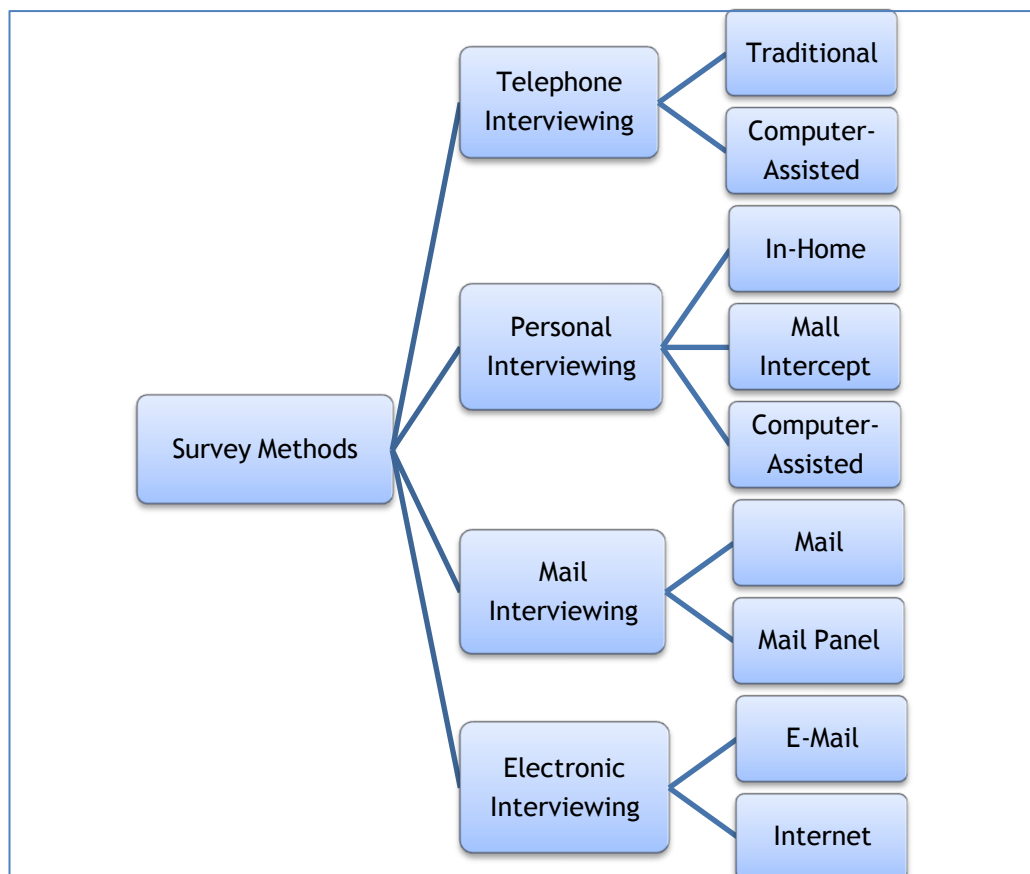


Figure 10: A classification of Survey Methods (Malhotra 2010, 212)

4.2.4 Secondary data access

Before going for the primary data collection it was necessary to access the secondary data sources and finalize what data would be gathered from the survey. The secondary data sources accessed for this study were company's own database and some external online sources like news, reports etc. After going through these sources it was identified that most of the festival organizers are having difficulties selling the festival tickets. There was an opportunity to observe this problem closely for the company since the company worked with many festivals as an online ticketing provider. As I work in the company I also had the chance to see it personally. Moreover, festivals are struggling to attract the customers' attention because the festival market is overcrowded; there are many festivals in a year. And for this reason some of the festivals were cancelled and postponed till the next year. BBC covered a report on this issue which stated that 31 festivals in UK were cancelled or postponed in 2011 and many festivals were struggling to sell out tickets. (Cochrane 2011) Even some of the big festivals had to sell their tickets less than the face value of the tickets and it was mentioned in another report by Spinner (a blog site owned by AOL). (Mugan 2011) By realizing the problem, the company had decided to create something which could help the festival organizers capture some early ticket sales and with this thinking the company came up with the idea of making an event/festival planning tool. But the information found by accessing secondary data sources were not enough, so a survey was implemented to gather some primary data. An online questionnaire was made for the survey. The following section would briefly describe the theory used to make the questionnaire.

4.2.5 Questionnaire design

Questionnaire design is an important step for a survey based research because only well-organized questionnaire can provide the information which is needed to obtain the research objectives. Questionnaire design process implies a series of steps which are mentioned by Malhotra (2010, 336)

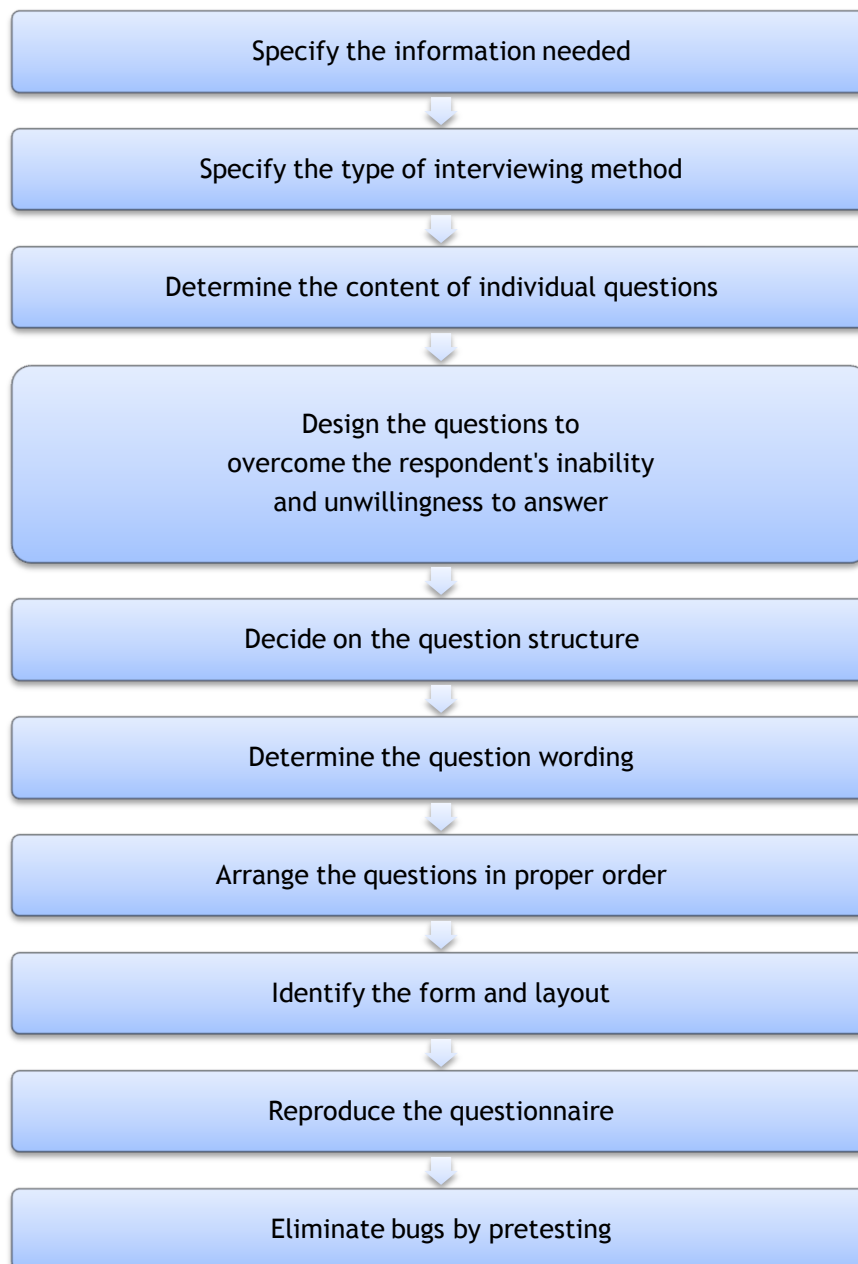


Figure 11: Questionnaire design process (Malhotra 2010, 336)

While designing the questionnaire for this research, all these steps were followed accordingly. At first the information needed for this research were specified. For example, most important reasons for not buying ticket early, most important reasons for attending or not attending a festival, and so on. The Likert scale was used in some questions (questions 8, 10, and 12) in the questionnaire to measure the importance of the reasons that affected the decision making. The alternatives in the questions were chosen in a way so that the important ones would be added in the questions. At first, all the

possible alternatives were listed and then among those alternatives, the important ones were chosen for the likert scale alternatives/items. While choosing the alternatives, the relevancies of the alternatives with the questions were checked carefully and the suggestions from CEO and CFO of the company, thesis instructor and friends were considered as well. Below, there is a short description of how the alternatives/items were relevant with the questions' objectives.

The objective of the question 8 in the questionnaire was to identify the most important reasons for not buying festival tickets early. Usually festival dates are announced at least a couple of months before the festival take place but it is quite hard for the festival attendees to make sure if the dates are okay for them, e.g. they have nothing else to do in the festival time or they can arrange free time for the festival on the dates announced for the festival. People usually do not make plan for the next couple of months, more often people are not sure if they have some other things to do in the festival dates which might cause late ticket buying. The festival dates might be one of the important reasons for buying tickets late and this is why it was included in the question. Another important reason could be that people are not sure if their friends can join them in the festival, because people usually like to attend festival with friends but as it is also hard for the friends to manage their own schedule few months earlier than the festival dates, they cannot promise to join them. So this was also included in the question. Another reason could be that people do not have enough money to buy the tickets early but they might be able to arrange the money later which causes late ticket buying. The last alternative/item included in the question was that people buy tickets late because they are not a good planner or they do not like to plan early.

The objective of the question 10 was to measure the reasons for cancelling a festival attendance in which people wanted to attend. Some of the alternatives chosen for this question were linked with the question 8, for example, friends' attendance to the festival, the festival dates, and the expensive ticket price. Friends' attendance to a festival is always one of the most important issues for attending a festival, so if someone cannot make his/her friends agreed to go to a festival with him/her, he/she might cancel going to the festival even though he/she initially wanted to go. Again the festival dates affects the decision making, people cancel their plan to go to a festival because they have some other things to do on the same dates, e.g. work, school, etc. Expensive ticket price is also an issue for cancelling a festival attendance. Sometimes the festival tickets are sold out very fast and some people cannot able to get their tickets on time and as a result they missed the festival. The last alternative was added to identify if people cancel their festival attendance because they cannot manage a car or other means of transportation

to go to the festival. Another reason for adding this last alternative in the question was to testify if there is a need for adding a feature of “car/transportation arrangement” in the festival planning tool.

In question 12, the objective was to evaluate the most important reasons for attending a festival. As the artists are the main attractions of a festival, most of the time people make decision to attend the festival if they like the line-up of the festival. So this was included in the question as one of the alternatives/items of the question. Friends’ attendance and festival ticket price issues were included in this question again to testify further the reasons for attending or not attending the festival. Another alternative included in this question was to identify if people attended the festival because the festival venue was close to them.

After preparing the questionnaire, the next step was to conduct the survey and the E-Mail interviewing method was chosen for this. Basically all the participants of the survey received an email with a questionnaire link and were asked to fill this out. The questionnaire was made by using Google forms and attached in a landing page which included the company logo and a short description of what the company is working for and why this survey is being done along with a prize draw for the participation to increase the answer rate. All the data was automatically collected to a Google spreadsheet as it was linked with the Google form. While forming the questions there were few things that considered highly. First of all the questions were made in a way so that it would gather the relevant information, it would maintain the coherence and the simplicity of wording so that it would be easily understandable by the recipients, and finally it was made short so that it would not be boring to the recipients. The questionnaire was designed with the help from the company CEO and CFO. Before finalizing the questionnaire, there was a sample questionnaire made and tested within a small group of people which included some friends and other company personnel. The test was done to identify the possible bugs in the questionnaire, to test if the questions provide the information that was expected, and gather some feedback about the questionnaire to improve it.

4.2.6 Sampling

Sampling is also an important part of a research process. A sample is the group of people chosen from a big population and used in the research study to gather information. “A sample is a subgroup of the elements of the population selected for participation in the study”. (Malhotra 2010, 371) While choosing the sample for this study, a few things were taken into consideration. First of all, the sample was targeted to be taken from the young

people who love to go to festival and use internet a lot for information sharing and surfing. These groups of people are easily accessible via internet. As the research questions were developed for email survey so the next step was to identify the specific sample group who would be easily reachable via email. By having this in mind it was decided to implement the research within the university students since I was also a university student and I got help from the university to reach out all the students from the university. The students actually represented the sample perfectly as they were young and attended festivals and more importantly in this case they were easily reachable through email survey. The size of the sample group was approximately 5000 individuals and the total responses were expected to be around 500 but at the end the total responses were 417.

4.2.7 Data collection

In the data collection process, there was an email sent to all Laurea University students with the survey link attached to it. The recipients were asked to take part in the survey by clicking a link in the email which led them to a landing page. The landing page was created by the company. There were two options for the participants: one was taking part in the survey by saying yes to the prize draw and the other one was saying no to the prize draw but still taking part in the survey. There were few things taken into consideration while drafting the email to generate better response rate. First of all, in the email body and the subject line it was mentioned that there was a prize draw for a winner of the participants so that it would attract more participants. Then the recipients were requested to take part in the survey by informing them that it was a thesis survey and about an interesting topic of festival planning. The email was sent to the whole sample group in one day and within a couple of days the amount of responses expected were achieved. As the questionnaire was made with Google forms, all the data was automatically stored in a Google spreadsheet. So the next step was analyzing data and reporting.

4.2.8 Data analysis

After collecting the data now it is time to analyze the data. There are two methods of analyzing the data: qualitative and quantitative. As it was mentioned earlier that the descriptive research design was followed in this study and a survey was implemented for collecting the data, so the quantitative data analysis method was used mostly to analyze the data. But the qualitative method was also followed to analyze the open ended question in the questionnaire.

4.2.8.1 Quantitative data analysis

If the research possesses a positivist research philosophy, the data collected are mostly quantitative data. Quantitative data refers the data which are numerical in nature. (Wilson 2010, 212) “A range of quantitative analytical techniques can be used to analyze and interpret the data which include everything from simple tables to summarize data, to multivariate tests to determine the strength of relationship between variables”. (Wilson 2010, 212) There are some steps that are usually followed while conducting quantitative analysis:

- Preparing data for analysis
- Summarizing and presenting data using tables and graphs
- Describing data using suitable statistical methods and
- Examining relationships and trends between variables (Wilson 2010, 213)

These steps were followed and reflected in Chapter 5 where the data were analyzed to conceptualize the decision making model on festival attendance.

4.2.8.2 Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is usually related with exploratory research. In this type of analysis the data are not numeric in nature. The concept actually varies from researcher to researcher depending on what type of approach they take. Even if two researchers research on the same topic but their strategies and outcomes can be quite different. (Proctor 2003, 309) The following steps are mostly followed in the qualitative data analysis:

- Transcribing data
- Reading and generating categories, themes and patterns
- Interpreting the findings
- Writing the report

The qualitative data analysis method was used both in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. In Chapter 5 the method was used only to analyze the open questions.

4.2.9 Reliability and validity

The reliability and validity of the research was checked carefully during the research process. While forming the questionnaire it was highly concentrated on the issue that the questionnaire would be simple and easily understandable by the responders so that it provides the relevant information. As it was mentioned earlier in the “Questionnaire

design” section that there was a sample questionnaire tested within a small group of people which included the company staffs and some friends who were later asked for some feedback about the questionnaire to check if the questionnaire would bring the results that were expected beforehand. After taking all the feedbacks into account, the questionnaire was modified and reformed to make sure the results provides valid information. As the research was done by conducting an email survey and Google docs was used to collect the data, so there was a chance of observing the results closely overtime. Basically the formulas of measuring the results were inserted in the Google spreadsheet (where the data were being collected automatically) early at the beginning when the survey was conducted and later on, the results were observed closely at some points of the survey, for example, the results gained from 100 responses were compared with the results at 200 and then both of these results were also compared with the results from 300 responses, all the time the results were consistence that means the results recorded at each point were almost same. So the research can be referred as reliable. The research can also be said reliable as it was conducted within the university students who usually attend festivals more than any other group of festival attendees.

5 CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING - QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the data collected from the survey are analyzed. The questions in the questionnaire were created in a way so that the quantitative data analysis technique could be used while analyzing the data but there were three open questions (question 9, 11, and 13) in the questionnaire which supported their corresponding previous questions to find out extra information which might be missing from the previous questions. The qualitative method was used to analyze these open ended questions. As it was mentioned earlier that the survey was conducted with the use of Google forms, so all data were collected automatically in a Google spreadsheet and then the data were analyzed in the same spreadsheet file. The questionnaire was simple enough to analyze in Google spreadsheet, so the necessity of any other statistical software (e.g. SPSS, SAS) was not felt during the analyzing process. The most common data sorting used during the analyzing process was Pivot table. And the mathematical formula of calculating percentage was used mostly in the analyzing process. To make it easy to understand the results from each question, the following titles of the results were chosen from the key words of the questions. The whole questionnaire was also sliced into pieces by questions and mentioned in each title so that it could make it even easier to understand.

5.1 The respondents

1. Are you? *

☐ Male

☐ Female

The first question of the survey identified whether the respondent was male or female. It was important to see the differences between male and female respondents' answers towards other questions. Because there was a hypothesis that female festival attendees are likely to be good festival planner, they take the initial step to attend a festival with friends. This hypothesis would be tested with the help of other questions. Basically this question provided the male and female ratios of the participants. So the result indicated that there was almost 68% female took part in the survey while the male was only around 32%. The male participants were less than half of the female participants. The reason behind this was the larger number of female students studying in the university than the male students where the survey was implemented. The total response rate was 8.34% which was taken as quite satisfactory response because the total respondents in numbers were 417.

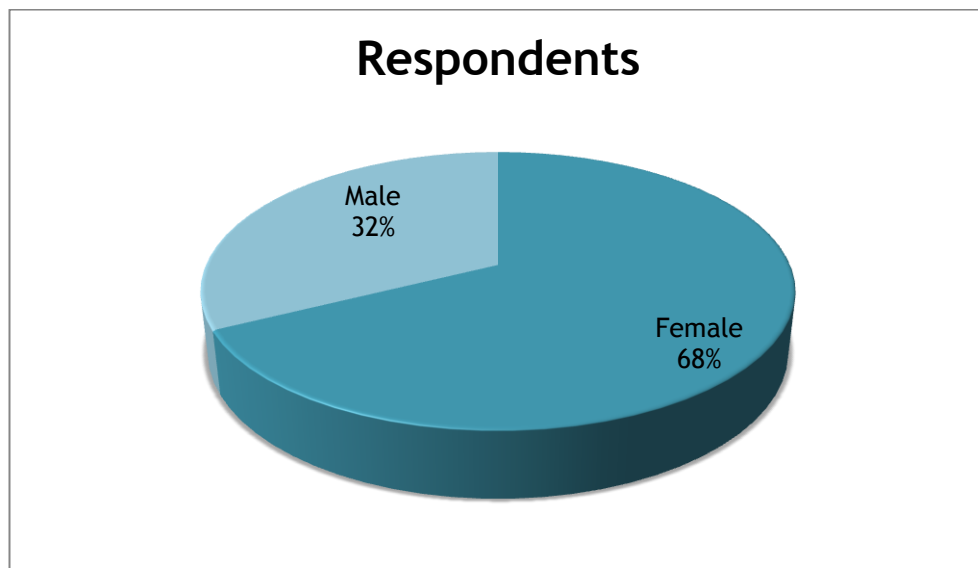


Figure 12: The ratios of respondents

5.2 Planning vs. getting involved

2. Have you ever had to buy a ticket for your friend to make sure he/she comes to a festival? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Has a friend ever had to buy you a ticket to make sure you come to a festival? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

The second and third questions provided the data of how many people buy tickets for their friends and how many of them get tickets from friends. In both cases, whether buying tickets for friends or getting tickets from friends, the idea is to attend a festival within a group of friends. The second question in the survey identified the number of people who buy tickets for friends to make sure that their friends can join them in the festival. It was derived from the result that male respondents usually buy tickets more than female buy. Almost 38% of total male participants buy tickets for their friends; on the other hand 30% of total female participants bought tickets for their friends. The idea of including this question in the survey to see the amount of people who actually plan or take the initial step to attend a festival and invite others to join them in the festival.

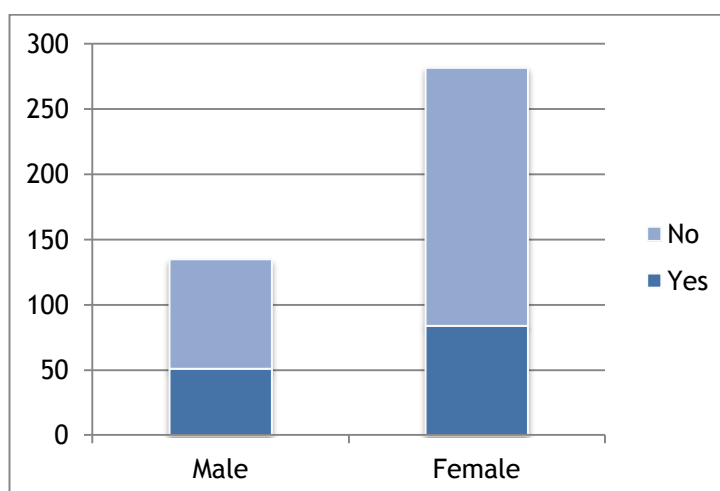


Figure 13: Buy tickets for friends

On the other hand, the third question provided the information of people who are motivated by others or involved in the friends' plan to attend a festival. This question brought the opposite scenario of question 2 and helped testifying whether the participants get tickets from the friends or not. The result showed that almost 36% male participants got tickets from their friends to make sure they join their friends in the festival; on the other hand around 26% female received tickets from their friends on the same purpose.

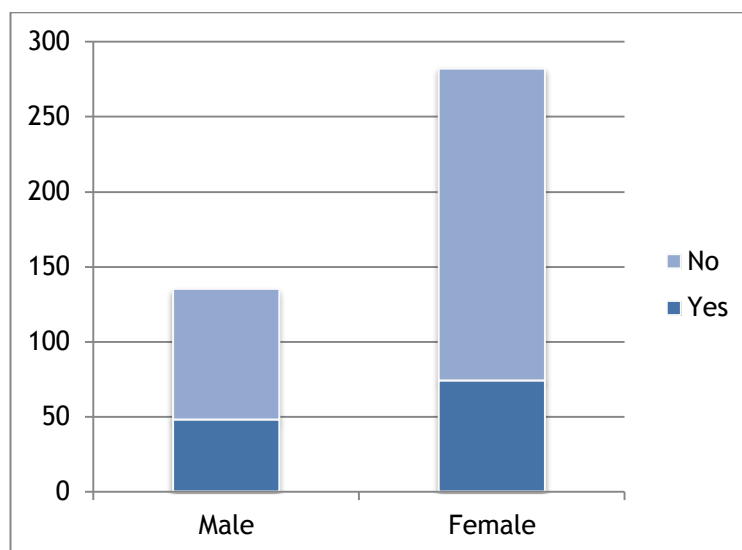


Figure 14: Get tickets from friends

5.3 Festival attendance

4. How many festivals have you been to in the past 12 months? *

☐ None

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ More than 4

The fourth question in the questionnaire helped to measure the attendance rate of the respondents in the past 12 months. The result showed that generally 26.62% respondents did not attend any festival during the past 12 months where women (29.79%) were more in numbers than men (20.00%). The survey was done in late October and by this time all

the summer festivals had already been held, so while filling out the questionnaire people could easily remember if they attended any festival. The question also indicated some other important figures, for example most of the female respondents attended only one festival during the past 12 months on the other hand men attended two festivals most.

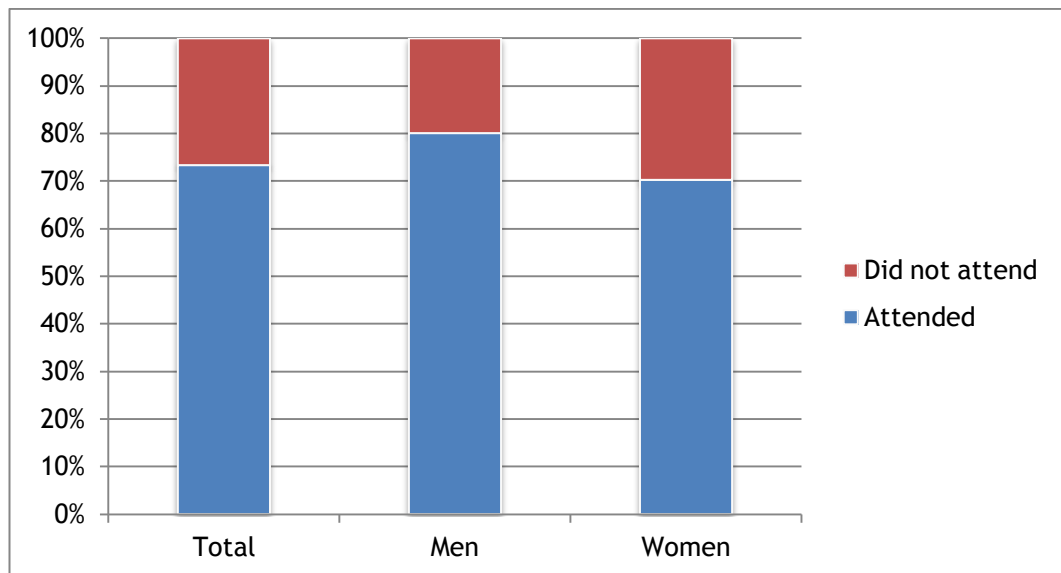


Figure 15: Festival attendance rate in past 12 months

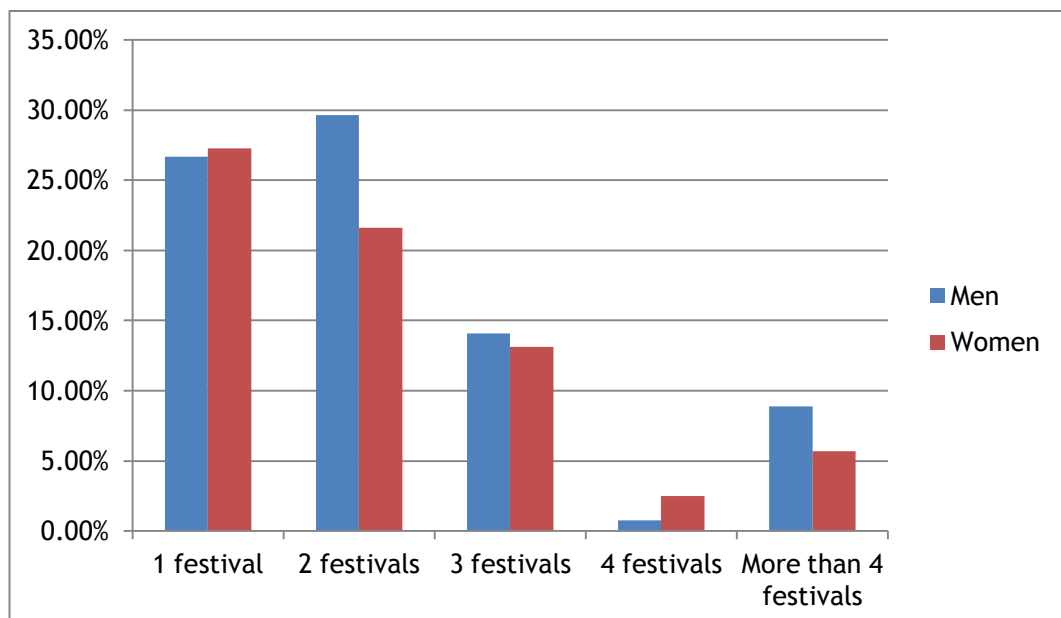


Figure 16: Festival attendance rate by number of festivals attended

5.4 Friends' attendance in the festival

5. How many friends joined you to the LAST festival you went to? *

☐ None
☐ 1
☐ 2 to 3
☐ 4 to 6
☐ 7 to 10
☐ More than 10

People usually enjoy attending festival with friends and family but it would be interesting to see how many friends can generally manage to join them in the festival. The fifth question in the questionnaire was included to observe the amount of friends who joined the festival with the festival planner. The results indicated that most of the time people attend festival with 2 to 3 friends and this is true for both men and women. There was not any significance difference between man and women while going to a festival with certain number of friends.

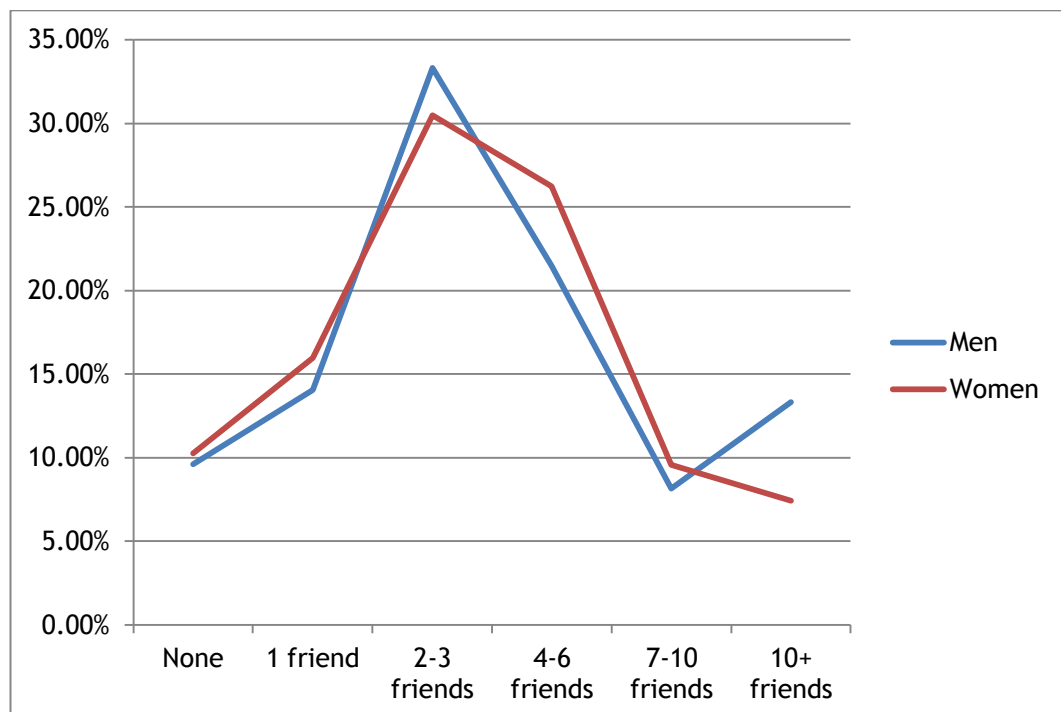


Figure 17: Friends' participation rate

5.5 Early or late ticket buying observation

6. Do you PREFER to buy tickets.....? *

- ☐ As early as possible
- ☐ As late as possible

7. But in REALITY you end up buying tickets.....? *

- ☐ Early
- ☐ Late

When people want to go to a festival sometimes they need to buy tickets as early as possible since some festival tickets are sold out very quick. And this influences festival attendees to buy tickets as early as possible even though some of them might prefer to buy tickets late. So eventually it is developed as one of the ticket buying behavior. To observe the people's preferences in terms of buying tickets and the real situation of whether they manage to buy tickets early or late, there were two questions in the questionnaire: question 6 and 7. Question 6 gathered the information of whether people want to buy tickets as early as possible or as late as possible and question 7 identified the final buying situation of tickets, whether they finally manage to buy tickets early or late. The result showed that almost 75% people wanted to buy tickets as early as possible and it provided almost the same result for men and women.

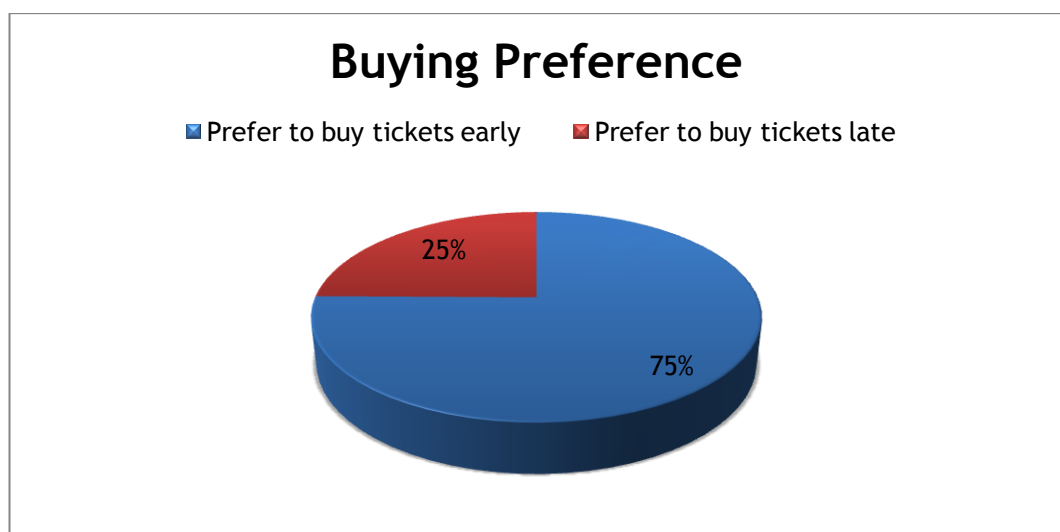


Figure 18: Buying preferences (Early/Late)

But in reality 59% people of among them who wish to buy tickets early can manage to buy tickets early. The possible reasons behind that would be uncertainty about friends' participation, festival timing, or not being a good planner. The reasons were measured by question 8 in the questionnaire and the results are described in the following section. On the other hand, those people who prefer to buy tickets late sometimes they buy tickets early as well and the result identified that 27% people actually buy tickets early even though they prefer to buy tickets as late as possible. The reasons here could be that they are influenced by others to buy tickets early or the tickets are about to sold out so they have to buy tickets early. So finally, 55% people actually buy tickets early on the other hand 45% cannot buy early. The following figure shows a comparable information about early and late ticket buying behavior of festival attendees.

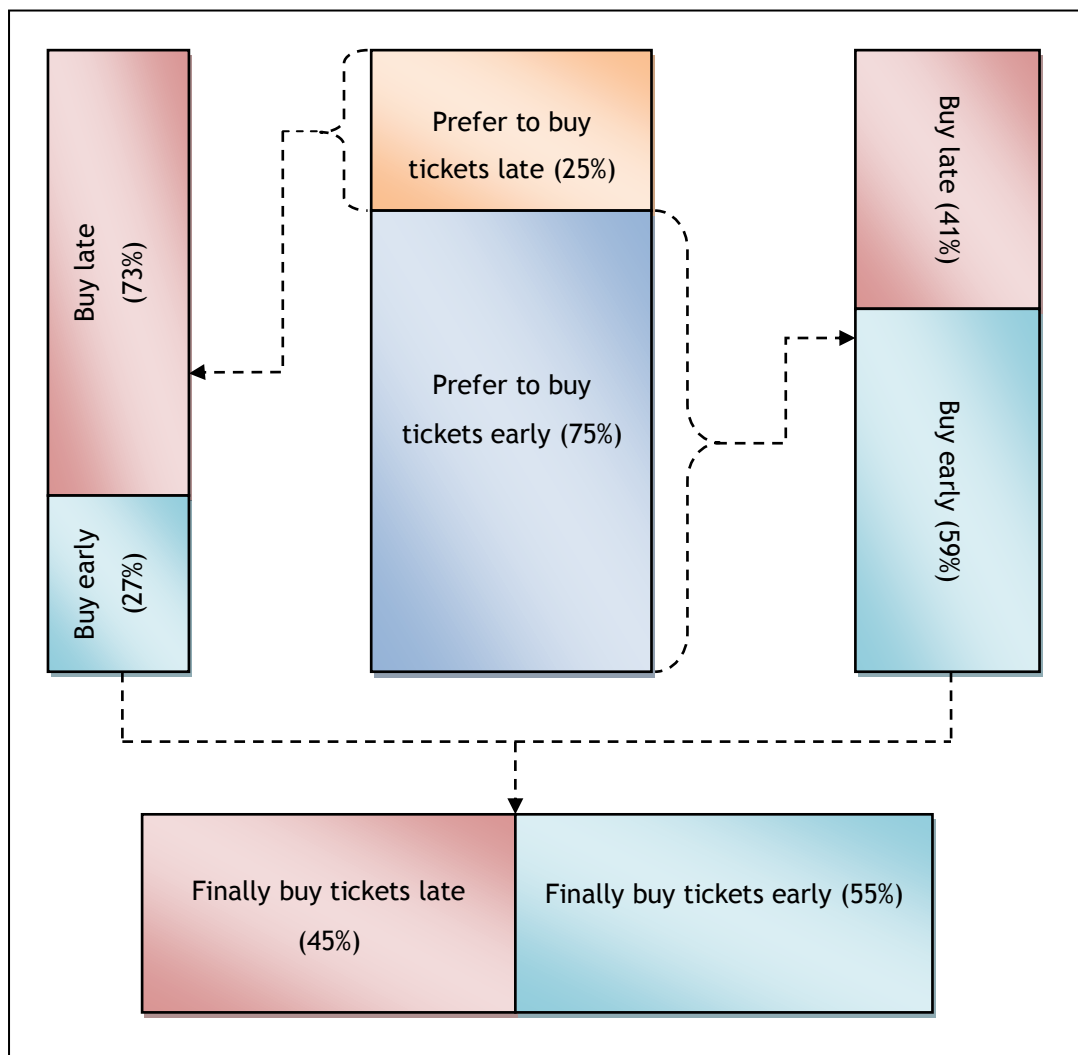


Figure 19: Early vs. late ticket buying

5.6 The most important reasons for not buying tickets early

8. If and when you buy your festival tickets LATE, is it typically because...? *

	I strongly disagree	I somewhat disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I somewhat agree	I strongly agree
You are not sure if the dates are good for you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You are not sure if your friend(s) can join you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You are not sure if you can afford it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You are just not good at planning early	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. If there's any other reason(s) for not buying your ticket early, please describe it here (optional):

It was already identified in the previous section that 45% people buy tickets late but it was necessary to know the most important reasons for not buying tickets early. This section would identify the most important reasons by analyzing the data which were collected through question 8. As the result showed, the most important reason for not buying tickets early for a festival is that people are usually not sure if their personal schedule allows them to attend the festival. The second most important reason is that they are not sure if their friends can come along with them in the festival. While those two are most important reasons for not buying tickets early, the other reasons such as uncertainty about ticket affordability did not make any strong affect on early ticket buying. The fourth and last item was included in the question to see if people do not buy tickets early because they are not good at planning and it was observed that most of the people think that this is not the reason for not buying tickets early. In other words we can say that most of the people are good planner and this actually strengthen the facts for creating a event/festival planning tool so that people can use it to solve planning things and finally able to buy tickets early. The following figure shows a comparable result of not buying tickets early.

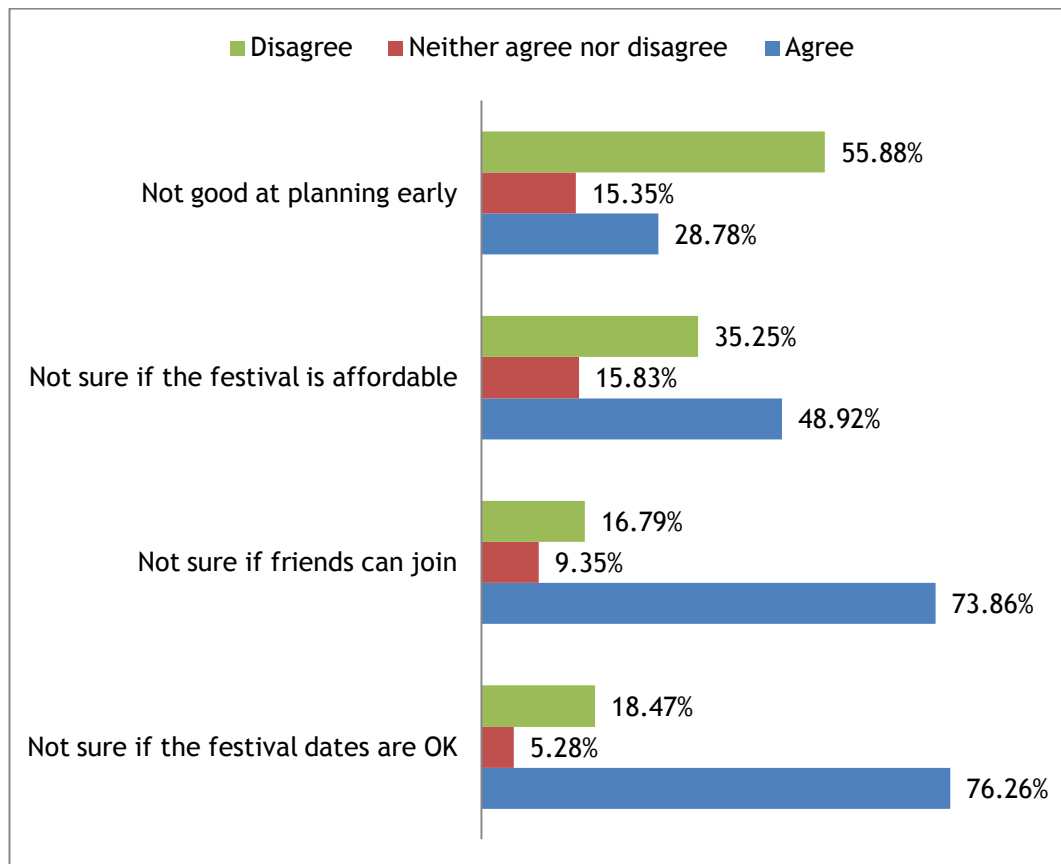


Figure 20: Reasons for not buying tickets early

In addition to these hypothesis tests in question 8 there were also one open question (question 9) which asked the respondents to write if there was any other reason that could affect the early ticket buy. After going through all the answers, it was observed that people do not buy tickets early because they cannot see the full line up of the festival early at the beginning when the ticket sale is on. Even though the full line-up is announced, people are still aware of the possible changes in the line-up because they might not see the acts which they buy tickets for. Other facts which were discovered from the question includes that some people are aware of weather on the festival dates, some of them need reminder for buying tickets, some people wait to get a discounted tickets from ticket reseller or from some other people who do not want to attend the festival.

5.7 Reasons for cancelling a plan to attend a festival

Please think about the festival you really, REALLY wanted to go, but you DID NOT

10. You did not go, because...? *

	I strongly disagree	I somewhat disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I somewhat agree	I strongly agree
You couldn't get your friend(s) to join you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The tickets were too expensive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The tickets were sold out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The festival dates didn't work out for you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You couldn't get a car (or other means of transportation)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. If there was any other reason(s) for NOT going to the festival, please describe it here (optional):

In certain situation, people have to cancel going to a festival that they want to go. There might be many reasons for cancelling the plan to attend a festival. In this section some of the important reasons to cancel going to the festival would be evaluated. The possible reasons were included in the question 9 and they were measured by the likert scale. The reasons included in the question were mostly related with some hypothesis tests as the information from this survey would be used in the product development. The following figure provides a comparable data of the reasons to cancel a festival attendance.

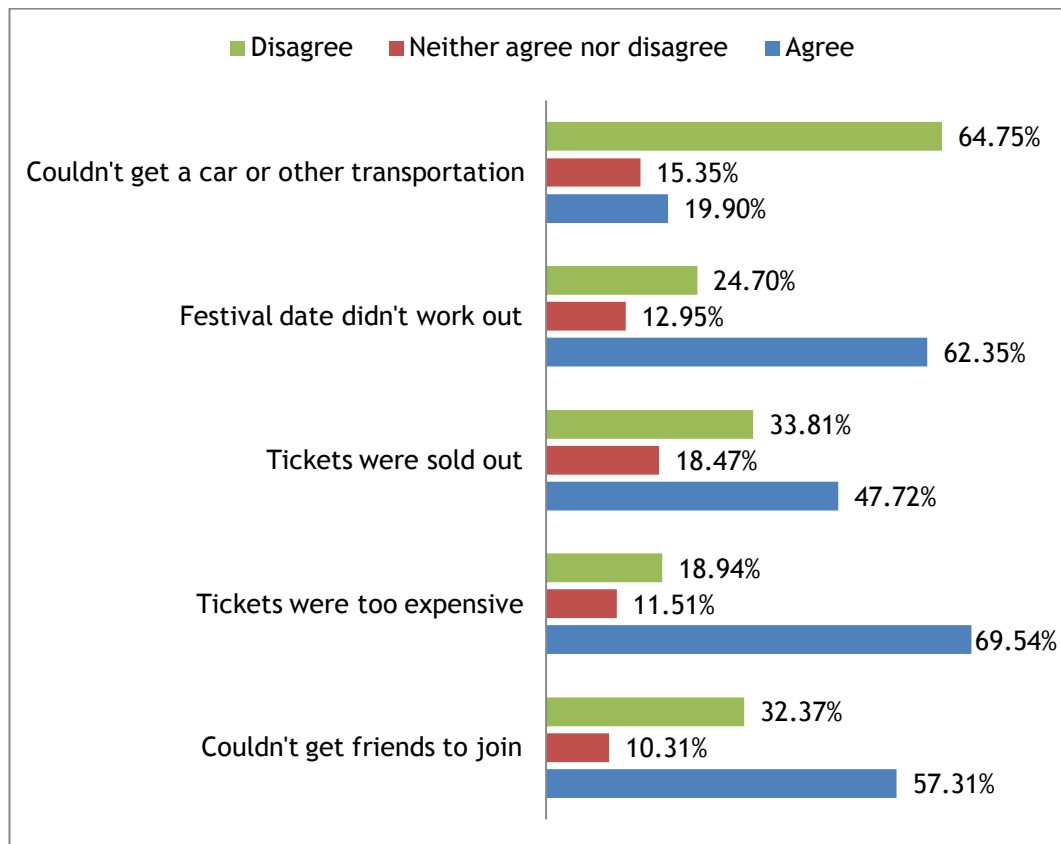


Figure 21: Reasons for cancelling a festival attendance

As it is seen from the above figure, the most important reason for cancelling a plan to go to a festival was expensive ticket price. The second most important reason was the festival dates; the dates did not match their personal schedule, they might be busy on other things then. The third and one of the important hypothesis tests was friends' participation in the festival. More than 57% people missed the festival that they wanted to go because they could not get their friends join them. The possible reasons for not getting friends join them would be that there is no event planning tool what they can use to involve all friends in planning to go to a festival, and this way the person who actually planned to go to the festival have the possibility to see who is going or who is not going. The tool would also allow them plan everything related to the festival. Managing a car for the festival or arranging other means of transportation for travelling to the festival was not a problem to cancel going to a festival.

There was also an open question in the questionnaire to see if there were any other important reasons for cancelling going to the festival. And it was observed from the result that there was not much reason for cancelling a festival, so it means that all the

important reasons that usually cause cancelling the plan were already included in the survey. A few reasons that were mentioned by the respondents include changes done in the festival (e.g. line-up change, date change), busyness at work, and overseas festival.

5.8 Reasons for attending a festival

Now please think about the festival you ATTENDED last time

12. You attended, because...? *

	I strongly disagree	I somewhat disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I somewhat agree	I strongly agree
Your friend(s) already had decided to go and you wanted to join	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The ticket price was reasonable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The venue was close to you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You liked the line up of the festival	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You had already asked friends to join you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. If there was any other reason(s) for attending the festival, please describe it here (optional):

The reasons for not attending a festival were evaluated in the previous section; now in this section the things that motivated people to go to a festival would be analyzed. The result indicated that the most important fact for choosing a festival to attend was reasonable ticket price. People usually do not go to a festival which costs too much; they think whether the ticket price can worth the festival or not. Secondly, people considered the festival line-up while thinking about going to a festival. Because the line-up or the acts that are going to be appeared in the festival is the important part of a festival especially for a music festival; if the line-up is not likeable by the festival attendees they would not provably attend the festival. Thirdly, people attended a festival because their friends had already decided to go and they wanted join them in the festival. As the people prefer to attend a festival with friends, so when they see that most of their friends are going to a festival they also want to go to the same festival just to enjoy with friends. Because festival is a social event that brings all kind of people together in the

same place to enjoy some free time and basically the enjoyment level goes high when people attend a festival with friends. The following figure indicates a comparable result of the things that influenced people to attend a festival.

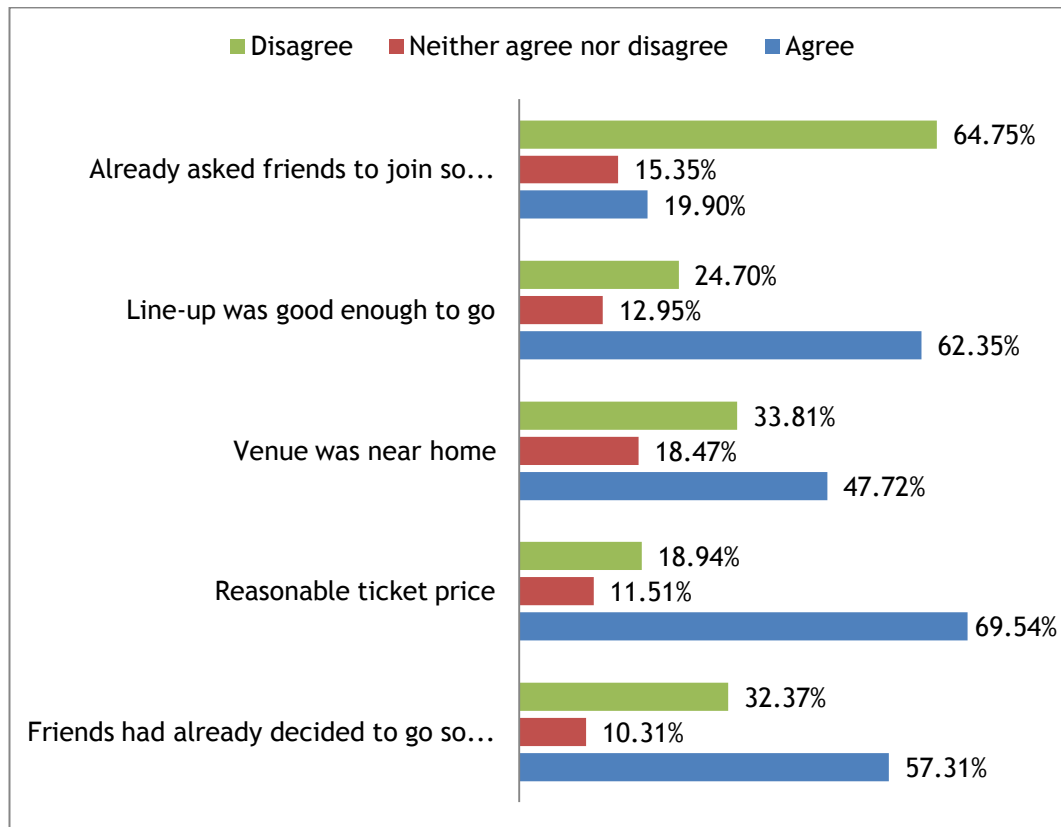


Figure 22: Reasons for attending a festival

As it was observed from the above figure, friends' activities had a great influence on people decision making process for a festival attendance. People usually get influenced or motivated by the friends to make a decision to go to a festival. On the other hand people also sometime stick on the decision of going to a festival even though they do not want to go to the festival anymore, only because they have already asked their friends to go to the festival with them. The result identified that around 20% people passed through this kind situation in the last festival they attended. These people can be referred as the opinion leaders who motivate other people and take the initial step to create a group activity within the friends. These types of people are few in numbers while others are mostly involved by them in the group activities.

Festival venue does not make any significance difference in the decision making process of festival attendance since a large number of people neither agreed nor disagreed on the

fact that they missed the festival because it was far away from them, so usually people do not care about the venue if it is close to home or far away from home. But still it affects on the decision making process as the result also indicated that almost 48% people attended the last festival because it was close to them. So it would be good for the festival organizers to start their festival marketing campaign from the festival locality or the localities which are close to the festival venue. In other words, all the promotional activities of the festival should be started focusing on the local community and then moving further to international community.

Moreover there were some other things that motivated people to attend a festival. The most important thing that came across was the tradition of attending a certain festival meaning that they have been attending the festival for many years and it has been developed as a tradition. This type of festival attendees can be referred as brand loyalty customers who usually stick with the product or service they have been experiencing for many years. Another important thing mentioned by the respondents that they attended the festival because the festival atmosphere was good. The previous years' good experiences always persuade people to go to the same festival next year. So it is a very important thing for the festival organizers to organize, arrange and manage the whole festival which could eventually make the festival atmosphere good enough to attract people for the next festival. People also tend to go to a festival just to experience the festival if it is a very popular one or if other people recommended the festival. Sometimes people attend the overseas festival just to grab the opportunity of traveling abroad and gather international festival experience.

5.9 Decision making on festival attendance

In the theoretical part of this study, the theory about consumer behavior and consumer decision making briefly described and in the previous sections, the results were analyzed. In this section, consumer decision making on festival attendance would be conceptualized by combining the theory and results.

Making decision on attending festival can be referred as either Brand Loyalty type decision making or Variety Seeking decision making. Usually it depends on how the consumers process the information. If he has been attending a festival for several years and still planning to go to the festival that means he has become a loyal customer of that festival. On the other hand, when someone wants to have different kind of experiences by attending many festivals, then he can be referred as variety seeking customer. So when making decision on going to a festival, these two types of people passes through different

kind of decision making process. For example, in brand loyalty decision making process, people usually make the decision so easily with the least information process or no information process since they attended the festival before and they already know most of the information about the festival. On the other hand, in variety seeking decision making, people usually process a lot of information about the festival they wish to attend because they have never been to the festival.

The problem solving model (the traditional model mentioned earlier) of decision making was not used to explain the decision making on festival attendance for some reasons. Firstly, people go to a festival not to solve any problem; they go to festival for entertainment or relaxation. Secondly, the information processing was not emphasized in the traditional model while information processing and sharing is one of the important parts of the decision making process on festival attendance. So the cognitive processing model would be followed here to illustrate the decision making on festival attendance.

To describe the decision making process simply, Bob, a random character is selected. There were three cognitive processes in the cognitive model. So in the first step of the cognitive process Bob usually receives the information about the festival from his surroundings which might be a TV commercial, information from friends, advertisement on billboard or in the newspaper or in some other media. In the second step, he interprets the information alone and makes some assumptions about the festival. Then in the third step, he looks for some more information about the festival, for example, festival line-up, ticket price, festival dates and timings and so on. He evaluates all the information he has gathered already and integrates all the information, even he might also look for some other similar festival on the same dates which is not seen very often. In the third step, he retrieves information or knowledge stored in his memory, in this case, the previous festival experience; the experience can be gained either from other festivals or from the festival he is planning now to attend. After making the initial decision to attend the festival, he might ask his friends to join him as he likes to go to festival with friends. When he knows that his friends are also going to the festival with him, then he makes the final decision to attend the festival and buys tickets. The whole process can be described in the following figure which has been prepared by following the cognitive process of decision making mentioned earlier in the theory section of consumer decision making process.

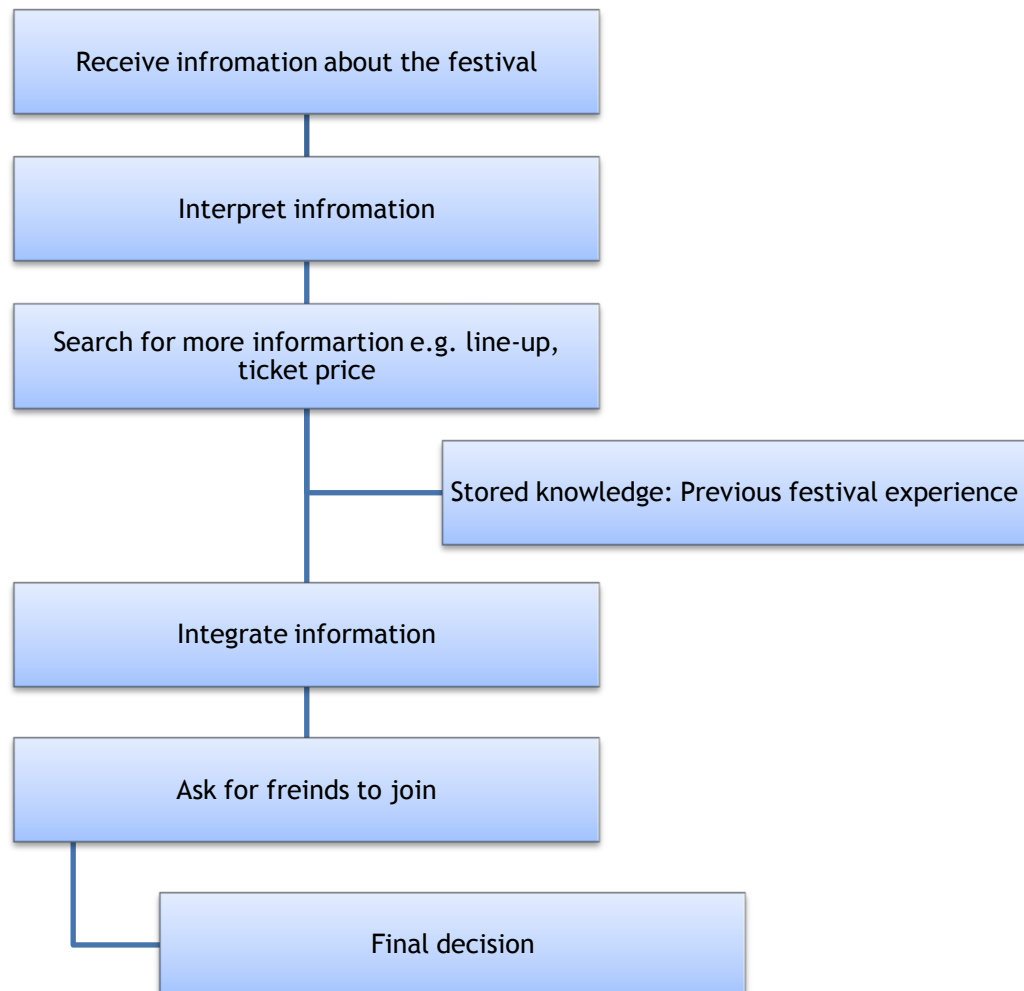


Figure 23: Consumer decision making on festival attendance

There are many factors that have influences on the decision making on festival attendance; some of them have much influence while some of them comparatively have less influence. The ones which have much influence are shortly described below to see how these reflect on the decision making.

Festival line-up: Festival line-up is one of the most important reasons for making a decision on attending a festival. If someone finds his favorite acts performing in a festival, he will initially think about going to the festival without taking other things into account.

The results also showed that a large number of people attended their last festival because they liked the festival line-up.

Festival tickets: The ticket price of a festival also has a great influence on making a decision for attending the festival. After finding out the favorite acts performing in the festival, the next thing people usually do is, they look for ticket pricing and think if the ticket price of the festival really worth the festival. For example, if the ticket price is so expensive but the festival line-up is not so good; people actually do not want to go to the festival anymore even though they initially wanted to go to the festival.

Festival dates: Whenever people find an interesting festival and want to go to the festival, the thing they want to make sure early at the beginning is that their own schedules allow them to attend the festival, because in many cases people could not attend the festival only because they had other things to do on the festival dates, e.g. work, school, etc.

Friends' attendance: Friends' attendance also has a great effect on the decision making process because people usually go to festival with friends. The results showed that in many cases people missed their favorite festivals because their friends could not go to the festivals. So people tend to go to a festival if their friends are also going to the festival.

The following figure can visualize the issues that have effect on the decision making on festival attendance. The darker and bigger shapes in the figure have much influence on the decision making while the other ones have comparatively less influence.

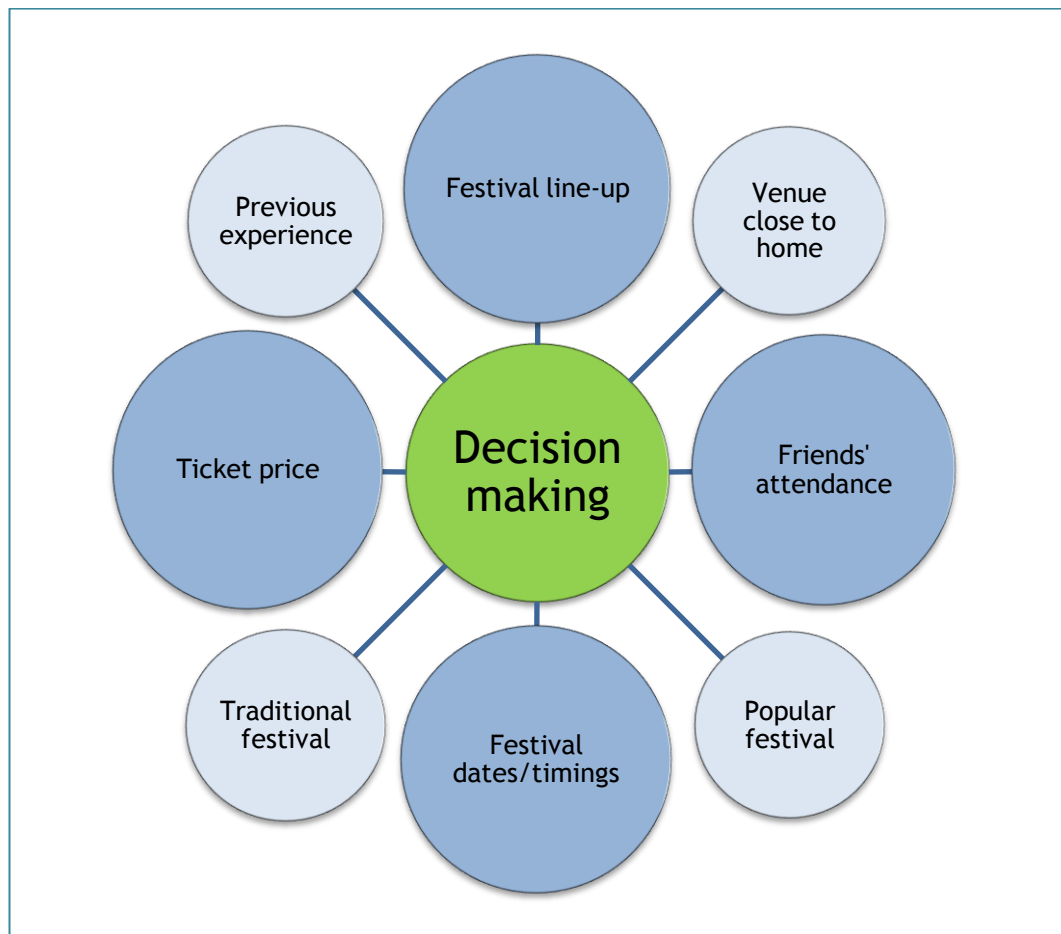


Figure 24: Influences on the decision making

6 PRODUCT INFORMATION - QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

14. When planning to go to festivals, what kind of internet services are you and your friends currently using?

And what kind of new features or services would you find useful?

There was an open question (question 14) in the questionnaire which was not analyzed earlier because the objectives of the question were different. The objectives were

related with the event/festival planning tool. The question can be divided into two parts based on the objectives and the pattern of the question itself. The first part of the question asked the respondents about the products or tools which were being used for event/festival planning and the second part asked them about the features or services that could make the festival planning easier.

6.1 Existing event planning tools/products

The products or tools that had been used by the respondents were, Facebook, email, phone calendar, Skype, Doodle, Last.fm, Twitter, Google+, and other social media. Among these all products and services, Facebook was used mostly by the respondents. The reasons could be that Facebook is the largest social media and it has a feature of creating event where people can invite people and see who is coming and who is not, also it allows people to discuss about the event on the event page. But the event page is not enough to make sure who is actually coming to the event because people usually receive many events invitation through Facebook and sometime people miss the invitation or sometime they ignore the invitation. Even though people can see who is going to the event, who may be going and who is not going but still there are some people who actually do not say anything; whether they are going or not going. Most of the time, people who have said they may be going, usually they do not go at all. So it is quite hard to count the exact number of people who is actually going to the event. Moreover, the Facebook event page does not have any features which can help people plan for the festival attendance. It only provides people an opportunity for an open conversation among the people who are invited and also an opportunity to get an idea of the total attendees of the event/festival. Like Facebook, people also mentioned other social media for example Twitter where people can share and discuss about a festival. People also use Skype to discuss with friends and plan about the festival. But the problem about Skype that they cannot find all of their friends together at the same time on Skype and it is hard to make the plan correctly as well. Email is also used widely to share the ideas and plans about the festival but the problem with the email is that people might have more than one email address and it is hard to know which is being used currently, so there is a chance of not seeing the email.

6.2 Customers' expectations

As it was seen from the previous section that there was no such product or tool which focused on only festival/event planning. In this section, the product/tool that people expected to have is described. It would also help in the developing process of the event planning tool. The things that people wanted to have in the future are mentioned below:

- A website or some tool where people can see the list of all the upcoming festivals and their all information (e.g. dates, line-up, camping) and also the info about the ticket inventory for each festival
- A line-up schedule where people can see who is playing when and also a way to make their own schedule with the acts or bands they want to see in the festival. In this way people have the fewer chance of missing their favorite artists' or bands' performances in the festival. The personal line-up schedule would be more useful in a festival where there are more than one performing stages and with their own custom schedule people can see on what stage and at what time their favorite acts or bands are going to perform.
- Phone apps for scheduling and planning festivals

6.3 Festival planning tool in the decision making

In this section the relationship between the decision making on festival attendance and the festival planning tool is described. In other words, it describes how the festival planning tool would help the decision making on festival attendance. The following figure shows a picture of how the festival planning tool would be used in the decision making and at what stage it would be used.

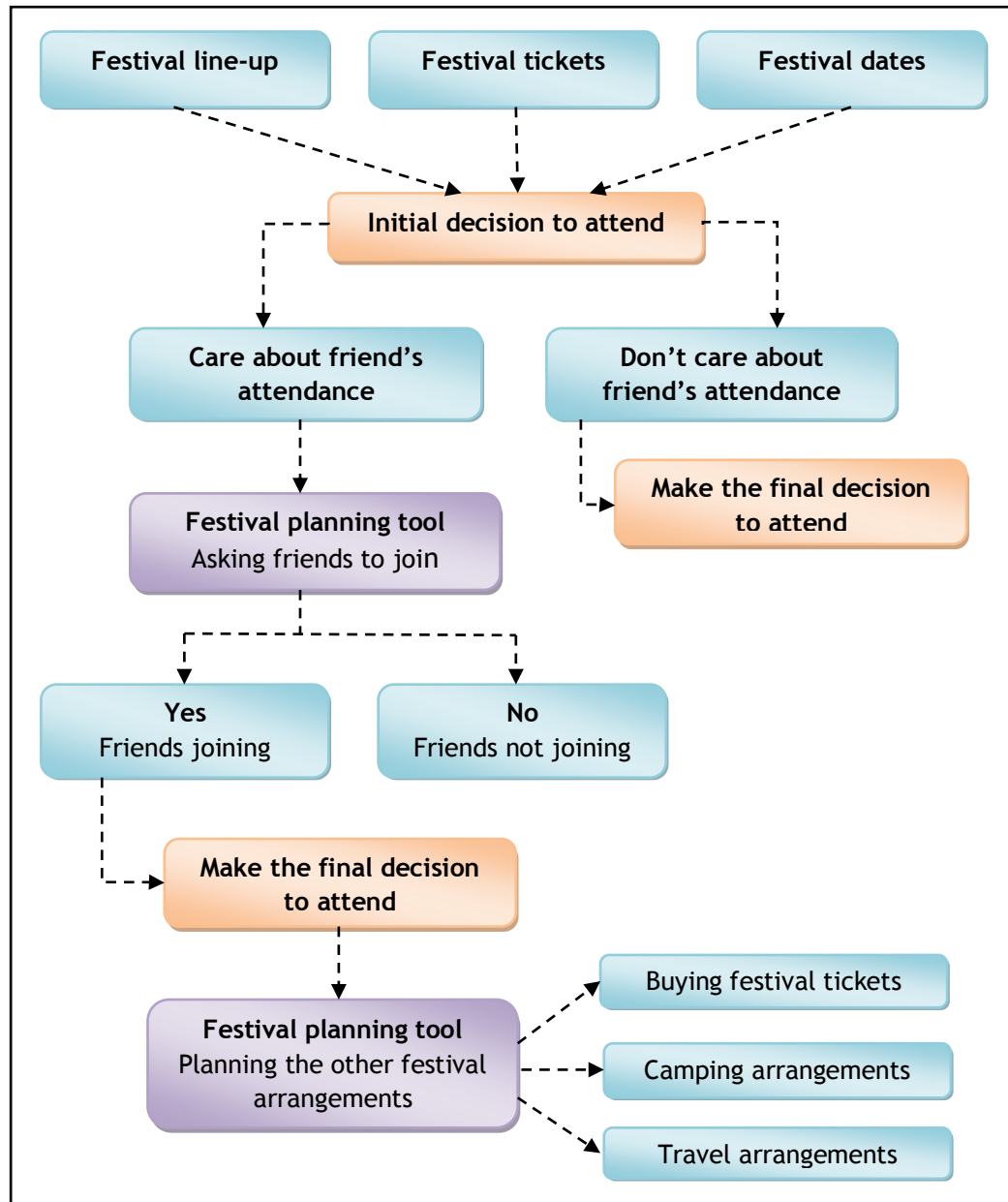


Figure 25: Festival planning tool in the decision making

It is identified earlier from the research there are four main factors that have significant influence on the decision making over festival attendance, such as, festival line-up, festival tickets, festival dates, and friends attendance to the festival. The first three factors are related with festival organizers, only they can change these factors. The festival attendees have nothing to do about these factors. Once the festival attendees have decided to attend the festival after taking all these three factors into account, now the decision depends on the friends' attendance to the festival. As it is identified earlier from the research that most of the people tend to attend a festival because their friends'

are attending the festival. Those people who care about friends' attendance to a festival, they would mostly use the festival planning tool to ask their friends to join them in the festival and to make sure how many friends can join them so that they can make the final decision of attending the festival. When they are sure that a certain number of friends can join them in the festival, they would make the final decision to attend the festival. Later on, they would use the festival planning tool for planning other festival arrangements, for example, buying festival tickets, camping arrangements, travel arrangements etc. As the festival planning tool would have features of emailing, mobile messaging, it would be easier to reach the friends and receive the responses quickly. The festival planning tool would automate some of the manual tasks such as reminders to the friends. Finally, the planning tool would increase the festival attendees as it would allow people to plan for attending the festival early at the beginning which enables them to reform their own schedule and make other necessary arrangements.

7 CONCLUSION

Many festival organizers have been struggling to sell tickets at the early stage of their ticket sale round and some of them cannot even sell 100% of their festival tickets. If they could sell some portion of their all tickets early at the beginning of their ticket sale round, they would acquire financial stability early which would eventually help them to run the festival smoothly and make the festival successful in the long run. But there was no such product or tool which could help them increase early ticket sale. The company, for which the study was conducted, was developing a festival/event planning tool for the festival attendees to help them make decision early when the festival dates are just announced. And when the festival attendees are able to make decision early they would buy tickets early as well which would on the other hand help the festival organizers acquire early ticket sale. As the festival/event planning tool is for the festival goers or attendees it is obvious to know about them: why they buy tickets late, what are the reasons for cancelling a plan to attend a festival, and what are the reasons for attending a festival. This is why the study was conducted to find out the answers of these questions. The study was conducted by an email survey in which the sample group was university students who usually attend festivals a lot. The response rate was impressive and the amount of data collected through the survey was sufficient to draw conclusion for each factor in the study.

The study identified the proportion between the people who prefer to buy tickets early and the people who prefer to buy tickets late. The portion of the people who actually manage to buy tickets early was also discovered from the study. After analyzing the

results it was observed that a significant amount of people prefer to buy tickets early but for some reason they cannot manage to buy tickets early. Two major reasons were identified for not buying tickets early: the festival dates and the friends' attendance to the festival. Usually festival organizers announce the festival dates or timings couple of months earlier than the festival is held but at this time it is actually quite difficult for the festival attendees to make sure if the festival dates are okay for them, meaning that they have nothing else on the festival dates. Friends' attendance to the festival also has a great influence on early ticket buying since people tend to go to festival with friends. If they do not find friends going to the festival early at the beginning, they do not buy tickets early. The festival/event planning tool would help the festival attendees gather friends in one platform and make the decision over festival attendance early which would eventually allow them to buy tickets early.

As the festival/event planning tool would be helping festival attendees to make decision on festival attendance, so one of the most important objectives of this research was to understand the festival goers' decision making on festival attendance and develop a decision making model. At first the model was developed by using both the theory (consumer decision making theory - the cognitive process) and the research findings, and later on the festival/event planning tool was placed in the model to see how it would create effect on the decision making. The factors that have influence on the decision making were identified from the research. When making decision to go to a festival, people usually process some information very carefully with high importance. These are the festival line-up, festival dates, festival ticket price, and the friends' attendance to the festival. They also process information about some other things which are related to the festival offerings, for example the camping or tenting place offered by the festival if the festival is a multi day festival. One of the most important hypotheses from the company's point of view was that the friends' attendances to a festival have a significant influence on the decision making and it was proved with the positive responses from the survey result. This hypothesis test strengthened the company's own thoughts and encouraged them to develop the festival/event planning tool with high enthusiasm.

Finally, the information from the research will be used in the marketing materials while contacting festival organizers. The idea is to start conversations with the festival organizers with some interesting information about the festival attendees. For example the decision making model might be an interesting topic to start the conversation with. The other model, in which the festival/event planning tool is placed, would also be an important issue to start conversation with the festival organizers since the main aim of the company is to sell the festival/event planning tool to them for their end customers

(the festival attendees). Other information, such as the most important factors that affect the decision making on festival attendance, the reasons that cause the early ticket buying would also be used in the marketing materials to draw festival organizers' attention.

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Appendix 1: The email format used in the survey

Hello my Laurea friends!

I hope you're all doing great in Laurea!

Here's a thing:

I think you love going to festivals with your friends.

You probably also love SPOTIFY if you are anything like me! :)

It would be cool if you could spare 2 minutes to help with my thesis about festivals! Oh yeah and you'll also have a chance to win Spotify Premium for 6 months.

Click this link below to help me, please:

<http://use.yourflocks.com/festival-customer-survey-win-6-months-spotify-premium/>

Thank you so much!

Please contact me if you have ANY questions regarding this survey!

Best regards,

Abu Noman

Email: abu.noman@laurea.fi


GSM: +358 466 427 202

Laurea University of Applied Sciences

Appendix 2: The landing page of the survey

TAKE PART IN OUR FESTIVAL SURVEY AND WIN SPOTIFY PREMIUM FOR 6 MONTHS!

COME ON! IT'LL TAKE YOU LIKE LESS THAN 2 MINUTES!

 **Steven Seagull from YOURFLOCKS Data Nerd Team**
 We're building the **AWESOMEST** planning tool for festival-goers **EVER**. It will make it easier for you and your friends to plan ahead for those good times next summer!



Please answer a few questions to help us make the tool perfect - it will take you **2 MINUTES!**




Oh! And we will be giving away a 6 month **SPOTIFY PREMIUM GIFT CARD** to one lucky participant! I will let you know personally, if **YOU** are the winner.

Don't fly solo!


Yeah! Count me in and win: Spotify **I'll take the survey but not interested in Spotify**

TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THIS SURVEY RIGHT NOW!

 Tweet 

 Recommend  29  Send

CHECK OUT THE [TERMS OF THE COMPETITION!](#)

 **yourflocks**

Appendix 3: The survey questionnaire

HERE'S THE SURVEY - I HOPE YOU DON'T GET BORED! :)**Take part in this quick 2 minute survey - and win 6 Months of Spotify Premium!***** Required****1. Are you? ***

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

2. Have you ever had to buy a ticket for your friend to make sure he/she comes to a festival? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

3. Has a friend ever had to buy you a ticket to make sure you come to a festival? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

4. How many festivals have you been to in the past 12 months? *

- ☐ None
☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ More than 4

5. How many friends joined you to the LAST festival you went to? *

- ☐ None
☐ 1
☐ 2 to 3
☐ 4 to 6
☐ 7 to 10
☐ More than 10

6. Do you PREFER to buy tickets.....? *

- ☐ As early as possible
☐ As late as possible

7. But in REALITY you end up buying tickets.....? *

- ☐ Early
☐ Late

8. If and when you buy your festival tickets LATE, is it typically because...? *

	I strongly disagree	I somewhat disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I somewhat agree	I strongly agree
You are not sure if the dates are good for you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You are not sure if your friend(s) can join you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You are not sure if you can afford it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You are just not good at planning early	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. If there's any other reason(s) for not buying your ticket early, please describe it here (optional):

Please think about the festival you really, REALLY wanted to go, but you DID NOT

10. You did not go, because...? *

	I strongly disagree	I somewhat disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I somewhat agree	I strongly agree
You couldn't get your friend(s) to join you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The tickets were too expensive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The tickets were sold out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The festival dates didn't work out for you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You couldn't get a car (or other means of transportation)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. If there was any other reason(s) for NOT going to the festival, please describe it here (optional):

Now please think about the festival you ATTENDED last time

12. You attended, because...? *

	I strongly disagree	I somewhat disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I somewhat agree	I strongly agree
Your friend(s) already had decided to go and you wanted to join	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The ticket price was reasonable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The venue was close to you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You liked the line up of the festival	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You had already asked friends to join you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. If there was any other reason(s) for attending the festival, please describe it here (optional):

14. When planning to go to festivals, what kind of internet services are you and your friends currently using?
And what kind of new features or services would you find useful?

Please leave your email address: *



You will take part in the draw to win 6 Free Months of SPOTIFY Premium

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[Report Abuse](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Additional Terms](#)

TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THIS SURVEY RIGHT NOW!

 Tweet

 Recommend  Send

Appendix 4: Pivot table 1 _ Festival attendance in last 12 months

	1 festival	2 festivals	3 festivals	4 festivals	More than 4 festivals	None	Grand Total
Female	77	61	37	7	16	84	282
Male	36	40	19	1	12	27	135
Grand Total	113	101	56	8	28	111	417

Appendix 5: Pivot table 2 _ Number of friends attended to the last festival

	1	2 to 3	4 to 6	7 to 10	More than 10	None	Grand Total
Female	45	86	74	27	21	29	282
Male	19	45	29	11	18	13	135
Grand Total	64	131	103	38	39	42	417

Appendix 6: Pivot table 3 _ Early vs. Late ticket buying comparison

	As early as possible		As early as possible Total	As late as possible		As late as possible Total	Grand Total
	Early	Late		Early	Late		
Female	122	87	209	20	50	70	279
Male	58	36	94	7	23	30	124
Grand Total	180	123	303	27	73	100	403

Appendix 7: Pivot table 4 _ Buy tickets for friends

	No	Yes	Grand Total
Female	198	84	282
Male	84	51	135
Grand Total	282	135	417

Appendix 8: Pivot table 5 _ Get tickets from friends

	No	Yes	Grand Total
Female	208	74	282
Male	87	48	135
Grand Total	295	122	417