



Popular music festivals: An examination of the relationship between festival programs and attendee motivations

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1. Introduction

In recent years, music festivals have emerged as key players in a rapidly changing musical industry (Brown & Knox, 2016). Indeed, music festivals constitute not only an important revenue source—in 2017, the top 10 music festivals in the world grossed US\$259 million (Pollstar, 2020)—but also play a significant role in the sustainable development of communities (Van Aalst & Van Melik, 2012). One of the strengths of music festivals is their popularity. In 2014, the USA's 800 music festivals attracted 32 million people (Nielsen, 2015). Interestingly, music festival attendees differ considerably from one event to another, notably in terms of motivation (Abreu-Novais & Arcodia, 2013); some people attend festivals especially for the music while others primarily to socialize. This being said, even if motivation constitutes a key theme of past and present festival studies (Getz & Page, 2016; Wilson, Arshed, Shaw, & Pret, 2017), not much is known about the relationship between the type of music festival and the motivations of its attendees. Indeed, despite a recent call by Maeng, Jang, and Li (2016) for more motivation research accounting for the special features and attributes of festivals, the impact of specific music festival characteristics such as the main genre of music or fame of the programmed artists on the motivations of attendees is not clear.

We propose that the variation in attendees' motivations can be explained, at least in part, by the type of program, both in terms of musical content and format. Little research on music festivals has taken a close look at the programs of the studied events, despite existing evidence suggesting their importance (Kruger & Saayman, 2012; Lopez & Leenders, 2019). Hence, the objectives of the present study are: (1) to identify the motivations of attendees of different popular music festivals and (2) to identify and characterize clusters of attendees according to their motivations. To meet these research objectives, a field study was carried out with a sample of 296 festival-goers attending six music festivals. The contribution of this study to the literature in tourism management is twofold. First, while previous studies considered music as a unique motivation dimension (Abreu-Novais & Arcodia, 2013), we show that there exist multiple motivations related to the musical

content and that their strength differs between events, which helps explain the variance of results found in the previous studies. Second, this research offers managerial insights by revealing the existence of different types of attendees seeking distinct kinds of program (in terms of both content and format). This can help festival organizations by indicating how to design the content and format of their event to target specific groups of festival-goers.

2. Literature review

2.1. Motivation to attend music festivals

In a review of 29 empirical studies on festival motivations, Abreu-Novais and Arcodia (2013) identified seven motivational dimensions: socialization, family togetherness, event novelty, escape & relaxation, excitement & enjoyment, cultural exploration and other specific motivators (e.g. food or event theme). These dimensions display concomitantly a certain form of commonality, being present across multiple studies and contexts, and some variance due to “the type of event, visitor segment, and socio-demographic and geographical variables” (Abreu-Novais & Arcodia, 2013, p. 44).

In Table 1, we present an overview of the results of seven studies, published between 1999 and 2016, tackling specifically the issue of motivations to attend a popular music festival. The compilation of these studies offers two main conclusions. First, the most frequent motivations are socialization and musical content, but their importance varies significantly from one event to the other. For instance, while the attendees of the Efes Pilsen Blues Festival (Özdemir Bayrak, 2011) are primarily motivated by socialization, New Zealand Gold Guitar Awards' festival-goers are mostly driven by their love for music. Second, a same event can attract different segments of attendees with diverse motivations. For instance, Bowen and Daniels (2005) have indeed identified four clusters of attendees of the Celebrate Fairfax! Festival: the *just being social* mainly motivated by socialization, the *enrichment over music* who attend to discover new things or new people, the *music matters* drawn by the musical features and the *love it all*, who seek everything.

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Table 1
Review of Studies on Popular Music Festival Motivations.

Authors	Name of the festival (main music genre)	Identified motivation factors by main dimensions (adapted from Abreu-Novais & Arcodia, 2013)	Excitement and enjoyment	Escape and relaxation	Event novelty and specific characteristics (except music)	Family togetherness	Musical content
Faulkner, Fredline, Larson, and Tomljenovic (1999)	Storsjöyran Music Festival (Pop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialization • Known group socialization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excitement • Party 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novelty seeking • Local attractions • Ancillary activities 		
Nicholson and Pearce (2001)	Gold Guitar Awards (Country)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialization 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local culture/identity • Novelty/uniqueness • Variety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music/entertainment
Bowen and Daniels (2005) Gelder and Robinson (2009)	Celebrate Fairfax! (Rock) Glastonbury and V Festival (Rock)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socializing with friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment • General entertainment • Excitement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escape from everyday life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novelty • Cultural exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socializing with family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Music or artist playing
Pegg and Patterson (2010)	Tamworth Country music festival (Country)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love for country music
Özdemir Bayrak (2011)	Efes Pilsen Blues (Blues)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialization 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escape 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festival related motivations
Li and Wood (2016)	Midi music festival (Occidental popular music)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Togetherness 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual escape • Spiritual pursuit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novel experience • Educational enrichment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love of the music • Music sharing

2.2. Music festival audiences segmentation

Several researchers have surveyed the audience of a specific music festival, using socio-demographic variables such as age, gender or occupation to cluster attendees (see for instance Saayman & Saayman, 2014; Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2013). While those studies help us describe the attendees of specific events, they do not allow us to understand why attendees decided to attend those festivals in particular. A Fonseca and Ramos (2014) provides some answers: instead of focusing on a single festival, they recruited 657 persons living in Lisbon (Portugal) and surveyed their music festival consumption habits. They identified three market segments: *music lovers*, *networkers* and *tourists*, who differ notably in terms of their favorite music festivals and the reason why they like them. Indeed, *music lovers* preferred events on account of their music while the *networkers* favored events for their nice atmosphere. Lastly, the *tourists* preferred well-organized festivals held in interesting locations. This suggests that certain events, by their nature, are more suited to certain attendees.

Moreover, a study examining the audiences of three rock bands (Kruger & Saayman, 2012) revealed that their respective audiences differ significantly in terms of their socio-demographic profile, consumption behavior and motivations. Their study also shows that the composition of a live show audience is influenced by many variables: the genre of artist, its attractiveness, popularity and originality, among others. Thus, to understand live concert audiences, one must examine the artist who is performing and the context in which the performance takes place (Kruger & Saayman, 2012).

Accordingly, it seems that in order to understand the variance among audiences of music festivals, it is necessary to examine their musical content. In fact, if artists of the same genre can attract significantly different audiences, failure to consider the content and format of a music festival (where multiple types of artists of different genres perform) at a more detailed level seems to be a questionable omission.

2.3. Music festival programs: Content & Format

Few papers have used program as a research variable: first, Leenders, van Telgen, Gemser, and Van der Wurff (2005) have studied the impact of the content (scope of the audience, presence of star performers, number of editions, and theme) and the format (budget, ticket prices, location, maximum capacity) of music festivals on their success. Their results suggest that a small number of musical genres generally improves success. Hence, niche festivals showed a higher growth in attendance than events with a large number of genres. Second, Négrier, Guérin, and Bonet (2013) found that the main musical genre of a festival has a direct and significant impact on the age and size of its audience. Overall, it suggests that a deeper analysis of a music festival's program would improve understanding of the audience.

3. Method

3.1. Research setting and case selection

This study was conducted in the summer of 2015 in six popular music festivals situated in the province of Québec, Canada. Québec is an interesting research field for music festivals, notably due to their number (at least 65 according to Audet & Saint-Pierre, 2015) and their diversity in terms of location, program, attendance, budget, reach, and history. To select the events, we employed a stratified purposeful sampling strategy (Patton, 2002), combining typical cases from different categories of festivals. A series of criteria ensured the validity of the final sample. Hence, the selected festivals represent different regions and multiple popular music genres. Moreover, we excluded contests-events, indoor festivals and events taking place in Montréal, Québec's biggest city, to make sure that its high touristic potential would

Table 2
Respondents' sociodemographic characteristics.

Characteristics		%
Gender	Men	46.6
	Women	53.4
Age	Under 30	48.3
	Between 30 and 50	29.1
	Over 50	22.6
Highest obtained diploma	High school or less	33.1
	Professional school	35.1
	College degree	31.8
Professional status	Students	25.7
	Workers—part time	7.1
	Workers—full time	53.7
	Retired or unemployed	13.5
Civil status	Single without children	35.8
	Single with children	8.1
	In couple without children	31.8
Origin	In couple with children	24.3
	Locals	54.1
	Tourists	45.9

not interfere with the results.

We regrouped the six selected festivals in two subgroups formed of three festivals each presenting a similar program. The festivals take place in various types of region, which ensures geographical representativeness. Finally, these six events attracted altogether 300,000 attendees, i.e., close to 5.5% of the total number of music festival attendees in Québec (Audet & Saint-Pierre, 2015). The next sections present the selected events and the content and attendance of their 2015 edition. Since attendance numbers are provided by festivals, they are only given as an indication since they are subject to bias (De Grandpré, 2016).

3.1.1. Two niche events, dedicated to rock, punk and heavy metal music

The *Montebello Rockfest* (June 18–20, 2015) is a large one week-end event held in a small rural region. The festival attracts approximately 200,000 people, mostly tourists. It is known for its intense festive atmosphere since the whole village is transformed into a giant camping party in which attendees listen to punk, metal and hard rock while drinking significant amounts of alcohol. The highlights of the 2015 edition consisted of international artists Linkin Park, System of a Down, and Slayer.

Québec City's *Envol & Macadam* (September 10–12, 2015) is a smaller event with 30,000 attendees in 2015. The shows take place exclusively at night. Its program also focuses on punk, hard rock and heavy metal, mostly from local artists.

3.1.2. Two festivals targeting a wide audience

Trois-Rivières *Festivoix* (June 26 to July 5, 2015) is a family-oriented event located in the downtown of this 150,000-inhabitant city. In 2015, the festival sold a little more than 14,000 festival passes, in addition to almost 10,000 single-day passes. The 2015 program offered concerts by well-known and new local artists of various genres (folk, pop, rock).

Lévis's *Festivent* (July 29 to August 2, 2015) is a family-oriented festival that also showcases hot air balloon flights. Its attendance compares with the *Festivoix*. *Festivent's* 2015 program offered a mix of popular local artists and international acts such as Simple Plan, 3 Doors Down and Pennywise.

3.1.3. Two festivals dedicated to new and local artists

Baie-Saint-Paul's *Festif!* (July 23–26, 2015) is a festival located in a rural touristic region. 17,000 unique attendees came to the 2015 edition. Located in downtown, attendees can enjoy live concerts while experiencing the town's various attractions. The 2015 edition mainly offered shows by indie local bands of various genres.

Located in Vaudreuil-Dorion, *Artefact* (August 13–15, 2015) is the smallest festival of the sample (2000 attendees in 2015). The 2015 program featured concerts mostly by new artists from Québec and of various genres.

3.2. Sampling strategy and data collection

Throughout the six events, we applied a structured convenient sampling strategy: respondents were approached in a systematic manner, i.e. by approaching one out of x people, x depending on the size of the crowd and varying between 5 and 20. This strategy, while non-probabilistic, constitutes an adequate technique when the situation prevents the use of a pure randomized sample (Audiences London, 2012). To collect the data, a face-to-face survey was employed and conducted by the first author and one graduate student. This method was chosen to encourage interviewees to complete the survey while opening the possibility for clarification of questions when needed (Kolb, 2008).

3.3. Development of the survey questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 27 questions divided into four sections (see Appendix A). The first section questioned attendees on their music preferences and music consumption habits (for instance, the attendee's favorite genres and frequency of festival and live shows attendance). The second section consisted of 14 motivation items (inspired by Fonseca & Ramos, 2014; Kruger & Saayman, 2012; Özdemir Bayrak, 2011 and Pegg & Patterson, 2010; Saayman & Saayman, 2014; Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2013). The third section questioned the attendees preferences with respect to the program of a music festival (Leenders, Go, & Bhansing, 2015; Leenders, van Telgen, Gemser, & Van der Wurff, 2005; Paleo & Wijnberg, 2006). The fourth and final section consisted of socio-demographic questions.

3.4. Demographic characteristics

In total, 296 people were surveyed with an average of 50 people per festival (see Table 2). A majority of attendees were men (53.4%), less than 30 years old (48.3%), working full-time (53.7%), did not have children (67.6%) and were locals (54.1%). It should be noted that the proportion of locals and tourists varied significantly ($p < .001$) between the six festivals. For instance, *Rockfest's* subsample was composed entirely of tourists, while *Festivoix's* was mainly made up of locals (83.6%).

3.5. Data analysis

The data analysis followed two steps: First, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed on the 14 motivational items, using an Oblimin rotation with the unweighted least squares (ULS) extraction method. Use of this method is recommended when working with non-normal distributions (Jöreskog, 2003), as is the case here (see Table 3). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was used to test the robustness of the solution while Bartlett's sphericity test verified the null hypothesis which states that all correlations between variables equal zero. To select the number of factors, Kaiser's criterion of eigenvalues and Cattell's scree test were employed. Lastly, Cronbach's alpha estimated the reliability of each factor.

Second, an exploratory classification analysis was performed using as input the six motivational dimensions extracted from the factor analysis, in order to reduce the number of variables to a minimum. Ward's method was employed to determine the number of clusters and to identify initial cluster centroids, using the squared Euclidean distance measure. We then used the K-means method to obtain the final solution, as suggested by Punj and Stewart (1983).

When relevant, the Chi-squared test and Kruskal-Wallis H-test were

Table 3
Descriptive statistics - motivation items.

<i>I attend popular music festival...</i>	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
To make musical discoveries	3.95	1.03	-0.89	0.19
To listen to various music genres	4.23	0.965	-1.29	1.21
To see national and international stars	4.02	1.15	-1.04	0.19
To discover and see local artists	4.10	1.01	-1.25	1.26
To see my favorite bands or artists	4.81	0.53	-3.15	10.46
To socialize with friends	3.83	1.12	-0.79	0.001
To be with my family	2.80	1.35	0.04	-1.13
To meet people who share common interests with me	3.64	1.16	-0.57	-0.37
To party	3.86	1.15	-0.95	0.22
To enjoy the non-musical activities	3.01	1.22	-0.18	-0.94
To visit the city in which the festival is held	3.25	1.22	-0.33	-0.79
Because I love the festival atmosphere	4.50	0.79	-2.10	5.45
To do something different from the usual	4.28	0.97	-1.44	1.80
To escape from everyday life	3.74	1.31	-0.74	-0.58

used to measure differences, both for comparisons of events and attendee profiles. The Kruskal-Wallis H test was used instead of ANOVA due to the non-normal nature of the distribution of certain variables.

4. Results

4.1. Exploratory factor analysis

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for the 14 motivation items while Table 4 shows the summary of the EFA. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is 0.787, which is considered “middling” (Field, 2013). Furthermore, the KMO value for each item is equal or superior to 0.720, which is above the 0.500 threshold suggested by Field (2013). Bartlett’s sphericity test is significant ($p < .001$) and the reproduced correlation matrix shows only 14% of non-redundant residuals with a value above 0.05, both supporting the factorial solution (Field, 2013).

It is important to note that three of the fourteen items found in the questionnaire were excluded for the EFA: *To see my favorite bands or artists*, *To see national or international stars* and *To be with my family*. The first two are problematic in that they show no correlation of at least 0.30 with another item. In addition, the “family” item shows only one correlation above the 0.30 threshold which also seems insufficient. Indeed, as Field (2013) and Gray and Kinnear (2012) explain, it is preferable to exclude variables with little or no correlation above 0.30

since they may harm the factorial solution. Furthermore, in line with the recommendation of Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2018) for samples of more than 250 respondents, we use 0.35 as the cut-off point for factor loadings.

The first factor contains motivations related to *socialization & entertainment*. The second factor relates to *musical discoveries*, while the third factor explains motivations of *escape & tourism*. The first two factors, *socialization & entertainment* ($\alpha = 0.75$) and *musical discoveries* ($\alpha = 0.71$) present good reliability, while the *escape & tourism* factor shows a lower reliability ($\alpha = 0.54$).

In the subsequent analyses, we kept the three items previously excluded from the rotation process and consider them as three unique motivations for music festival attendance. Indeed, the theoretical relevance of the three items justifies their consideration as motivation on their own. Indeed, music is a very important motivator for festival attendance (Bowen & Daniels, 2005; Pegg & Patterson, 2010; Pérez-Gálvez, Lopez-Guzman, Gomez-Casero, & Fruet Cardozo, 2017; Vinnicombe & Sou, 2017) while family togetherness is often found in research (Gelder & Robinson, 2009; Nicholson & Pearce, 2001). Therefore, it seems illogical to discard certain important motivations supported by the previous literature (such as the motivation to see favorite bands or international stars). Also, it would be unreasonable to eliminate the item with the highest average score (*To see my favorite bands or artists*) and two items with high standard deviations (*To see national or international stars* and *To be with my family*).

Table 4
Summary of the factor analysis.

Items	Rotated factors loadings		
	Socialization & entertainment	Musical discoveries	Evasion & tourism
To party	0.76	-0.04	-0.13
To socialize with friends	0.61	-0.03	0.13
To meet people who share common interests with me	0.57	0.16	0.06
To enjoy the non-musical activities	0.37	-0.01	0.31
Because I love the festival atmosphere	0.36	0.09	0.28
To make musical discoveries	0.04	0.76	-0.05
To listen to various genres of music	-0.03	0.69	0.05
To discover and see local artists	-0.02	0.60	-0.02
To do something different from the usual	-0.09	-0.05	0.78
To escape from everyday life	0.09	0.01	0.45
To visit the city in which the festival is held	0.06	0.12	0.38
Eigenvalues	3.47	1.64	1.08
% of variance	31.51	14.92	9.58
Cronbach's α	0.75	0.71	0.54
Mean score	3.77	4.09	3.76
Mean standard deviation	0.78	1.00	1.17
Between items correlations	0.42	0.45	0.29

Note: three items (*To see my favorite bands or artists*, *To see national or international stars* and *To be with my family*) were excluded from the factor analysis due to low correlations. Values in bold are above 0.35, the cut-off point used in this study.

Table 5
Kruskal-Wallis H test and stepwise step-down comparisons for the six motivations across all studied events.

Type of musical program	Niche		Wide audience		New & local artists		
Studied festival	<i>Rockfest</i>	<i>Envol & Macadam</i>	<i>Festivoix</i>	<i>Festivent</i>	<i>Festif</i>	<i>Artefact</i>	K-W
Motivations	Average score						H statistic
Favorite artists	4.89 ^A	5.00 ^A	4.84 ^{ABC}	4.94 ^{AB}	4.73 ^{AC}	4.60 ^C	26.63 ^{***}
Star performers	3.95 ^{ABC}	4.23 ^{AB}	4.40 ^A	4.30 ^A	3.75 ^{BC}	3.63 ^C	43.40 ^{***}
Musical discoveries	3.72 ^C	3.84 ^C	4.29 ^B	3.75 ^C	4.21 ^B	4.50 ^A	44.10 ^{***}
Socialization & entertainment	3.83	3.80	3.67	3.64	3.86	3.84	3.57
Evasion & tourism	3.70 ^{AB}	3.59 ^B	3.89 ^{AB}	3.64 ^B	4.01 ^A	3.66 ^B	12.46 _.
Family togetherness	1.86 ^D	2.27 ^D	3.49 ^A	3.04 ^{AB}	2.69 ^{BC}	3.00 ^{AB}	27.37 ^{***}

Values with the same superscript (A, B, C or D) belong to the same subgroup. For instance, values followed by an A differ significantly from values (in the same row) not followed by an A and so on.

* p < .05.

*** p < .001.

Therefore, when combining the three identified factors with the three previously excluded items, we obtain six motivations for music festival attendance: three music-related motivations (*favorite artists*, *star performers* and *musical discoveries*) and three festival-related ones (*socialization & entertainment*, *escape & tourism* and *family togetherness*).

4.2. Kruskal-Wallis H test and stepwise comparisons

Table 5 presents the results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test for the six motivations and of the stepwise step-down comparisons, using festivals as the independent variable and motivation scores as dependent variables. The H tests are significant (p < .05) for every motivation except for *socialization & entertainment*, suggesting motivations differ between attendees of each event. Stepwise step-down comparisons suggest that *Artefact's* attendees are significantly less motivated by the idea of seeing their favorite artists than those of the two niche events and of the *Festivent*. Also, national and international stars are particularly important in both wide audience event. As for *evasion & tourism*, *Festif's* attendees are significantly more motivated than those of *Artefact*, the *Festivent* and *Envol & Macadam*.

4.3. Exploratory classification analysis

To determine the number of clusters of attendees, we analyzed the clustering dendrogram, looked at R-squared, semi-partial R-squared and cubic clustering criterion values and theoretical & practical issues. Two solutions emerge as serious candidates: a three and a four-class scenario. After examinations, the four-class solution was chosen, notably because it offered the most meaningful results.

As shown in Table 6, the four clusters were named *enthusiasts*, *open to discoveries*, *looking for stars* and *just for my bands*. The *enthusiasts* are the most numerous attendees (n = 113) while the *just for my bands* are relatively few (n = 35). The four groups differ significantly (p < .001) in terms of festival attendance. Indeed, *enthusiasts* were mainly found in wide audience events (46.0%), *looking for stars* in niche festivals (45.0%) and *open to discoveries* (45.6%) and *just for my bands* (54.3%) in new & local artists events.

Table 6 also shows that there are significant (p < .001) differences between the types of festival-goers for all six motivations, thereby solidifying the solution of the classification analysis. The next paragraphs present the four types of festival-goers.

4.3.1. Enthusiasts

Enthusiasts are the typical music festival lovers in that they are motivated by the whole experience offered by these events. Indeed, while they first look for their favorite artists (mean = 4.92), *Enthusiasts* show the highest average score for each of the six motivations (p < .05). They go to festivals to see different kinds of artists, to socialize, to have fun, to do tourism, and to be with their family.

Table 6
Distribution of attendees across the four groups and results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test and stepwise step-down comparisons.

Cluster name	Enthusiasts	Open to discoveries	Looking for stars	Just for my bands	
N	113	68	80	35	
Distribution among types of festivals (%)					Chi-squared
Niche events	15.9 ^B	13.2 ^B	45.0 ^A	31.4 ^{AB}	36.642 ^{***}
Wide audience festivals	46.0 ^A	41.2 ^A	30.0 ^{AB}	14.3 ^B	
New & local artists festivals	38.1 ^{AB}	45.6 ^{AB}	25.0 ^B	54.3 ^A	
Motivations	Average score				K-W
					H statistic
Favorite artists	4.92 ^A	4.62 ^B	4.91 ^A	4.60 ^B	31.53 ^{***}
Star performers	4.76 ^A	3.34 ^C	4.45 ^B	2.00 ^D	172.05 ^{***}
Musical discoveries	4.42 ^A	4.07 ^B	3.90 ^B	3.54 ^C	41.30 ^{***}
Socialization & entertainment	4.11 ^A	3.50 ^{BC}	3.76 ^B	3.21 ^C	52.93 ^{***}
Evasion & tourism	4.26 ^A	3.17 ^C	3.78 ^B	3.24 ^C	87.32 ^{***}
Family togetherness	3.74 ^A	3.69 ^A	1.29 ^B	1.39 ^B	219.02 ^{***}

Values with the same superscript (A, B, C or D) belong to the same subgroup. For instance, values followed by an A differ significantly from values (in the same row) not followed by an A and so on. Significance for step-wise stepdown comparisons is p < .05.

*** p < .001

4.3.2. Open to discoveries

These festival-goers are characterized by their interest in musical discoveries. In fact, the *Open to discoveries* are significantly more motivated by the possibility of discovering music that is new to them (4.07) than the opportunity to attend shows by star performers (3.34, p < .05). Furthermore, they show relatively low motivation for the three extra-musical motivations.

4.3.3. Looking for stars

These attendees show an important motivation to attend concerts featuring star performers (4.45, the second highest for all four groups, p < .05). They show less motivation for *musical discoveries* (3.90) than the *enthusiasts* (4.42). They also express noticeable, but relatively less important, motivation for *socialization & entertainment* (3.76) and *evasion & tourism* (3.78) and they despise *family togetherness* (1.29) during festivals.

4.3.4. Just for my bands

The smallest (n = 35) group of attendees is characterized by low interest in star performers (2.00), by their motivation for shows by their favorite acts (4.60) and relatively low interest for the four other

Table 7

Results of the Kruskal-Wallis H-Test for the music program preferences across clusters of attendees.

Cluster name	Enthusiasts	Open to discoveries	Looking for stars	Just for my bands	
Music program preferences	Average score				K-W H statistic
Musical diversity	3.19 ^A	3.15 ^A	2.81 ^B	3.03 ^{AB}	17.11***
Importance given to...					
Star performers	2.95 ^A	2.59 ^B	2.89 ^A	2.23 ^C	24.20***
Special events	2.96 ^A	2.62 ^B	2.81 ^B	2.51 ^B	14.84**
New artists	3.28	3.12	3.10	3.14	3.65
Local artists	3.23	3.09	3.05	2.97	4.03

Values with the same superscript (A, B or C) belong to the same subgroup. For instance, values followed by an A differ significantly from values (in the same row) not followed by an A and so on.

Significance for step-wise stepdown comparisons is $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

motivations. Therefore, those festival-goers seem relatively indifferent to the music festival experience and attend mostly for specific shows.

4.4. Musical program preferences

The four clusters of attendees differ significantly in terms of musical diversity (see Table 7, $p < .001$), star performers ($p < .001$) and special events ($p < .01$) preferences. For instance, the *looking for stars* group prefer significantly less diverse musical programs (2.81) than the *enthusiasts* and the *open to discoveries*. Moreover, the *just for my bands* (2.23) and the *open to discoveries* (2.59) assign significantly less importance to the presence of star performers than the two remaining groups (2.95 and 2.89).

Also, the *enthusiasts* give significantly more importance to the presence of special events (2.96) than the three other clusters (2.81, 2.62 and 2.51). Finally, the four groups do not differ significantly ($p > .05$) in terms of importance given to the presence of either new and local artists.

4.5. Format preferences

As seen in Table 8, the four clusters of attendees differ in terms of

Table 8

Music festival format preferences across clusters of attendees.

Cluster name	Enthusiasts	Open to discoveries	Looking for stars	Just for my bands	
Music festival format preferences	%				Chi-squared
Festival duration					11.69**
One to three days	50.4 ^B	63.2 ^{AB}	66.2 ^{AB}	80.0 ^A	
Four days or more	49.6 ^A	36.8 ^{AB}	33.8 ^{AB}	20.0 ^B	
Number of stages					8.80
One single stage	17.7	22.1	15.0	8.6	
Several stages in a single location	56.6	45.6	65.0	54.3	
Several stages over multiple locations	25.7	32.4	20.0	37.1	
Type of pricing method					8.97
Festival-long pass	85.0	83.8	81.2	71.4	
Single-day pass	8.8	8.8	15.0	11.4	
Single show tickets	6.2	7.4	3.8	17.1	
Number of shows per day					6.52
Several shows throughout the day	53.1	64.7	65.0	71.4	
Several shows, only in the evening	35.4	23.5	27.5	20.0	
Only one show per day	11.5	11.8	7.5	8.6	
Maximum \$ willing to pay per day for...	Mean				K-W H statistic
Tickets for a music festival	47.5 ^B	43.5 ^B	61.9 ^A	59.6 ^A	22.49***
A trip to a music festival (excluding tickets)	121.2	123.2	131.3	115.1	1.49

Values with the same superscript (A, B, C or D) belong to the same subgroup. For instance, values followed by an A differ significantly from values (in the same row) not followed by an A and so on.

Significance for subgroup comparisons is $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

duration preferences ($p < .01$) and willingness to pay ($p < .001$). First, the *just for my bands* significantly prefer shorter events (80.0%) than the *enthusiasts* (50.4%). Moreover, the *looking for stars* and the *just for my bands* are willing to pay significantly more for tickets (\$61.9 and \$59.6 per day) than the others. Finally, the four groups do not differ in terms of preferred number of stages, pricing method, and number of shows per day.

4.6. Music consumption habits

Festival-goers of the four groups differ significantly in terms of favorite music genres (see Table 9, $p < .05$). Indeed, *looking for stars* have somewhat homogenous preferences, in this case punk, heavy metal or rock music (59.7%), while the *open to discoveries* have more diverse musical preferences (the most popular genres for *open to discoveries* are punk, heavy metal and rock music [23.6%], indie rock [17.6%] and folk music [10.3%]). The four groups do not differ significantly in terms of the other music consumption habits variables. A plurality of attendees often goes to music festivals (45.9%) and non-festival concerts (45.9%). Of all the festival-goers, 54.4% usually attend festivals alone or with one person while 45.6% travel with a group of two or more persons.

Table 9
Music consumption habits across clusters of attendees.

Cluster name	Enthusiasts	Open to discoveries	Looking for stars	Just for my bands	
Music consumption habits	%				Chi-squared
Favorite music genre					53.345*
Most named genre	Rock (25.8)	Rock (19.2)	Punk, Heavy metal (33.9)	Rock (27.6)	
Second-most named genre	Punk, Heavy metal (15.9)	Indie/alt. Rock (16.4)	Rock (25.8)	Punk, Heavy metal (20.7)	
Third-most named genre	Pop (14.4)	Folk, country (9.6)	Indie/alt. Rock (8.1)	Folk, country (17.2)	
Consumption of local music					18.035**
Often	54.5 ^A	55.6 ^A	40.3 ^A	34.5 ^A	
Sometimes	31.8 ^A	38.9 ^A	30.6 ^A	44.8 ^A	
Rarely or never	13.6 ^{AB}	5.6 ^B	29.0 ^A	20.7 ^{AB}	
Music festival attendance					8.581
Often	37.9	24.7	43.5	41.4	
Sometimes	47.0	56.2	35.5	37.9	
Rarely or never	15.2	19.2	21.0	20.7	
Music concerts attendance					1.635
Often	28.8	24.7	30.6	31.0	
Sometimes	44.7	52.1	43.5	41.4	
Rarely or never	26.5	23.3	25.8	27.6	
Usual festival group size					0.582
One or two persons	54.5	52.1	58.1	51.7	
Three or more persons	45.5	47.9	41.9	48.3	
“When I go to a music festival...”					6.387
I'm just going to the festival	46.2	53.4	61.3	44.8	
I'm a festivalgoer first, but I also like to do some sightseeing or I'm mainly a tourist	53.8	46.6	38.7	55.2	

Values with the same superscript (A, B, C or D) belong to the same subgroup. For instance, values followed by an A differ significantly from values (in the same row) followed by a B and so on. Significance for step-wise stepdown comparisons is $p < .05$.

* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

4.7. Sociodemographic variables

The four clusters of attendees differ significantly in terms of age (see Table 10, $p < .01$), origin ($p < .01$), civil ($p < .05$) and professional status ($p < .05$) and display near significant levels of divergence for education ($p < .1$). *Enthusiasts* (41.2) and *open to discoveries* (36.0) are significantly older than the *looking for stars* (29.5) and the *just for my bands* (30.2). Furthermore, locals (people living within 40 km of the

festival) are more frequent among the *open to discoveries* (63.2%) than in the *looking for stars* (42.5%) and the *just for my bands* (37.1%). There are more attendees with children among the *enthusiasts* (42.5%) when compared to the *looking for stars* (17.5%) and the *just for my bands* (17.1%). Lastly, the four groups do not differ in terms of gender.

Table 10
Sociodemographic across clusters of attendees.

Cluster name	Enthusiasts	Open to discoveries	Looking for stars	Just for my bands	Statistic
Sociodemographic variables	Mean				K-W H statistic
Age	41.2 ^A	36.0 ^B	29.5 ^B	30.2 ^B	31.55**
Gender	%				Chi-squared
Men	49.6	42.6	51.2	34.3	3.65
Women	50.	57.4	48.8	65.7	
Origin of the attendee					13.47**
Local	61.9 ^A	63.2 ^A	42.5 ^B	37.1 ^B	
Tourist	38.1 ^A	36.8 ^B	57.5 ^A	62.9 ^A	
Highest obtained diploma					12.13 ^T
High school or less	32.7 ^{AB}	23.5 ^B	45.0 ^A	25.7 ^{AB}	
Professional school	40.7 ^A	35.3 ^{AB}	26.2 ^B	37.1 ^{AB}	
College degree	26.5 ^A	41.2 ^B	28.7 ^{AB}	37.1 ^{AB}	
Civil status					19.45*
Without children	57.5 ^A	58.8 ^{AB}	82.5 ^B	82.9 ^B	
With children	42.5 ^A	41.2 ^{AB}	17.5 ^B	17.1 ^B	
Professional status					15.98*
Students	16.8 ^A	35.3 ^B	30.0 ^B	25.7 ^{AB}	
Workers—part time; retired; unemployed	30.1 ^A	17.6 ^{AB}	12.5 ^B	14.3 ^{AB}	
Workers—full-time	53.1 ^A	47.1 ^A	57.5 ^A	60.0 ^A	

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; T = $p < .1$ Values with the same superscript (A, B, C or D) belong to the same subgroup. For instance, values followed by an A differ significantly from values (in the same row) not followed by an A and so on. Significance for step-wise stepdown comparisons is $p < .05$.

5. Discussion and contributions

The goal of this study was to examine the relationships between a music festival's program and its attendees by identifying their motivations and by segmenting attendees according to their motivations. An exploratory factor analysis revealed the existence of six motivations for attendance, three related to music and three to the festival experience. Moreover, a cluster analysis identified four clusters of attendees who display different motivations, program preferences and socio-demographics.

5.1. Musical motivations

The fact that musical aspects are the two main motivators for all studied audiences shows its importance in music festival attendance, which is consistent with previous literature (Bowen & Daniels, 2005; Pegg & Patterson, 2010; Vinnicombe & Sou, 2017). However, while authors typically group the different musical dimensions into a unique factor, this study revealed three distinct musical motivations, suggesting that some nuances should be taken into account.

The first and most impactful musical motivation among festival-goers is the desire to see their favorite artists perform. This motivation is relative to each attendee since any artist can be seen as "favorite". The second musical motivation, "star performers", brings a nuance not found in the previous studies: while the desire to see favorite artists is common to most, it is not true for star performers. Thus, for some, a famous artist can motivate the attendance of a festival that, perhaps, would have been avoided otherwise. The notion of stars is relative and could include international stars as well as local celebrities. The third musical motivation refers to a desire for musical discoveries. It resembles cultural exploration motivations often found among cultural festivals attendees (Abreu-Novais & Arcodia, 2013). Musical discoveries can refer to the discovery of new artists from a genre appreciated by the attendee, of performers of various unusual genres, or of local musicians.

Together, the three musical motivations suggest that the motivation for music is not monolithic, but rather multidimensional: a festival-goer can be motivated by the presence of their favorite artists, of star performers, of unfamiliar artists, or a combination of these three elements. The fact that previous studies did not take this multidimensionality into account could explain why their results are often contradictory (see again Table 1). This goes in line with Maeng, Jang & Li's call for a higher emphasis on the "unique characteristics of festival motivation" (2016, p. 22), which goes beyond tourism. Indeed, the three musical motivations were much more useful in characterizing and understanding types of attendees than were the three extra-musical motivations.

5.2. Extra-musical motivations

Our results reinforce the role of socialization & entertainment in music festival attendance, which supports previous findings (Abreu-Novais & Arcodia, 2013). Interestingly, there was no difference between festivals in the strength of this dimension; attendees sought enjoyable activities and social interactions, regardless of the festival.

Our results also confirm the importance of the touristic and escape dimensions of festivals. Although this motivation shows only slight variation between the studied festivals, certain events seem to be more in tune with these motivations. For instance, because of *Festif's* downtown location, attendees can take full advantage of the city's touristic attractions during the day.

The last extra-musical motivation, family togetherness is characterized by its polarizing character: for some, being with your family

can be a motivation for music festival attendance while for others, family and festivals do not mix. Again, the environment of the studied events can explain some of the variance. For instance, *Rockfest's* festival-goers say they prefer to be without their family which, considering the intense/not-for-child atmosphere, is logical. On the other hand, *FestiVoix* attracts family-oriented attendees since it offers an ideal environment for them.

5.3. The key role of program scope

The cluster analysis also reveals an interesting relationship between program scope (niche versus wide) and musical motivations. For wide-scope events, the presence of star performers and musical discoveries motivations among attendees is directly related to the place given to both stars and new artists in the program. Indeed, *open to discoveries*, looking for young and promising musicians, are found mostly in new and local artists festivals, which is logical. Similarly, since *Enthusiasts* are interested in star performers, they tend to attend wide-audience events that program a significant amount of them. This being said, this relationship does not seem to apply to niche events. Indeed, attendees of *Envol & Macadam*, a niche event that programs many new bands, and of the *Rockfest*, an event with many star performers, display the same level of motivation for musical discoveries. This unexpected observation can be explained by attendees' perception of what is a musical discovery. Since *Envol & Macadam* programs artists from one specific musical niche, they are not perceived as discoveries by attendees since they already know this niche very well. Therefore, the interaction between star performers and musical discoveries motivations can be very different depending on the scope of the program. This also suggests that niche and wide-scope events, currently the two most successful models for music festivals (Lopez & Leenders, 2019), show distinct motivation patterns and should not be compared without precautions.

5.4. Managerial implications

Thanks to the cluster analysis, four types of popular music festival attendees were identified; *enthusiasts*, *open to discoveries*, *looking for stars* and *just for my bands*. These four segments differ from those identified by Bowen and Daniels (2005) and Fonseca and Ramos (2014), in that they vary mainly in their musical motivations.

To illustrate the potential applications of this study, Table 11 presents the typical profile of the festival-goers in the four groups and suggests programs suited to their motivations and preferences. Thus, to target *enthusiasts*, a festival must present a program that mixes star performers and musical discoveries. Furthermore, a festival that targets *open to discoveries* can afford to offer fewer concerts by star performers, provided the program features a significant amount of new and local artists of various musical genres. To attract the *looking for stars*, mostly made up of tourists, the program should propose concerts of stars from the same musical genre over a relatively short period of time. Lastly, the *just for my bands* seek specific favorite artists in short events and shun star performers.

The main advantage of this classification is that it is based on a component directly controlled by music festival organizations, namely their program. Therefore, managers can design the content and the format of their events with specific objectives in mind. For instance, to stimulate tourism, managers can propose short-lived but intense festival that offers concerts by well-known artists from the same genre of music. Alternatively, events seeking success among locals should create longer and more musically diverse events.

Table 11
Summary of the characteristics of the clusters of attendees.

Prominent characteristics	Enthusiasts	Open to discoveries	Looking for stars	Just for my bands
Sociodemographic profile	41-year-old locals, likely to have children (42%)	36-year-old locals, likely to have children (41%)	29-year-old tourists without children	30-year-old tourists without children
Main motivations	Motivated by the whole experience offered by music festivals.	To make musical discoveries is a top priority.	Seek to see their favorite bands and star performers.	Relatively indifferent to the festival experience outside their favorite artists. Aversion to star performers
Preferred musical program and format	Appreciate musical diversity. Want to see both new/local artists and star performers. Seek cheaper tickets (\$47 per day)	Prefer shorter festivals. Give more importance to the presence of new and local artists. Seek cheaper tickets (\$43 per day)	Seek less diversified programs and short events with star performers. Willing to pay \$62 per day for tickets.	Prefer short-lived events and are willing to pay a significant amount per day (\$60)
Favorite type of events	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wide audience 2. New & local artists 3. Niche 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New & local artists 2. Wide audience 3. Niche 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Niche events 2. Wide audience 3. New & local artists 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New & local artists 2. Niche 3. Wide audience

6. Limitations and concluding remarks

The first limitation of this study is that results all emerged from popular music festivals. Hence, generalization should be limited to events presenting this type of music. Indeed, since small variations in the program create important differences among audiences, it is logical to assume that differences as fundamental as the types of music presented should have a considerable impact on the attendees attracted. Thus, to explain the variance in the motivation for attendance of all types of music festivals, new studies should be conducted on events that program jazz, traditional, classical or world music.

Regarding the identified segments of popular music festival attendees, their generalization is also subject to limitations. First, if the sample suggests that those *open to discoveries* are somewhat as numerous as those *looking for stars*, it would be inappropriate to apply the same proportion to the whole population of popular music festival attendees. Indeed, since the studied festivals are characterized by divergences in the size of attendance, the reality is much more complex. To obtain a good picture of the population, it would be necessary to obtain data from a random sample of adults who have participated in at least one popular music festival, in the style of [Fonseca and Ramos \(2014\)](#). In addition, the selection of the studied event can have had an impact on the socio-demographic profile and the musical preferences of the three profile attendees. For instance, substantial love of rock, heavy metal and punk music was shared by *looking for stars* and *just for my bands*, which is probably caused by the fact that two of the studied events showcased those genres of music. Thus, attempts to generalize the identified clusters to other contexts should be made with precaution and should consider the diversity of music genres and their potential effects on the results.

This being said, while both identified motivations and clusters of attendees are subject to limitations, they also show potential applications in non-musical events (i.e. in festivals dedicated to theater, comedy or cinema, to name a few). For instance, the impact of wide audience versus niche programming may very well have as much impact on audience motivations as it has for music festivals. Furthermore, the proposed classification of music festival attendees could be applied, with contextual adjustments, to other events. Thus, while new studies should be carried-out to verify this, we can expect to find *Enthusiasts* in comedy festivals featuring a diversity of artists of multiple genres and varied notoriety while the *Open to discoveries* should be numerous in events dedicated to new and local comedians.

Another limitation of this study is related to the use in the cluster analysis of three single motivation items (*favorite artists*, *star performers*, *family togetherness*) in addition to the three identified motivation factors (*musical discoveries*, *socialization & entertainment*, *evasion & tourism*). While this constitutes an unusual approach, it is still justified in this context. First, as explained previously in the method section, those three single item motivations were removed from the factor analysis (as suggested by [Field, 2013](#) and [Gray & Kinnear, 2012](#)) because they correlated weakly with the eleven other items used in this study and not because they were theoretically irrelevant. Indeed, since music and family togetherness are important dimensions of attendees motivations highlighted in many previous studies ([Bowen & Daniels, 2005](#); [Gelder & Robinson, 2009](#); [Nicholson & Pearce, 2001](#); [Pegg & Patterson, 2010](#); [Pérez-Gálvez et al., 2017](#); [Vinnicombe & Sou, 2017](#)), we thought it was essential to keep them in the remaining of the analysis and to treat them as important motivations dimensions. Since those three items (*favorite artists*, *star performers*, *family togetherness*) cannot be considered as factors per se, we decided to only describe them as motivation dimensions in the manuscript. However, the fact that those three items are not motivation factors does not make them, in our opinion, less relevant when discussing why the respondents of our sample attended the different music festivals.

Our research is also limited by the small ratio between sample size and number of segmenting variables. Indeed, recent research suggests

that the minimum sample size for a data-driven segmentation analysis should be 70 times the number of variables (Dolnicar, Grün, Leisch, & Schmidt, 2014) which would mean in our case using 4 or less variables. This is therefore a limitation of this study. This being said, we argue that discarding some of the motivation dimensions for the cluster analysis would not make sense theoretically since we would have to set aside key elements of music festival attendance motivations. Furthermore, the use of transformed values (factors) instead of raw items in a segmentation study (i.e. using a factor-cluster approach) has been criticized because it inevitably discards some information during the process and can create «noisier» clusters (Dolnicar & Grün, 2008; Khoo-Lattimore, Prayag, & Disegna, 2019). Since the use of the 14 raw items would significantly worsen the sample size issue, we decided to stick with the six identified motivations. This is another limitation of this study. This being said, the use in the cluster analysis of the three items excluded from the factor analysis answers one of the criticisms made of factor-cluster segmentation, i.e. that discarding certain items could otherwise prevent the identification of niche segments (Dolnicar & Grün, 2008).

Another possible limitation of this paper relates to the time gap between the data collection (2015) and the publication of this article (2020). Indeed, the music festival experience has seen some changes since 2015, notably due to the constant increase in the social media usage: just in the province of Québec (Canada) where the data was collected, 65% of adults declared using social media networks daily in 2018, a 15% increase since 2016 (CEFRIQ, 2019). Because social media is often used by attendees during music festivals (Grate, 2016), this increase may have changed attendee behavior. However, we argue that for our sample of events, this does not affect the validity of the results, since social media networks were an integral part of the festival experience back in 2015. For instance, events such as the *Festif!* or the *Festivoix* had strong interactions with their attendees on the social networks before, during and after their 2015 edition. Furthermore, while it is true that festival-goers may be motivated to attend an event in order to publicly display their attendance, share their stylish outfit and exhibit their friendships on social networks, we argue that this constitutes one of the components of the “socialization” dimension of motivation and not a new dimension per se. Hence, if social media may have changed the way people socialize during music festivals, it should not really change the importance given to the socialization dimension of motivation. This would go in line with our results in the sense that “socialization” is always an important part of festival motivation, even if the way attendees socialize can vary considerably from one event to the other; for some it means to dance and party hard during a punk music concert, for others to chat comfortably seated between two country music performances. Naturally, this would need to be verified in future studies since it goes beyond the objectives of our research.

Ultimately, the main implications of this article consist of putting forward the importance of a music festival's program, both in terms of content and format, on the attendees it attracts. Indeed, preferences in terms of level of musical diversity, presence of star performers and special events, festival duration and cost of the tickets per day all vary across the four types of attendees, which themselves differ with regards to favorite genres, age, origin, professional status and civil status. The results of this study follow those of Kruger and Saayman (2012) who affirm in their article “Show Me the Band and I Will Show You the Market” that the identity of an artist and the genre of music influence the characteristics of its audience. In fact, the particularity of music festivals is that, as they offer a series of shows instead of one discrete event, the characteristics of their attendees are related to the program as a whole. Thus, the formula used by Kruger and Saayman (2012) could be very well rephrased, with a slight adjustment, “Show Me the Program and I Will Show You the Market”.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2020.100670>.

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