

The influence of sustainable event management practices on consumers' word-of-mouth and visit intention in the music event industry

Submitted to Dr. Marion Garaus

Rada Assenova Kopreva
1811014

Vienna, Austria, 31st of May, 2021

Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed. The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

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Abstract

Contemporary consumers are becoming more considerate of the impacts of economies and are shifting to making more environmentally conscious purchasing decisions. Additionally, various sources claim that consumer green purchasing is initiated by consumers' general environmental consciousness and green self-efficacy. As modern-day consumers are also event attendees, it is likely that the consumer demand for sustainable efforts is also present in the music event industry. Therefore, it is valuable for event organizations to focus on incorporating sustainable event management practices within the events they produce. Nevertheless, it is also important for event organizations to know how sustainability management will influence event consumers. Since music events are intangible products, event attendees are often motivated to visit a specific event due to positive recommendations. Therefore, positive word-of-mouth plays a major role when it comes to attracting potential event goers.

Given the aforementioned growing sustainability trend and the importance of word-of-mouth method in the event industry, this thesis investigates the influence of sustainable event management practices on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention. In this research study, sustainable event management practices are represented by waste management procedures. Furthermore, this research provides valuable insights on whether waste management affects green self-efficacy, and it further explains the influence of green self-efficacy on consumers' word-of-mouth and visit intention.

In order to examine how consumers respond to waste management practices within music events, an online survey experiment was conducted. Respondents were randomly allocated to one of two groups and were exposed to a designated music event condition. The first experimental group presented an event which included waste management practices, whereas the second experimental group presented an event in which no waste management practices were applied. The generated data was analyzed using an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and it revealed that waste management practices within music events have a positive influence on consumer

green self-efficacy. Moreover, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was applied, and it revealed that the integration of waste management in music events has a positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention. Lastly, a regression analysis revealed that consumer green self-efficacy has a positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to all professors who have taught me throughout the past 3 years. All of you have inspired my interest in various subjects and it has been a pleasure being your student. Continue lighting up the way for future professionals!

I would also like to thank my Bachelor Thesis supervisor, Dr. Marion Garaus, for her support, guidance and help, not only in the thesis writing process, but throughout all subjects that she taught. It is amazing when professors are not only teachers, but leaders and role models.

Furthermore, I would like to thank Prof. Dimitris Christopoulos, Prof. Karl Weinmayer, as well as the Academic Office of MODUL University for providing me with the opportunity to develop my research through receiving the *Scholarship of Hope*. Your support is truly appreciated and I am grateful I got the opportunity to develop a reliable research which could benefit external organizations as well.

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2. Introduction

Like almost every other human activity, the creation and establishment of most events requires valuable resources provided by the planet and almost always results in emissions and waste (Jones, 2010). Nowadays, multiple event organizations incorporate sustainable event guidelines in order to design and deliver more environmentally mindful events (Hall, 2012). Research states that in 2015, more than 43% of German event operators integrated sustainability management in their work, compared to only 27% in 2011 (German Convention Bureau, 2015). Currently, more and more event providers turn their attention to sustainable event management not only to reduce the ecological footprint of events, but to gain other advantages such as event cost reduction, competitive advantage and improved event image (Porter, 1985; Jones, 2010).

In order to define sustainable event management, it is necessary to define sustainable development first. Sustainable development was defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations General Assembly, 1987, pp. 43). Accordingly, sustainable event management considers the current and future social, economic and environmental elements of sustainability, addressing the needs of event visitors, the event industry, the surrounding environment and host communities, in order to establish more environmentally friendly events (Musgrave and Raj, 2014). By incorporating sustainability management, event teams decrease the amount of resources consumed and also the waste generated throughout events (Jones, 2010).

Integrating sustainability management within events is a method to preserve hosting environments, but it can also be an efficient way to attract potential event visitors (Henderson, 2011). As contemporary consumers have a growing interest in the so-called “green” products (Debevec et al., 2013), there is a high consumer demand for ecologically conscious products and services. Recent research states that in the year of 2020, 53% of customers pay attention to sustainability of products in the Netherlands, compared to 2010, when only 25% had interest in the sustainable origin of products (Gelder, 2020). Since today’s consumers are also event attendees, it is

likely that they will be appreciative of sustainable practices within music events as well. Furthermore, multiple studies reveal that a significant motivator for green purchasing is green-self efficacy (Guo et al., 2019). Research by Nordlund et al. (2003) claims that green self-efficacy can initiate environmental beliefs among individuals and potentially trigger environmentally conscious consumer behavior. Therefore, this study will also examine the levels of green self-efficacy among consumers.

Additionally, word-of-mouth plays a major role within the experience economy and more specifically, the event industry (Silverman, 2011). Since events are intangible services, they cannot be pre-evaluated before purchase (Jalilvand et al., 2012). Accordingly, purchasing intangible goods and services implicates higher risk and that is why, when it comes to purchasing a service, many consumers are likely to take into consideration the advice of friends, family or even strangers (Zarrad & Debabi, 2015). Various sources state that generating positive word-of-mouth often results in higher visit intention among tourists and event consumers (Jalilvand et al., 2012).

However, little research has been conducted on how sustainable guidelines affect word-of-mouth and visit intention of music event goers. Currently, there are multiple research reports measuring sustainability management in events but only a few studies examining the consumer's feedback on sustainable practices applied in the creation of music events. While there is a growing trend of consumer interest in sustainable products, there is little information about how consumers perceive sustainable events. This results in present event teams lacking enough relevant information whether the established sustainable practices in music events are approved by their audience and whether they should be applied in future events.

To fully understand why event organizations would consider incorporating sustainable event management practices within their events, it is important to consider modern-day consumers and their levels of green self-efficacy. As there is little research about the influence of green self-efficacy on consumer attitude within the context of event management, this study also aims to examine if consumer green self-efficacy has an impact on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention within music events.

To fill the knowledge gap stated above, this thesis will examine in detail the influence of sustainable event practices on consumers word-of-mouth and visit intention. Additionally, this research study contributes to extant literature in at least three ways. Firstly, this thesis indicates the benefits of applying sustainable event management practices. It further identifies several event management practices which are currently used by event organizers and can be incorporated in other events. Secondly, this study explores the relevance of consumer green self-efficacy in the event industry. It aims to develop the understanding of green self-efficacy influences consumer attitude towards sustainable music events. Additionally, this thesis provides valuable insights on consumer environmental consciousness and its effects. Third, this thesis aims to provide deeper insights about the opinion of consumers on sustainable event management practices and provide relevant information to event organizations. Therefore, if this study reveals that event consumers have a positive attitude towards sustainable event practices, event producers should focus on integrating sustainable procedures within their work.

Concluding it can be stated that, the objective of this research is to determine how sustainable event management practices would affect consumer's word-of-mouth and visit intention specifically in music events such as festivals and concerts. Since there is a high consumer interest in the topic of sustainability in multiple fields, it is likely for sustainable event management procedures to have an influence on consumer's word-of-mouth and visit intention.

3. Literature review

In order to reach sustainable development, organizations should aim to maintain a balance between social, economic and environmental sustainability (Hall, 2012). Within the context of event management, the Canadian Standards Association (2015) claims that when organizations are establishing sustainable events, they should aim to increase the value of the experience of the event as well as to maintain a high quality of social life, environmental preservation and economic growth. As events in all forms generate both positive and negative outcomes for communities and

destinations, it is essential for modern event teams to consider the three pillars of sustainable development when planning an event (Hall, 2012).

The three pillar impacts of events are *social*, *environmental* and *economic* (Jones, 2010). The positive effects of the *social perspective* include development of communities, development of facilities and increased construction expenditures, increased employment and civic-mindedness. Furthermore, Arcodia and Whitford (2002) suggest that events can initiate the construction of facilities which are used freely by the public when the event ends. The establishment of events also contributes to destination marketing which further benefits local businesses (Arcodia & Whitford, 2002; Jones, 2010). The negative social effects include security and health risks, interruption of daily activities, migration of locals, community indifference. Additionally, there are other risks such as minimized use of established infrastructure or unequal distribution of wealth (Musgrave and Raj, 2014).

Additionally, from the *environmental perspective*, the positive externalities include raising awareness about environmental issues, development of waste land and conservation of specific areas. Accordingly, the negative effects involve waste and pollution, location damage (can be both short or long term), traffic congestion, noise pollution, increased usage of energy and water resources (Arcodia & Whitford, 2002; Musgrave and Raj, 2014).

From an *economic point of view*, events generate more positive externalities than negative ones (Musgrave and Raj, 2014). Overall, events generate various opportunities for tourism and local commerce development (Arcodia & Whitford, 2002). The positive effects include direct and indirect expenditure, development of trade, and event product extensions. Other positive effects include increased value of properties due to the further development of specific event areas and increased construction investments (Jones, 2010; Arcodia & Whitford, 2002). Depending on the scope of the event, events can initiate building processes which can be further maintained in the long-term (Holmes at al., 2015). The negative economic effects of events include inflated price of goods and services during events, costs of event failures to local or national economies and unequal distribution of wealth (Musgrave and Raj, 2014).

Event management teams should ensure that the externalities of the events they create are within acceptable limits so that they do not contribute to social disadvantage, environmental deterioration, or economic difficulties (Holmes et al., 2015).

To examine the topic of sustainability within music events, it is valuable to firstly explore sustainability management from a more general perspective. Globally, consumer environmental knowledge and concern have risen (Cleveland et al., 2005). In response to that, the need and demand for sustainability management within industries has also increased (Loucks et al., 2010). As sustainability management has gained importance on both corporate and consumer level (Bradbury, 2003; Cleveland et al., 2005), both aspects are further discussed in this research study.

3.1. Environmental consciousness of today's businesses

In the 21st century, multiple industries take into consideration the concept of sustainability, modify it according to the needs of their business, and learn to apply it in their practice (Loucks et al., 2010). Modern companies rise awareness about environmental mindfulness and promote it within and outside their organization, communicating messages about sustainability to their employees and clients (Loucks et al., 2010). Recent research examining the share of Italian businesses planning to undertake sustainable investments, states that in 2019, 21.5% of enterprises were planning to make such investments, whereas in 2014, this percentage was only 5.7% (Unioncamere, 2019). Globally, small, medium and large enterprises have focused on enforcing environmental sustainability within their work process (Eber, 2002). Research states that the global fast food chain *McDonalds* has implemented a specialized computer networking system which monitors the use of electrical power, which results in cost reduction by up to 10% (Smith & Adamy, 2007).

Today's businesses are interested in applying sustainability management not only to preserve hosting environments, but also to attract mindful employees (Loucks et al., 2010). Companies are now able to attract potential employees who believe and support environmental and social values and ethical behavior within the company (Hoffman, 2005). Organizations which focus on sustainable development

performance and corporate social responsibility often find they are able to attract and retain higher quality employees (Loucks et al., 2010). Recent research claims that 37% of surveyed Swedish employees state that corporate sustainability work is important when choosing a workplace. Additional 12% from the surveyed sample claimed that incorporating corporate sustainability is to a very large extent significant when choosing an employer (Svenskar och Hållbarhet 2019).

Another benefit of the organizations' engagement in sustainable development or other social or environmental activities, is that companies could also initiate and establish stable relationships with governments (Patten, 1991). According to Hart and Milstein (2003), some companies consider sustainability management a moral mission, while others- a legal necessity which allows firms to operate rightfully. Either way, companies which apply sustainable management within their work are more likely to form stable relationships with legal authorities (Loucks et al., 2010). On the other hand, the influence of governments is localized in nature and quite sensitive under the impact of larger corporations. For example, research studies in Spain suggest that government regulations promote the development of corporate social responsibility (CSR) within workplaces (Aragon-Correa, 1998). However, a similar study in the Netherlands reported that small and medium enterprises are less responsive to government regulations than to the public opinion and demand (Rutherford et al., 2000). As incorporating sustainable development practices within companies still holds a level of uncertainty in terms of market benefits, many small and/or medium enterprises are not willing to take the same risk as larger organizations.

Research further states that if implemented correctly, sustainable strategies within firms can contribute to worldwide sustainability but also generate a drive shareholder value (Hart and Milstein, 2003). As global sustainability is a complicated concept, it has to be approached by multiple consistent corporate actions. Hart and Milstein (2003) also suggest four ways by which companies can create value. Firstly, enterprises can create value by decreasing the level of consumption during the process of production in order to reduce pollution. Secondly, organizations can generate value by operating more transparently and responsively to match the civil society. Thirdly, companies can develop innovative technologies which facilitate the

process of conservation of natural resources and surrounding environments. Lastly, businesses can achieve value by meeting the needs of consumers of lower income in order to benefit inclusive wealth creation and distribution (Hart and Milstein, 2003). Incorporating sustainable practices within organizations is an efficient yet successful way to differentiate a company from competitors and to attract the growing segment of environmentally conscious consumers.

In addition, by undertaking sustainable measures companies could create an improved brand image and accordingly, increase sales. Research argues that sustainable practices hold the potential to enhance legitimacy and reputation (Hart and Milstein, 2003). Leading organizations such as *Unilever*, *Patagonia*, *IKEA*, *Interface*, *Nestlé*, and *Apple* are all integrating sustainability management in their business strategies. In fact, as of the year 2019, 42% of the surveyed experts claimed *Unilever* is the leading company incorporating sustainable practices, followed by *Patagonia* (26%) and *IKEA* (15%) (GlobeScan & SustainAbility, 2020). This proves that industry leaders are responsive to the trend of green consumerism and are also reflective towards the modern-day demand (Loucks et al., 2010).

Various companies are implementing sustainability management within their work process and final product to match the mindset and expectations of the demanding consumer of the 21st century. In addition, modern event providers also respond to this demand and incorporate sustainable guidelines in the event process (Musgrave & Raj, 2014). To explore how event organizations incorporate sustainability management within music events and festivals, some popular sustainable event management practices are further discussed in the following section.

2.1.1 Sustainable event management practices in music events and festivals

Sustainable event management practices are sets of techniques and procedures used in event management which decrease resource consumption and ensure improvements to the three pillar impacts- environmental, economic, social (Jones, 2010). Sustainable management frameworks are incorporated in events in order for the negative externalities of events to be minimized (Musgrave and Raj, 2014).

Integrating sustainable management in the event industry has faced some challenges, as the number of visitors at music events and festivals increases throughout the years. That is why sustainable event management guidelines and practices should be updated to be able to consider the number of visitors and deliver ecologically mindful events for larger audiences (Musgrave and Raj, 2014).

Sustainable policies and plans provide clarity to various stakeholders and event organizers. The success of an established sustainable plan depends on the event organizers, staff, suppliers, and the event visitors (Musgrave and Raj, 2014). There are multiple sustainable event guides who encourage and lead event managers and their teams to establish events which are mindful of their hosting environments (Holmes et al., 2015).

One of these guides is the DEFRA Sustainable Events guide which advises event organizers to include sustainability clauses in their contracts, to be energy and water efficient, to communicate digitally, to recognize the wellbeing of stakeholders, suppliers, delegates and local communities, to be transparent to all event participants (DEFRA, 2007). It also recommends that event managers use the three Rs of sustainability- reduce, reuse, recycle, in order to minimize waste, consumption and general ecological footprint. It also states that event producers should raise awareness about sustainability and share some sustainable practices with the event staff and attendees (Musgrave and Raj, 2014).

Another event management guideline focusing on sustainable development is the Sustainable Exhibition Industry Project (SEXI, 2002). The SEXI project considers sustainability issues in the exhibition industry of the United Kingdom and identifies some ways to reduce waste and resources when creating exhibitions (SEXI, 2002). It advises event managers to research, redesign, reduce, reuse and recycle when they arrange exhibition settings. Research done by the SEXI project states that materials such as carpet and cardboard used for flooring and decoration were creating the most waste at events. Additionally, there was significant waste generated from packaging and printed promotional materials. The project suggests that recyclable materials can be collected through waste segregation and therefore used again in future events or recycled accordingly (SEXI, 2002).

Other principles which are taken into consideration in terms of establishing sustainable events are the Hannover principles. These are nine statements which guide architects and designers how to adapt their work toward sustainable results (McDonough, 2003). Sustainable design is the realization of environmentally cautious interpretations which serve humans without compromising the Earth's wellbeing (McDonough, 2003). These principles were designed for the purpose of architecture, but they can be applied to multiple fields, including events establishment (Jones, 2010).

| THE HANNOVER PRINCIPLES | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. | Insist on rights of humanity and nature to co-exist |
| 2. | Recognize interdependence |
| 3. | Respect relationships between spirit and matter |
| 4. | Accept responsibility for the consequences of design |
| 5. | Create safe objects of long-term value |
| 6. | Eliminate the concept of waste |
| 7. | Rely on natural energy flows |
| 8. | Understand the limitations of design |
| 9. | Seek constant improvement by the sharing of knowledge. |

Table 1 The Hannover principles (McDough, 2003)

As per Table 1, the Hannover principles cover multiple aspects of sustainable design and creation. These principles could serve as a guideline for event managers to plan and establish events which serve the needs of event attendees and event stakeholders, but are also ecologically considerate (Jones, 2010).

Besides general guidelines and policies, there are some developed sustainable event policies which can be applied to various types of events. There are multiple ways to transform event venues, purchasing ways, sound & light production, staging & decor, catering, transport, communication and offices and make them more environmentally friendly (Musgrave & Raj, 2014).

For indoor venues, event managers have to keep in mind the venue's location. To make an event more environmentally friendly, the event's location should be located closely to most event participants and should be easily accessible by public transportation. Additionally, venues should consider waste management and should think about any recycling or composting opportunities (Holmes et al., 2015). Another aspect to consider is the way of heating or cooling the venue. Sustainable methods and guidelines could be applied to ensure more environmentally ways to powering electrical outlets (YOUROPE, 2007). Moreover, the venue should establish environmental policies, managing energy efficiency, water conservation and grey water processes. It is also important to consider if the venue has access to fresh air and if it is cleaned with chemical-free products (Jones, 2010).

When establishing events outside, event managers should consider if there are any ecologically sensitive areas surrounding the location (Holmes et al., 2015). Additionally, event teams should take into consideration if there is access to water and how sewage and grey water disposal is managed. Finally, event teams should take into account what is the access to grid power and how it can be delivered (Jones, 2010).

Every event needs some supplies and in order to make the purchasing process more environmentally friendly, event managers can adapt their purchasing decisions. In her book, Megan Jones (2010) advises event managers to buy needed goods from local suppliers, to use local contractors, to only purchase products which are "eco-labeled". The book also states that it is important to purchase goods which are ethically mindful and produced in a fair labour environment (Jones,2010).

As all music events involve sound and lighting technology, events of this type usually involve the consumption of large amounts of electrical power (Holmes et al. 2015). In order to make electricity usage as sustainable as possible, event organizers can try to power all equipment using green energy provided by main green energy providers, by biofuels or zero emission technologies (DEFRA, 2007; YOUROPE, 2007). The *Green'n'Clean* report by *The European Festival Association* further advises event organizations to install timers on street lighting and to equip music event areas with power saving lightbulbs (YOUROPE, 2007). Association Another idea to minimize the

event's footprint is to establish the so called "Switch-off" campaign, which encourages event organizers and event participants to switch off all appliances which are not being used at the moment, including lights during the day (Jones, 2010).

Music events produce significant amounts of waste when it comes to creating staging, sets and decor (SEXI, 2002). One way to decrease waste is to hire all staging equipment instead of buying it. If the event planners have their own gear, sustainable event management guidelines advise event organizations to reuse their equipment as much as possible (SEXI, 2002). In order to make staging more sustainable, it is essential to think about the materials used in stage construction. According to Megan Jones (2010), event organizers can try to build sets using reused materials, using sustainably grown timber (FSC), non-toxic paints and polishes with zero volatile organic compounds emissions. Additionally, for décor creation, organic cotton or fabrics produced under fair labour conditions can be used (Jones, 2010).

As catering is an essential part of every event, event organizers should consider what are the options for offering food and beverages in a more sustainable manner (Holmes et al., 2015; Jones, 2010). Firstly, green event guidelines suggest that all food offered during the event should be seasonal and locally produced in order to avoid deliveries from distant locations (Holmes et al., 2015). By using local food and beverage providers, event organizations can decrease transportation costs and generated negative externalities such as air pollution (Jones, 2010). In their book, Musgrave and Raj (2014) also advise event organizations to offer food which is prepared with organic and locally produced ingredients. Additionally, event teams should avoid offering food in packaging. Instead, they are advised to establish convenient buffets in order to serve food to participants without generating additional packaging waste (Jones, 2010). Event teams can integrate the usage of reusable or paper/ wooden recyclable cutlery, glassware and crockery (YOUROPE, 2007; DEFRA, 2007). Moreover, event planners can donate excess food to charity organizations, create a food bank or a hostel for anyone in need, or send it for composting (Jones, 2010). To avoid generating waste from water bottles, event planners can provide water dispensers and reusable cups for event visitors (DEFRA, 2007).

Transportation is a major theme when it comes to leaving an ecological footprint (Peeters & Schouten, 2006). In order to reduce the emissions generated when attending or leaving an event, event organizers can take several suggestions into consideration. Firstly, events should be placed in convenient locations accessible by public transportation (Holmes et al., 2015). Accordingly, event teams should provide to visitors, participants, delegates and staff detailed information about public transport access and timetables. If there are areas which cannot be reached by public transportation, the event team is advised to provide shuttle buses to connect existing public transportation and the event's location (YOUROPE, 2007). Moreover, event teams can further motivate participants, visitors and staff to come to the event using sustainable transportation (such as public transport, bikes or by foot) by offering incentives or prizes (A Greener Festival, 2020). Another way to ensure sustainable transportation to the event is to limit car parking space and charge for it, yet to offer freehand secure bike parking. Furthermore, event organizers are advised to encourage carpooling (Musgrave & Raj, 2014).

Another way to incorporate sustainability within events is to communicate sustainable ideas with the events participants, attendees and crew (YOUROPE, 2007; Jones, 2010). Firstly, event teams should communicate clearly any sustainable guidelines or rules which apply to this event (Holmes et al., 2015). In the case of waste management, the non-profit company *A Green Festival* (2020) suggest that event teams should inform event attendees what type of waste should be segregated in the different containers, what is the purpose of the containers, where they are located, and what is going to happen with the waste after the event. An example from practice is the Fusion Festival held in 2016 in Liverpool, United Kingdom. During the Fusion festival, the non-profit recycling organization *RECOUP* collaborated with the soft drinks company *Britvic* and established a network of recycling units, where Fusion festivals attendees were able to recycle their plastic bottles (RECOUP, 2016). Additionally, Fusion participants were encouraged to apply waste segmentation as they were offered a free backpack made from 3 recycled bottles, in exchange for recycling their waste (RECOUP, 2016). These practices were clearly communicated to event participants via online platforms, physical signs and labels, and announcements during the event (RECOUP, 2016). Moreover, research by Musgrave & Raj (2014) claims that if event attendees have received clear instructions, they are much more

likely to follow sustainable regulations. Additionally, by communicating these ideas, event teams are raising awareness about sustainability methods and also creating an image of an eco-friendly event (Jones, 2010). Event managers can also use different media to promote their sustainable practices and the event itself (DEFRA, 2007).

To incorporate sustainability in the events office, event teams can undertake several steps. Event offices can apply the three R's of sustainability- reduce, reuse, recycle, within the workplace (Jones, 2010). This can be achieved by using sustainable office supplies, by recycling paper, plastic and metal, by using less paper and working digitally (A Green Festival, 2020). Furthermore, sustainable guidelines advise event organizations to use biodegradable bags to collect waste or to recycle (A Green Festival, 2020). Also, offices can reduce their usage of electricity by putting all equipment on power saving mode, by putting off lights or having light sensors installed. Additionally, event team offices can be occupied with water dispensers in order to encourage colleagues to use reusable water bottles or washable cups (Holmes et al., 2015)).

A real-life example of a working sustainable policy in a largescale event is the annual major music event "Burning Man". The *Burning Man* team has established ten principles which represent the community's culture and ethos. This set of statements reflects on both social and environmental principles which are generally followed by all event participants (Jones, 2010). Table 2 (below) presents the statements in their authentic form, provided by the Burning Man official website (Burning Man Project, 2021). The 8th principle states "Leaving no trace" and it refers to event participants cleaning after themselves and not leaving any generated waste behind. The *Burning Man* management team also encourages festival attendees to bring all necessities for the festival themselves, including food and beverage, and to take back home any residue such as unconsumed food, packaging, generated trash (Burning Man Project, 2021).

| The Ten principles of Burning Man | |
|--|--|
| 1. | Radical Inclusion: Anyone may be a part of Burning Man. We welcome and respect the stranger. No prerequisites exist for participation in our community. |

| | |
|-----|--|
| 2. | Gifting: Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting does not contemplate a return or an exchange for something of equal value. |
| 3. | Decommodification: In order to preserve the spirit of gifting, our community seeks to create social environments that are unmediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions, or advertising. We stand ready to protect our culture from such exploitation. |
| 4. | Radical self-reliance: Burning Man encourages the individual to discover, exercise and rely on his or her inner resources. |
| 5. | Radical self-expression: Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of the individual. No one other than the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content. It is offered as a gift to others. |
| 6. | Communal Effort: Our community values creative cooperation and collaboration. We strive to produce, promote and protect social networks, public spaces, works of art, and methods of communication that support such interaction. |
| 7. | Civic Responsibility: We value civil society. Community members who organize events should assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavor to communicate civic responsibilities to participants. They must also assume responsibility for conducting events in accordance with local, state and federal laws. |
| 8. | Leaving no trace: Our community respects the environment. We are committed to leaving no physical trace of our activities wherever we gather. We clean up after ourselves and endeavor, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better state than when we found them. |
| 9. | Participation: Our community is committed to a radically participatory ethic. We believe that transformative change, whether in the individual or in society, can occur only through the medium of deeply personal participation. We achieve being through doing. Everyone is invited to work. Everyone is invited to play. We make the world real through actions that open the heart. |
| 10. | Immediacy: Immediate experience is, in many ways, the most important touchstone of value in our culture. We seek to overcome barriers that stand between us and a recognition of our inner selves, the reality of those around us, participation in society, and contact with a natural world exceeding human powers. No idea can substitute for this experience. |

Table 2 The ten principles of Burning Man (The Burning Man Project, 2021)

Sustainable event management policies should be established and applied to music events in order to decrease the environmental footprint of the event industry and decrease the event's costs (Jones, 2010). Furthermore, since consumer's interest in sustainability grows, event organizations which implement sustainable event management practices within their events often obtain a competitive advantage (Henderson, 2011). The benefits of implementing sustainability management in music events are further discussed in the next section of this thesis.

2.1.2 Benefits of incorporating sustainable event management practices

There are various advantages of incorporating sustainable event management practices which benefit not only the surrounding environment, but favor event organizations as well. The generated benefits include environmental preservation, reduction of generated waste, reduction of costs, improved brand image perception, and gain of competitive advantage (Jones, 2010; Henderson, 2011; Musgrave & Raj, 2014).

From an environmental perspective, sustainable event management practices are a way for event participants to preserve hosting environments (Jones, 2010). Events of various types require different amounts of resources and often result in generating certain negative externalities such as emissions and waste (Dickson & Arcodia, 2009). Sustainable event management practices ensure that music events become more environmentally friendly by using up less resources and producing less emissions (Dickson & Arcodia, 2009). Using sustainable guidelines when establishing events can minimize the use of non-reusable sources, use of synthetic sources, emissions to air, emissions to water and emissions to land in the form of waste (Jones, 2010). Event teams can choose sustainable products and services so that they create a more environmentally friendly event, but also contribute to businesses which are mindful to the environment (Musgrave & Raj, 2014). Additionally, by introducing the idea of sustainability at the event, event teams have the opportunity to engage and inspire its audience and stakeholders to be environmentally cautious in their own daily lives (Dickson & Arcodia 2009).

Furthermore, establishing sustainable frameworks in music events often results in reduction of waste generation (Jones, 2010). Event venues, event organization teams and event participants and attendees all generate some waste (SEXI, 2002). Research conducted by The Sustainable Exhibition Industry Project (2002) claims that at the beginning of events, most waste generated consists of event construction leftovers such as cable, carpet cut-offs, paper and other materials required for building event infrastructure. As per sustainable event guides, such materials can be reused in other events or recycled. At the end of the event, waste often consists of a large quantities of printed materials, packaging and any food and beverage leftovers (SEXI, 2002). According to The Sustainable Exhibition Industry Project (2002), the amount of waste generated by event visitors is positively correlated to the quality and relevance of the printed materials provided to them. Therefore, printed promotional materials which are low-quality or irrelevant are often thrown out during the event. To conquer this issue, event organizations are encouraged to distribute promotional or information through digital channels (Jones, 2010). Identifying and applying a sustainable framework in events should reduce the negative impacts on ecological environments by ensuring the decreased consumption of resources (Musgrave and Raj, 2014). To ensure long-term success of music events such as festivals, event organizers should maximize economic benefits but also preserve the natural surroundings in which the event takes place (Johnson et al., 1994).

Incorporating sustainable practices in events may also lead to reduced costs, because through methods such as the three R's- reduce, reuse, recycle, organizations can save a significant amount of financial resources (Jones, 2010). While creating budgets, event teams can look for saving opportunities both on short term and long-term basis. Event management teams are advised to make comparisons in all of the main resource areas such as energy, water supply, fuel supply, transport, procurement, waste disposal (Holmes et al., 2015). According to Jones (2010), many times the sustainable alternative is cheaper than the traditional one. To put this in perspective, let's assume that an event uses green batteries or puts all equipment on power saving mode. This results in consuming less electricity to power all event facilities which results in decreased consumption and decreased power costs. Generally, using up less resources results in paying for less resources which decreases costs (Musgrave & Raj). Additionally, by distribution event information and promotional material online,

event organizations can save decrease print expenditures (DEFRA, 2007). However, many times event organizers are limited when it comes to decreasing costs through sustainable management as in some cases sustainable alternatives can be costly (Henderson, 2011).

Sustainable event management practices may create a better image for event organizers and the brands associated with the event (Jones, 2010). Currently, consumers are becoming concerned with environmental preservation and are looking for brands who are environmentally mindful as well (Cleveland et al., 2005). Recent research states that in 2020, more than 53% of customers pay attention to sustainability of products in the Netherlands, compared to 2010, when only 25% had interest in the sustainable origin of products (Gelder, 2020). Other research claims that in 2019, waste reduction was voted as the most important initiative to music festival attendees in the United Kingdom (Ticketmaster, 2019). As more and more people become environmentally conscious and turn to environmentally preferable purchasing, event organizers should follow the trend in order to attract and satisfy event participants who value sustainability (Johnson et al., 1994).

Sustainable events often have a competitive advantage compared to events which do not include sustainable policies (Henderson, 2011). According to Porter (1985), competitive advantage can be examined in three dimensions- cost, differentiation and focus. One way to ensure a competitive advantage is to establish an event at a lower cost compared to relevant competitors (Porter, 1985). As discussed previously, sustainable event management practices can ensure some decrease in relevant expenditures. For example, events generate a significant amount of waste which may have to be buried in a landfill at the cost of the event organizers. Accordingly, encouraging stakeholders and event participants to generate less waste may result in reduced costs (Henderson, 2011). Additionally, events can generate competitive advantage through differentiation (Porter, 1985). Using sustainable management practices may ensure that the specific event is distinctive compared to competitors (Henderson, 2011). A real-life example of this practice is the “TRASHed” campaign of the *Coachella* festival. The “TRASHed” campaign is an art exhibition where different artists redecorate recycle bins and create unique designs in order to motivate event attendees to practice waste segmentation. The *Coachella* organization team

welcomes applications from everyone and chooses campaign participants based on multiple criteria such as art concept, past artworks, appropriateness for the festival and more (Coachella, 2020). This sustainable policy raises awareness about waste segregation and motivates event participants to recycle by simply attracting event attendees to the recycle bins through art (Coachella, 2020). It further makes the event distinctive, as the Coachella theme has created a branded campaign, not common among other festivals (Jones, 2010). Moreover, focus based competitive advantage happens when event planners target and attract event-goers who are predisposed to sustainability and already behave in a sustainable manner in their daily lives (Henderson, 2011). According to Hunt and Arnett (2004), targeting the right market segment is essential for reaching superior financial performance. In the context of sustainable events, it is probable that sustainable event practices will be appreciated by environmentally conscious consumers, the right focus group. Overall, there are multiple ways sustainable events can gain competitive advantage compared to events which do not practice and promote environmental protection (Henderson, 2011).

Moreover, it is important for event organizations to note the continuous trend of green consumerism and undertake actions accordingly (Cleveland et al., 2005). As consumers nowadays are becoming more environmentally conscious, they are in search of “green” products and services which allow them to make environmentally mindful purchases (Debevec et al., 2013). The ongoing consumer interest in purchasing sustainable products, develops a modern target segment for organizations. Additionally, green consumerism is gaining popularity among multiple age groups and other already existing market segments (Cleveland et al., 2005). This means that companies can reach various consumers by applying sustainable practices within their business and by making their product “greener”. With this rise of demand for green products, the demand for more environmentally friendly events is likely to rise as well (Jones, 2010). It is important for modern event management leaders to adapt to changing consumer segments and offer event products which are relevant, entertaining and engaging (Musgrave & Raj, 2014).

Nevertheless, different event markets may perceive sustainable event policies differently (Henderson, 2011). For example, the perceptions on sustainable event guidelines of festival goers versus conference attendees may completely differ. As

some groups might enjoy some sustainable guidelines more than others, it is important to identify which practices match the preferences of the target audience (Silverman, 2011). It is the duty of event organizers to identify which sustainable practices fit their audience and whether such policies are appropriate at all (Jones, 2010).

| | |
|----|--|
| | Identified benefits of incorporating sustainable event management practices: |
| 1. | Environmental preservation |
| 2. | Waste reduction |
| 3. | Cost reduction |
| 4. | Improved brand image perception |
| 5. | Gain of competitive advantage |

Table 3 Benefits of sustainable event management practices (Dickson & Arcodia, 2009; Jones, 2010; Cleveland et al., 2005; Henderson, 2011)

Table 3 provides a summary of the previously identified benefits of applying sustainable event management procedures.

To fully understand why music event organizers would consider incorporating sustainability management within their events, it is important to consider modern-day consumers and examine general consumer environmental consciousness. The next section of this thesis provides a detailed discussion of consumer environmental consciousness.

2.2 Environmental consciousness of today’s consumers

As consumer environmental knowledge and consciousness have significantly grown in recent years, modern consumers seem to be more environmentally conscious in various aspects of their life (Debevec et al., 2013). Consumers are more aware of

general environmental, economic and social impacts of industries and they seem to be more involved in the topic of sustainability than years before (Debevec et al., 2013). This means that currently, consumers are more mindful of their ecological footprint and are open to choosing sustainable alternatives to conventional shopping (Cleveland et al., 2005).

Consumer environmental knowledge about present and future environmental issues causes a significant twist in modern consumer behavior (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). As people are more aware of the consequences of the production and retail processes in larger corporations, consumers are more likely to adjust their preferred products and replace conventional with sustainable (Debevec et al., 2013). Recent research states that in 2018, nearly 70% of consumers located in the Netherlands were either sustainable consumers or consumers with the intention to be sustainable (Motivation, 2018).

Today's and future consumers who are interested in the topic of sustainability, are mostly shaped by younger generations such as millennials and generation Z representatives (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). Generation Y or the generation of the so-called "Millennials" is formed by people born between 1977 and 1994, therefore aged between 27 and 44 (as of the year 2021). Millennials are characterized as open-minded, ambitious and motivated by achieving success and are highly attracted to products which are innovative, collaborative, efficient, and customizable (Williams & Page, 2011). Additionally, Millennials are expressing strong spending power which is of great interest to businesses globally. Research has estimated that the Millennial market reveals a spending power worth around \$200 billion (Fuller, 2013). The group of Millennial consumers are expected to be the new power consumers, shaping a new high priority target for marketers across the globe (Fuller, 2013).

In order to monitor today's and future consumers, it is also valuable to take into consideration generation Z representatives (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). Members of the generation Z are the first who have never lived without the use of the Internet. They are described as confident, technologically advanced, self-controlled and appreciative of authenticity and truthfulness (Williams & Page, 2011). Both Millennials and Generation Z members appear to have a higher interest in sustainability than

other, older generations. A research conducted by Deloitte (2018) presents that around 87% of surveyed generation Z representatives and 75% of surveyed Millennials have claimed that they are willing to pay extra for a sustainable and socially ethical product. On the other hand, for preceding generations such as generation X, this percentage is only at 62% and for the generation of baby boomers, at 59% (Deloitte, 2018).

Moreover, these groups are also more likely to adjust their parenting practices in order to communicate environmental sustainability to their offspring. Recent statistic published by Wunsch (2021) identifies that 72% of surveyed Millennials and 65% of surveyed Generation Z representatives reported that they taught their children about environmental sustainability. On the other hand, around 59% of baby boomers, or people who were born between 1946 and 1964, claim that they advised their children about sustainability. Additionally, the statistic reveals that 47% of surveyed Millennials and 49% of surveyed generation Z representatives claimed that their children have voluntarily expressed an interest in the topic of sustainability. This percentage was around 29% among baby boomer respondents (Wunsch, 2021).

Since consumers globally have been introduced to the topic of sustainability and are showing interest in preserving the environment, they are likely to be more environmentally conscious and therefore appreciative of sustainability management within music events. Consumers which incorporate sustainability in other aspects of their lives are likely to appreciate sustainable event management practices in events they are visiting (Jones, 2010). To examine why are today's consumers environmentally conscious, the topic of environmental knowledge and ecological consumer consciousness will be further explored in the next sections of this thesis.

2.2.1 Environmental knowledge and consumer environmental consciousness

Consumer environmental knowledge serves as a basis for consumer environmental consciousness and often triggers pro-environmental consumer behavior (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Environmental knowledge is defined as “the general knowledge of facts, concepts, and relationships concerning the natural environment and its major

ecosystems” (Fryxell & Lo, 2003, p.7). This type of knowledge requires understanding of environmental issues and their causes. According to Heo and Muralidharan (2017), environmental knowledge can be divided into three distinctive forms. The first form is “system knowledge” and is defined as knowledge about general environmental problems (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). The second form of environmental knowledge is “action-related knowledge” and is based on expertise about specific behaviors and actions necessary for solving environmental problems. The third form is “effectiveness knowledge” and it refers to realizing the positive impacts of acting in an environmentally mindful manner (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). According to the authors, consumers who make environmentally friendly purchasing decisions tend to have at least one of these knowledge types.

Furthermore, consumer environmental knowledge is reported to influence consumer attitudes and purchasing behavior (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Thus, knowledge about global environmental issues can significantly trigger environmentally conscious consumer behavior. Research by Kaiser and Fuhrer (2003) reveals that environmental knowledge and beliefs are linked to consumer intention to behave in a more ecologically responsible manner. Additionally, research about the Chinese market presented by Chan and Lau (2000) reports that consumers who were ecologically knowledgeable also expressed a strong intention to purchase green products. Further research by Tanner and Kast (2003) claims that relevant knowledge is needed to initiate certain behavior and that environmental knowledge is essential for comprehending green consumerism. Overall, consumer environmental knowledge has the ability to shift consumers’ choice and purchasing behaviour. Multiple studies have proven that consumers who obtain environmental knowledge often prefer to buy environmentally mindful products (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017).

Consumer environmental knowledge is the basis of consumer environmental consciousness as consumers who obtain environmental knowledge are often environmentally conscious when it comes to purchase decision making (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). Past research claims that consumer knowledge impacts consumer attitude and purchasing behavior. Thus, consumers’ environmental knowledge has the power to initiate environmentally responsible behavior (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Generally, consumer environmental consciousness can be defined

as the extent to which consumers are concerned with the wellbeing of surrounding environments and the extent to which they are undertaking meaningful actions which contribute to the preservation of these environments (Roberts, 1995). Accordingly, the extent of consumer ecological behavior depends on consumers' knowledge and engagement in environmental preservation (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). Hence, consumers which define themselves as environmentally conscious tend to be the accelerators of ecologically mindful consumer behavior (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002).

Ecologically conscious consumer behavior is defined as the extent to which consumers purchase product and/or services which are harmless and/or favorable for the environment (Roberts, 1995). General environmental consciousness arose in response to solving global environmental issues and the growing need to understand and apply ecologically conscious purchasing (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Ecologically conscious consumer behavior can be operationally performed in various ways like purchasing sustainable products, recycling, using power-saving light bulbs, driving less, etc (Guo et al. 2019). Overall, practicing environmentally conscious behavior seems to be a common trait among modern day consumers (Cleveland et al., 2005).

2.2.2 Perceived consumer effectiveness and green self-efficacy

Other consumer factors which contribute to green consumerism are perceived consumer effectiveness and green self-efficacy (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). Perceived consumer effectiveness is defined as the level of confidence one has that his/her actions can contribute to reaching desired outcomes (Sharma & Dayal, 2017). In addition, green self-efficacy shares a similar denotation. In social learning theory, solely the term "self-efficacy" refers to the self-awareness a person has of his/her ability to meet personal targets and complete tasks through applying required effort (Guo et al., 2019). Self-efficacy is comprised of one's personal views and values, and general belief that his/her actions can make a difference (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). Thus, self-efficacy serves as a motivator for individuals to act the way they do and make the choices they make. Research states that perceived consumer effectiveness and self-efficacy have an influence on general human behavior and on consumer behavior as well (Sharma & Dayal, 2017). Accordingly, green self-efficacy is defined as the self-evaluation of an organization or individual's ability to reach environmental

goals (Guo et al., 2019). Green self-efficacy indicates that consumers buy environmentally friendly products and services because they believe that their purchasing choices have the ability to preserve or benefit the environment (Guo et al., 2019). Green-self efficacy is often present among consumers who are ecologically-minded and behave in an environmentally conscious way (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). Roberts (1995) claimed that consumer environmental consciousness is a strong predictor of green self-efficacy and environmentally conscious consumer behavior. Additionally, research states that consumers who are more environmentally conscious are more likely to demonstrate higher purchase intention for green products (Chan, 1996). Therefore, consumer green self-efficacy can influence consumer purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, previous research has shown that green self-efficacy plays a significant role in environmental preservation (Heo & Muralidharan, 2017). The development of green self-efficacy and perceived consumer effectiveness further triggers environmentally friendly behavior among consumers (Guo et al., 2019). Research by Kinnear, Taylor, and Ahmed (1974) states that perceived consumer effectiveness had an impact on consumers' selection of detergent and the level of green product shopping. A further study by Webster (1975) reported that perceived consumer effectiveness influenced the use of detergents with low-phosphate consistency and reusable packaging. Furthermore, in a research conducted by Bang et al. (2000), the authors suggest that consumer beliefs build the basis of solid and more durable attitudes. The study also reveals that there is a positive correlation between positive outcomes of renewable energy usage and consumer attitude towards the act of paying a higher price for renewable energy (Bang et al., 2000). Another study discovered a positive correlation between green self-efficacy and consumer attitude towards buying sustainable dairy products (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Multiple studies have shown that generally, perceived consumer effectiveness influences consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour.

Perceived consumer effectiveness and green self-efficacy apply to general consumer behavior and are therefore applicable in multiple industries (Guo et al., 2019). Focusing on solely on events management, event attendees who share environmentally friendly values and obtain green self-efficacy in their daily life, are

likely to be appreciative of sustainable event management practices. Accordingly, if music events apply sustainability management and provide opportunities for pro-environmental consumer behavior, green self-efficacy of consumers is likely to increase. For the purpose of this study incorporating sustainable event management practices is represented by applying waste management in events. Therefore, this thesis suggests the following hypotheses:

H1: Waste management will have a positive influence on consumers' green self-efficacy.

H2: This effect is strengthened by environmental consciousness.

2.3 The influence of sustainable event management practices on consumer's word of mouth and visit intention

In order to examine how sustainable event management practices influence consumer's word-of-mouth, it is essential to define the concept of "word-of-mouth" first. Even though the term "word-of-mouth" has multiple relevant definitions, according to Zarrad and Debabi (2015), word-of-mouth is the dialogue between consumers about a given product, service or brand in which the participants were not affected by commercial influences. Word-of-mouth is a way of communication which in its essence is unbiased and independent (Grewal et al., 2003; Silverman, 2011). Research states that word-of-mouth has a significant effect on consumer's brand perceptions and buying behavior (Jalilvand et al., 2012). Because of its informal nature, word-of-mouth is a wide-spread method of expressing opinions or recommending a specific product or service. According to Silverman (2011), word-of-mouth is a highly convenient method of receiving information in a time-saving manner. Research claims that word-of-mouth saves consumers a significant amount of time as people communicate product or service details such as price, delivery, brand honesty and other, without having to do any additional research about the product or service offered (Silverman, 2011). In his book, Silverman (2011) further argues that WOM eases the decision-making process of consumers living in the fast-paced environment of the 21st century. Currently various products are offered to consumers and are constantly promoted via social media, television, radio or in the

form of printed material. Because of this, modern consumers can feel overwhelmed and that is why they often turn to friends and family when it comes to making purchase decisions. Research by Grewal et al. (2003) states that WOM has a strong influence on consumers decision making process as consumers are very likely to follow recommendations given by others. Furthermore, recent research proves that consumers find it more convenient, reliable and truthful to take advice from family, friends or even acquaintances (Litvin et al, 2008). Furthermore, consumers tend to follow recommendations of close ones because this facilitates the decision-making process during purchases (Silverman, 2011; Chevalier & Myazlin, 2003). Research also revealed that consumers prefer to consider word-of-mouth especially when they purchase luxurious or more expensive items as they believe that following advice from friends and family will minimize the chance of making a mistake (Ahmad et al., 2014).

Generating positive WOM is an essential tool to advertise products and services in multiple industries (Litvin et al, 2008). For instance, the experience economy is highly dependent on word-of-mouth communication because the WOM method can play a key role in promoting experiences (Silverman, 2011). Since most travel and event experiences are to some degree intangible, consumers are very likely to follow recommendations of close ones or professionals about whether an experience is worth trying (Zarrad & Debabi, 2015). Another reason for consumers to follow recommendations when it comes to travel and event experiences is that they cannot be tried out before they are purchased (Jalilvand et al., 2012). Research suggests that consumers of intangible services are more likely to listen to personal sources of information (Silverman, 2011). Therefore, the word-of-mouth method has a significant impact on consumers' buying behavior when it comes to making travel or event purchases (Zarrad & Debabi, 2015). Research further indicates that word-of-mouth affects the consumers recognition, attention, perceived image, brand attitudes and expectations (Webster, 1991).

As part of the experience economy, music events offer to event consumers an extraordinary experience (Jones, 2010). Whenever visitors attend concerts or music festivals, they reflect on the overall experience they consumed during the event. It is important to note that each consumed experience is different and personal to each consumer (Silverman, 2011). This experience is dependent on environmental factors

such as location, atmospherics, and entertainment. Word-of-mouth can also be described as an “experience-delivery” system because through word-of-mouth, consumers share their personal experience with a specific product or service (Silverman, 2011). Consumers regularly and informally discuss their experience regarding purchases they have made (Webster, 1991). To put this into the perspective of the experience economy, people are very likely to discuss the experiences they consumed during travels or events (Jalilvand et al., 2012).

Since consumers are influenced by word-of-mouth, generating positive WOM is an efficient way to attract customers to any type of business (Zarrad & Debabi, 2015). Research by Ahmad et al. (2014) states that 86% of surveyed participants claimed that they would purchase a product if it was recommended to them by a family member or friend. Other research claims that 57,9% of survey participants choose where to shop based on word-of-mouth from close ones (Conlumino & Webloyalty, 2016). In terms of intangible services such as travels, a research on destination selection methods by Shanka, Ali-Knight and Pope (2002), showed that the majority of travel decisions in Western Australia were based on WOM communications.

As WOM affects general consumer behaviour, it can also play a major role when it comes to consumers’ intention to visit an event and consumer buying behaviour within events (Jalilvand et al., 2012). As consumers often discuss the experience they consume when they travel (Litvin et al, 2008), it can be assumed that word-of-mouth can also influence the event choice of regular event attendees. Furthermore, word-of-mouth marketing can promote events among people who have not yet visited a music event in their life. WOM motivates potential attendees to attend an event and eventually share their experience to other future event visitors (Silverman, 2011). It is important for event teams to maintain positive word-of-mouth in order to increase visit intention. Ensuring a high visit intention means that more and more people are interested in consuming an event, which results in increased ticket sales and generated revenue (Silverman, 2011).

As word-of-mouth marketing is essential for the success of music events, event organizers must ensure a positive reaction from all of the events participants (Jalilvand et al., 2012). As previously discussed, modern consumers have a high interest in purchasing sustainable products and services (Chan et al., 2000). The trend of

incorporating sustainable practices has also emerged in the event industry (Stoll, 2021). Research by Stoll (2021) reveals that in 2019, waste reduction, improved security and eco-friendliness were voted as the most important initiatives according to music festival attendees in the United Kingdom. Another study identifies that in 2015, more than 43% of German event operators incorporated sustainable event management practices, compared to only 27% in 2011 (German Convention Bureau, 2015). Therefore, incorporating sustainable event management practices may raise a positive response among ecologically mindful event participants and increased intention to visit. For the purpose of this study, sustainable event management practices are represented by waste management within events. Based on this reasoning, the following hypotheses were developed (see Figure 1):

H3: Waste management will have a positive influence on consumers word-of-mouth.

H4: Waste management will have a positive influence on consumers visit intention

H5: Green self-efficacy will have a positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth.

H6: Green self-efficacy will have a positive influence on consumer visit intention.

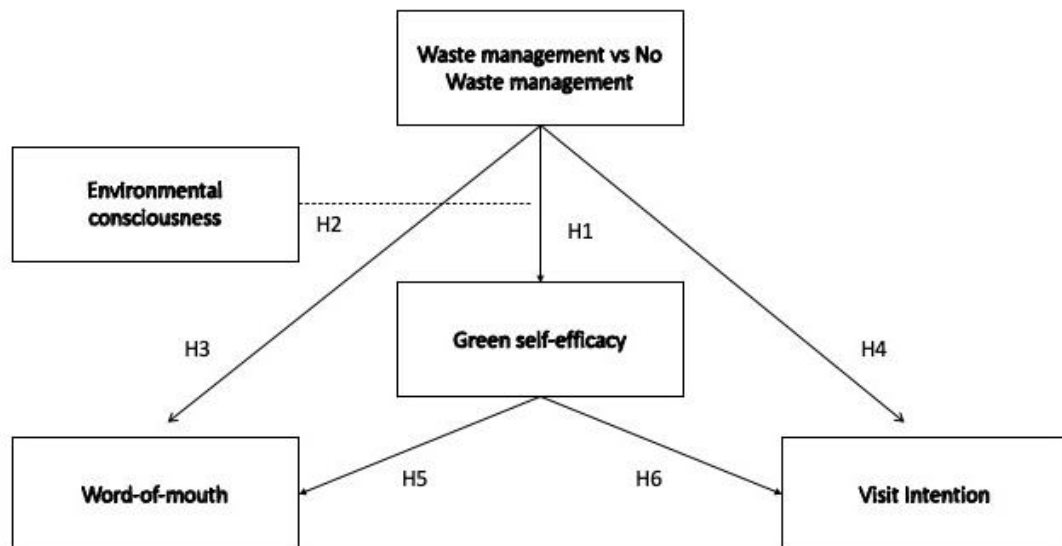


Figure 1 Conceptual research framework

4. Methodology

The methodology part of this thesis describes the chosen research design and presents the data collection in detail. This chapter provides an overview of all techniques used to gather meaningful quantitative data.

4.1. Justification of the chosen research approach

The chosen research approach for this study is quantitative research, as it allows the independent and objective collection of data (Mertler, 2019). Additionally, the data generated through quantitative methods allows researchers the opportunity to receive information about a sample which is representative of a bigger audience. Thus, by using a representative sample, researchers are able to make conclusions which are relevant for the larger population (Mertler, 2019).

The main purpose of conducting quantitative research is to explore and explain situations, establish relationships between constructs and explain causality between variables (Mertler, 2019). Exploring causal relationships can be done by applying experimental research, also known as causal research design. To pursue the exploration of causal relationships, an *experimental research design* is often used (Dudovskiy, 2018). Experimental research design aims to explore the influence of different stimuli on the final outcome by manipulating a specific variable or a set of variables (Creswell, 2014).

This thesis aims to examine the effect of waste management practices within music events on consumer green self-efficacy. This thesis also aims to explore if this effect is strengthened by the degree of consumers' environmental consciousness. Furthermore, this research study investigates the influence of waste management practices on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention as well as the influence of consumer green self-efficacy on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention. As this research study investigates causal relationships, it is appropriate to apply an experimental research design.

This study will conduct an online experiment in which participants will be randomly allocated to one of two experimental groups (waste management vs no-waste

management practices). The experiment is in the form of an online survey to allow the examination of causal relationships.

4.2. Research design

The online experiment was conducted in April 2021 and was distributed via the online platform *Clickworker.de*. The platform *Clickworker* allows the recruitment of survey participants online and automatically selects respondents by following certain participant criteria which are provided by the researcher beforehand (Clickworker, 2021). The target segment examined consisted mainly of native English speakers based in the United Kingdom. Therefore, in order to qualify for the survey, participants needed to be native English speakers and living in the United Kingdom. Through *Clickworker*, the sample consisted of respondents who fulfilled the abovementioned requirements and the total count of participants was 381. In order to test the developed hypotheses, an online experiment was conducted in April 2021. This research aims to test hypotheses related to the following five constructs: waste management, green self-efficacy, consumer environmental consciousness, consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention (Figure 1).

To fulfill the purpose of this research, a causal research design was applied. The causal research design allows for cause-and-effect relationships to be examined which makes it suitable when exploring consumer behavior (Field, 2009). The experimental research design employed an one-factor between subjects design experiment. In this research study, the manipulated variable is waste management (presence vs absence).

Participants in the online survey have been randomly allocated to one of the two experimental groups. Then, respondents from both experimental groups were presented a designated experimental condition. As aforementioned, the manipulated variable in the experiment was waste management. Thus, in one of the examined groups waste management was present and in the other, waste management was absent. After participants were introduced to one of the two conditions, they were presented with a set of survey questions.

4.3. Research Stimulus

At the beginning of the experiment, respondents were firstly asked to think of a music event of their choice which they would like to attend in the near future. As there are numerous types of music styles and music events, participants were encouraged to think of an event which best suits their personal event preference. To facilitate this process, the experiment gave participants several examples of music events such as rock/metal music event, jazz music event, classical music event, electronic music event, pop or hip-hop music event.

Next, participants were randomly allocated in one of the two experimental groups and were presented with one of two music event scenarios. Participants who were allocated to the waste-management experimental group were presented with an outline of a music event which applied certain sustainable event management practices. Therefore, in the first scenario, the manipulated variable “waste management” was present. The event condition in which waste management was included is as follows:

At the event, local food providers will offer drinks and meals. The unconsumed food and beverages at the event are later stored in a food bank in order to be donated to hunger relief charities. The event management uses water dispensers instead of plastic water bottles.

The event management kindly asks to dispose the paper cups, plates and wooden cutlery in the foreseen recycle bins.

The event team presents promotional materials such as flyers and posters digitally, via the help of social media channels. Important labels and signs are shown on digital screens. Additionally, the event team packs event merchandise and other goods in branded reusable bags. To enter the event, attendees can present a digital access ticket.

Participants who were allocated to the no-waste management experimental group were presented with an outline of a music event which did not apply sustainable event management practices. Thus, in the second scenario, the manipulated variable “waste

management” was absent. The event condition in which waste management was not included is as follows:

At the event, world famous food chains will offer drinks and meals. At the end of the event, unconsumed food is thrown out with the rest of the garbage generated. The event management team provides water and beverages in plastic bottles.

The event management team kindly asks to dispose the plastic cups, plates and cutlery in the foreseen trash containers (no separation of materials).

The event team prints out promotional materials such as flyers and posters to promote the event. The event team also prints out on paper any important labels and signs. Additionally, the event team packs event merchandise and other goods in branded plastic bags. To enter the event, attendees must present a printed access ticket.

After being exposed to the aforesaid stimuli, participants answered a short set of survey questions which related to the waste management practices included in the stimuli. Furthermore, there were questions examining consumer’s environmental consciousness, green self-efficacy, attitude towards recycling, word-of-mouth and visit intention.

4.4. Measures

After reading the event condition, participants were asked to evaluate the sustainable event management practices within the given event. In order to do so, they were presented with a set of statements regarding the waste management procedures presented in the event condition and respondents had to evaluate on a scale from 1 to 7 the extent to which they disagree or agree with each statement (1 meaning “strongly disagree” and 7 meaning “strongly agree”) (Guo et al., 2019).

Next, respondents were exposed to a series of statements which examined their green self-efficacy and again, they had to indicate the degree to which they disagree or agree (Guo et al., 2019). Additionally, in order for participants to evaluate the event management practices presented in the experiment, a semantic-differential scale rating from -3 to 3 was introduced, where -3 identified a negative attitude (unfavorable, bad, negative, dislike) and 3 identified a positive attitude (favorable,

good, positive, like) (Huffman et al., 2014). Then, to ensure that participants answered thoughtfully, the survey included an attention check, where respondents had to mark the midpoint of a 5-point scale. Respondents who failed to indicate the midpoint, failed the attention check and were restrained from continuing the survey. After, respondents were presented with a set of statements which aimed to explore their word-of-mouth and visit intention towards the event. To measure the construct word-of-mouth, a 7-point Likert scale was adapted from Zarrad & Debabi (2015). To measure consumer visit intention, another 7-point Likert scale was adapted from Jalivland et al. (2012).

Following, the survey consisted of Likert-scale questions about respondents' general opinion of waste and their general purchasing behavior. To examine respondents' general opinion of waste, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they think waste is avoidable or unavoidable on a 7-point Likert scale adapted from Stancu et al. (2016), where 1 indicated "unavoidable" and 7 indicated "avoidable". Additionally, a 7-point Likert scale adapted from Balderjahn et al. (2018) was used to measure consumer environmental consciousness and consumer behaviour. The statements adapted from Balderjahn et al. (2018) asked participants to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree (1 meaning "strongly disagree" and 7 meaning "strongly agree) with the following statements:

I prefer to buy a product if I believe that it...

...was made from recycled materials

... was packaged in an environmentally friendly manner

...was produced in a climate-friendly manner

Next, respondents were asked to indicate their attitude towards recycling practices. Consumer attitude towards recycling practices was measured through a semantic-differential scale rating from -3 to 3, where -3 represented negative attitude (impractical, unnecessary, not functional, ineffective, unhelpful) and 3 represented positive attitude (practical, necessary, functional, effective, helpful) (Voss et al., 2003; Huffman et al., 2014).

The last page of the survey contained several open-ended questions. Respondents were asked how many times they had visited a music event in the last five years in order to gain a clearer perception of participants' event visiting habits. Furthermore, the survey included demographic questions which asked respondents about their age, gender, level of education and monthly net income. Finally, the survey included an open-ended question asking about any additional information or comments which participants might want to share.

In the Preliminary Analysis section (4.2) of this thesis, Table 6 presents more information about the items used to measure the constructs which were examined in this research study.

5. Analysis & Results

In order to analyze the collected data, the statistical software SPSS was used to measure constructs and reach meaningful conclusions.

5.1. Sample Characteristics

As previously mentioned, the target sample consisted of participants who were native English speakers and were based in the UK. In the experiment, there were a total of 381 participants. Even though the majority of respondents were British (75%), the sample included respondents from overall 28 nationalities. Some of them include Scottish, Irish, German, Austrian, Bulgarian, Greek, Italian, Indonesian and other. To provide details about the sample characteristics, several tables were established.

| | | Experimental Group | |
|--------|-------------------|--------------------|---------|
| | | Group 1 | Group 2 |
| Gender | Male | 72 | 69 |
| | Female | 117 | 121 |
| | Prefer not to say | 1 | 1 |

Table 4 Number of respondents by gender by experimental group

Table 4 presents the number of participants in each of the two experimental groups in terms of gender. Overall, in this experiment, a total of 141 respondents were male, 238 were female and two respondents preferred not to identify. In the first experimental group, there were a total of 72 males, 117 females and one participant who preferred not to identify their gender. In the second experimental group, the participants composed of 69 males, 121 females and one participant who preferred not to identify their gender. The two experimental groups consisted of relatively similar amount of males, females and participants who preferred not to claim their gender.

| | Gender | | |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Male | Female | Prefer not to say |
| Age Mean | 41 | 37 | 31 |
| Education Level | Male Count | Female Count | Prefer not to say Count |
| Still in School | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Junior High School Diploma | 4 | 20 | 0 |
| General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) | 14 | 25 | 0 |
| Vocational Secondary Certification | 37 | 38 | 0 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 62 | 106 | 2 |
| Master's Degree | 22 | 43 | 0 |
| PhD Degree | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| | Male Mean | Female Mean | Prefer not to say Mean |

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|---|
| Net Income | 2500 Euro | 1750 Euro | - |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|---|

Table 5 Sample Characteristics: age, level of education and income by participant’s gender

Table 5 summarizes participant’s mean age, level of education completed, and net income by participant’s gender. The sample is composed mainly of adults, the mean age of male participants is 41, the mean age of female respondents is 37 and the mean age of participants who did not identify their gender is 31.

Furthermore, the bigger part of the sample is composed of respondents who have completed a certain level of higher education as 19% of the examined obtain vocational secondary education, 44% of the examined sample obtain a Bachelor’s degree, 17% obtain a Master’s degree and 1.5 % obtain a PhD degree.

Moreover, males earn an average of 2500 euros monthly, whereas females have an average net income of 1750 euros a month.

5.2. Preliminary analysis

The random assignment of participants to one of two experimental groups ensured that the data generated expresses independent observations. To test the reliability and internal consistency of the constructs, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for all constructs was calculated. A Cronbach’s Alpha above the value of 0.7 represents a high reliability value (Connelly, 2011). The Cronbach’s alpha values of all constructs tested in this research exceed the value of 0.7. Therefore, it can be concluded that the scales used in this research have good consistency and high reliability. In addition, Table 6 (see below) presents the constructs and their corresponding items and the Cronbach’s alphas generated.

| Construct/ Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--|------------------|
| <p>Environmental consciousness</p> <p><i>7-point Likert scale (strongly disagree—strongly agree)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I prefer to buy a product if I believe that it was made from recycled materials. - I prefer to buy a product if I believe that it was packaged in an environmentally friendly manner. - I prefer to buy a product if I believe that it was produced in a climate-friendly manner. | 0.944 |
| <p>Green Self-Efficacy</p> <p><i>7-point Likert scale (strongly disagree—strongly agree)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think this event can help me benefit environmental protection. - I think this event gives me the ability to deal with environmental problems effectively. - I think this event can help me overcome environmental problems. - I feel that this event supports me in fulfilling the mission of environmental protection. - I think that this event is a creative solution for me and other attendees to benefit environmental protection. | 0.986 |
| <p>Word-of-mouth</p> <p><i>7-point Likert scale (strongly disagree—strongly agree)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I would recommend this event to my friends and family. - I am likely to share positive feedback about this event. - I would leave a positive recommendation about this event online. | 0.968 |
| <p>Visit Intention</p> <p><i>7-point Likert scale (strongly disagree—strongly agree)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I would visit this event in the future. | 0.977 |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I would rather visit this event over other events. - I am likely to visit more events like this. - In the future, I intend to visit more events like this. | |
|--|--|

Table 6 Measurement of constructs

In order to check whether the manipulation succeeded, an univariate ANOVA test was conducted. With this manipulation test, it was examined if participants noticed the presence of waste management procedures in the experimental condition. Thus, the test examined how participants responded on the follow-up questions about waste management procedures applied in the music event described in the stimuli. Results from the ANOVA test reveal a significant difference between the two experimental conditions (5.97 vs 2.21, $F(1,422)=689.78$, $p<0.01$). In the waste management group, participants indicated the presence of waste management procedures in the event condition ($M=5.97$, $SD=1.15$, $n=190$), compared to participants from the no waste management experimental group ($M=2.21$, $SD=1.74$, $n=191$). The mean values for the two groups are notably different, therefore the presence or absence of waste management procedures had an impact on respondents. Hence, the presence or absence of waste management procedures was identified correctly and the research can be continued.

5.3. Hypotheses testing

Table 1.4 summarizes the developed hypotheses throughout this research study. The next several subsections reveal how these hypotheses were tested as well as whether they were accepted.

| Developed Hypotheses |
|--|
| H1: Waste management will have a positive influence on consumer green self-efficacy. |
| H2: This effect is strengthened by environmental consciousness. |
| H3: Waste management will have positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth. |
| H4: Waste management will have a positive influence on consumer visit intention. |
| H5: Green self-efficacy will have a positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth. |
| H6: Green self-efficacy will have a positive influence on consumer visit intention. (Regression Analysis 2) |

Table 7 Summary of developed hypotheses

Table 7 summarizes the developed hypotheses throughout this research study. The next several subsections reveal how these hypotheses were tested as well as whether they were accepted.

5.3.1. The influence of waste management on consumer green self-efficacy & the impact of environmental consciousness

To test H1 and H2 accordingly, the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) test was applied. An ANCOVA test was chosen in order to provide a clearer measure of effect of the manipulated variable (Field, 2016). The ANCOVA test revealed that there was a significant effect of waste management on consumer green self-efficacy after controlling for consumer environmental consciousness $F(1,378)= 630.26, p<0.01$. Thus, H1 is accepted- waste management has a positive influence on consumer green self-efficacy. The ANCOVA test further showed that consumer environmental consciousness has a significant influence on consumer green self-efficacy ($p<0.01$).

To further elaborate on these assumptions, a scatter plot (Figure 2.1) was created and described (see below).

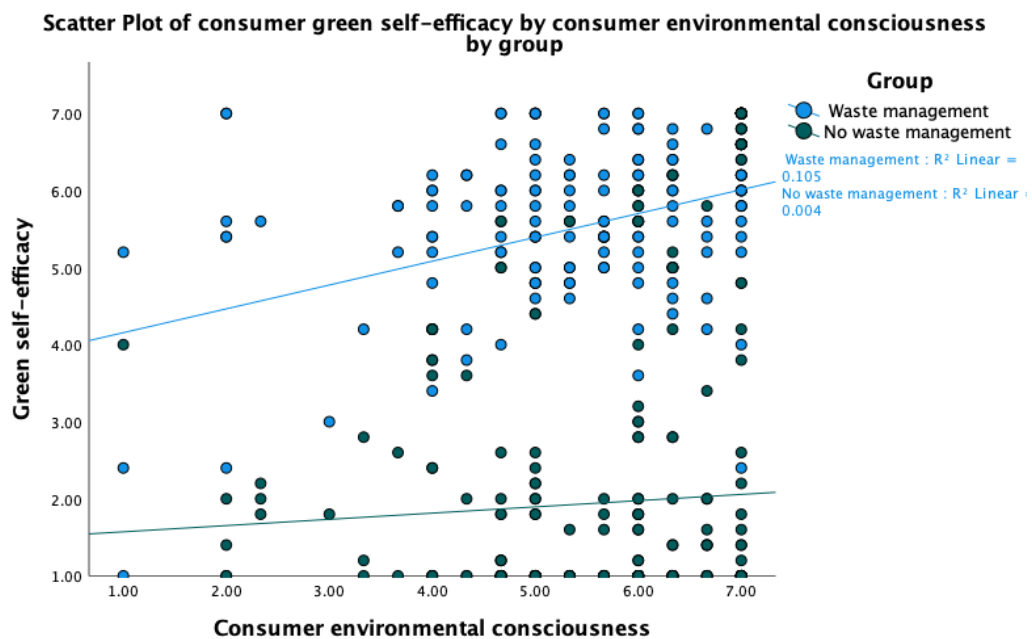


Figure 2.1 Scatter plot of consumer green self-efficacy by consumer environmental consciousness by group (waste management vs no waste management)

The scatter plot displays the relationship between consumer green self-efficacy and consumer environmental consciousness for each of the two experimental groups. The regression lines (blue and green) represent a summary of the relationship between

consumer green self-efficacy and environmental consciousness for each of the two groups. The blue circles represent respondents from the experimental group *waste management* and the green circles represent respondents from the experimental group *no waste management*.

As per Figure 2.1, the regression line for the waste management group shows that consumers who were exposed to waste management practices obtain higher levels of green-self efficacy. Therefore, H1 is confirmed. Furthermore, the regression line illustrates a strong positive relationship between consumer environmental consciousness and green self-efficacy. Therefore, participants who are considered more environmentally conscious, obtain higher levels of green self-efficacy as well.

On the other hand, the regression line representing the no waste management group, shows that consumers who were not exposed to waste management obtain a lower level of green self-efficacy. Furthermore, the regression line for group 2 has a steady positive slope. Thus, in this group there is a weak positive relationship between consumer environmental consciousness and green self-efficacy.

The conducted test reveals that consumers who obtain higher levels of environmental consciousness, also tend to have higher levels of green self-efficacy. Thereby, the positive influence of waste management practices on consumer green self-efficacy is strengthened by consumer environmental consciousness. Thus, H2 is accepted.

5.3.2. The influence of waste management on consumer word-of-mouth and consumer visit intention

Furthermore, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was applied in order to test H3 and H4. A MANOVA test was chosen to test these hypotheses, as it allows the consideration of the correlations of more than one dependent variable. Therefore, by including two or several dependent variables in the same analysis, a MANOVA test also examines the relationship between these dependent variables (Field, 2009). In this case, the MANOVA test considered the independent variable, waste management, and the two dependent variables- consumer word-of-mouth and consumer visit intention.

The multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tested the influence of waste management practices on consumer word-of-mouth and consumer visit intention. The analysis produced a significant model (Pillai's trace $V=0.490$, $F(378, 2)= 181.83$, $p<0.01$).

The results supported the assumption that waste management has a positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth (5.74 vs 2.85, $F(1,379)=346.27$, $p<0.01$). In the waste management experimental group, participants indicate that they are more likely to recommend the event to others ($M=5.74$, $SD=1.36$, $n=190$), compared to respondents from the no waste management experimental group ($M=2.85$, $SD=1.65$, $n=191$). Based on these findings, H3 is accepted.

Furthermore, the multivariate analysis of variance confirmed the assumption that waste management has a positive influence on consumer visit intention (5.62 vs 2.83, $F(1,379)=321.23$, $p<0.01$). Results reveal that participants from the waste management group indicate a higher level of visit intention ($M=5.62$, $SD=1.29$, $n=190$), compared to respondents from the no waste management experimental group ($M=2.83$, $SD=1.70$, $n=191$). Therefore, waste management has a positive influence on consumer visit intention. Following this line of reasoning, H4 is accepted.

| Group | | WOM | Visit Intention |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------|-----------------|
| Group 1: Waste management | Mean | 5.74 | 5.62 |
| | Standard Deviation | 1.36 | 1.29 |
| | N | 190 | 190 |
| Group 2: No Waste management | Mean | 2.85 | 2.83 |
| | Standard Deviation | 1.65 | 1.70 |
| | N | 191 | 191 |
| Total | Mean | 4.29 | 4.22 |

| | | |
|--------------------|------|------|
| Standard Deviation | 2.09 | 2.06 |
| N | 381 | 381 |

Table 8 Comparison of mean scores of consumer word-of-mouth (WOM) and consumer visit intention by experimental group

Table 8 summarizes the mean and standard deviation values for consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention by experimental group (waste management vs no waste management). As the scale used to measure the constructs of consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention was a 7-point Likert scale (Zarrad & Debabi, 2015; Jalivland et al., 2012), it can be seen that the mean values for word-of-mouth and visit intention in group 1 are considerably higher than the mean values generated in group 2.

5.3.3. The influence of green self-efficacy on consumer word-of-mouth & consumer visit intention

A regression analysis was used to test the assumption that consumer green self-efficacy has a positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth (H5) and on consumer visit intention (H6). To test H5, a linear regression was calculated to predict consumer word-of-mouth based on consumer green self-efficacy. The results reveal a significant regression equation ($F(1,379)= 1231.400, p<.001$) with a R^2 value of 0.765. The generated Beta value for the constant equals 1.319 and the beta value for green self-efficacy equals 0.794. As green self-efficacy was measured on a 7-point Likert scale, the coefficient results reveal that for every point increase in the level of green self-efficacy, the dependent variable, consumer word-of-mouth, increased with 0.794 points. Therefore, green self-efficacy was a significant predictor of consumer word-of-mouth.

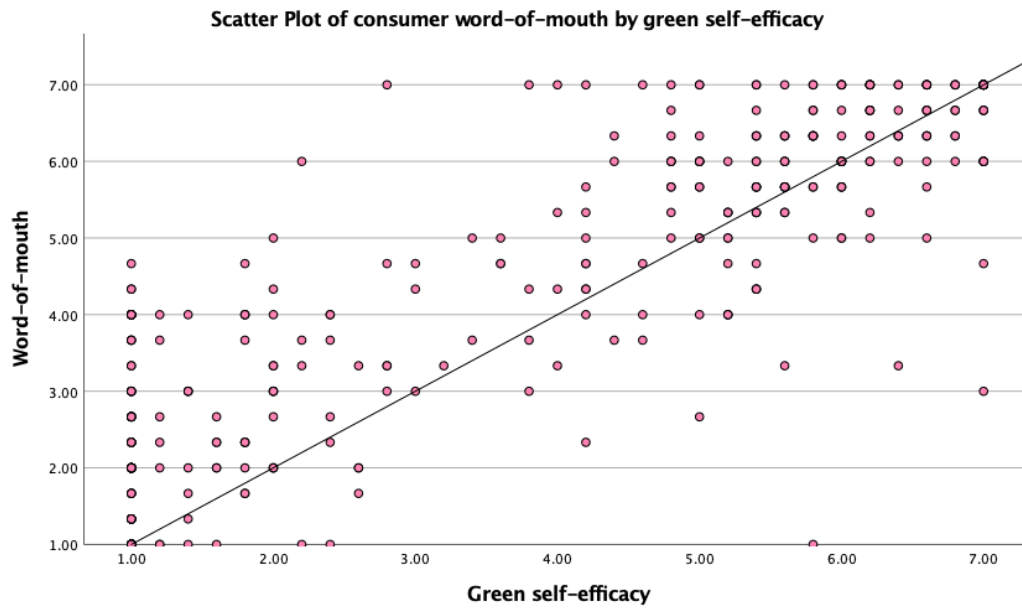


Figure 2.2 Scatter plot representing consumer word-of-mouth by consumer green self-efficacy

Figure 2.2 displays the relationship between the dependent variable, consumer word-of-mouth, and the independent variable consumer green self-efficacy. The regression line indicates a strong positive relationship between consumer green self-efficacy and consumer word-of-mouth. Based on the above line of reasoning, it can be concluded that green self-efficacy has a positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth. Therefore, H5 is accepted.

Furthermore, to explore the influence of green self-efficacy on participants' visit intention, another regression analysis was conducted. A regression analysis was applied in order to predict consumer visit intention based on consumer green self-efficacy. The analysis produces a significant regression equation ($F(1,379)= 1060.919$, $p<.001$) with a R^2 value of 0.737. The generated beta value for the constant equals 1.354 and the beta value for green self-efficacy is equal to 0.766. As previously mentioned, green self-efficacy was measured on a 7-point Likert scale. The results generated in the coefficient table reveal that for every point increase in the green self-efficacy level, consumer visit intention increased with 0.766 points. Thus, it can be concluded that green self-efficacy was a significant predictor of consumer visit intention.

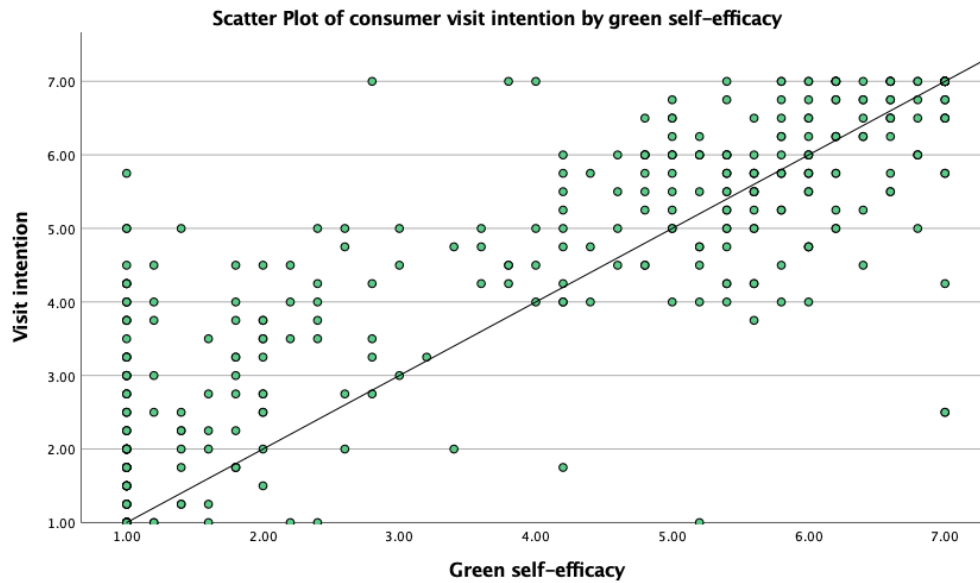


Figure 2.3 Scatter plot representing consumer visit intention by consumer green self-efficacy

Figure 2.3 depicts the relationship between consumer visit intention and consumer green self-efficacy. The regression line in this scatter plot reveals that there is a strong positive relationship between consumer green self-efficacy and consumer intention to visit this or similar events. Therefore, the previous assumption that green self-efficacy has a positive relationship on visit intention is confirmed. Thus, H6 is accepted.

6. Conclusion and Discussion

The goal of this research was to gain a deeper understanding whether sustainable event management practices influence event goers. Particularly, this study focused on examining whether the inclusion of waste management in music events had an impact on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention. Additionally, factors such as general consumer environmental consciousness and green self-efficacy were also considered.

As previously discussed in the literature review section of this thesis, there are multiple ways to incorporate sustainability within events management. Some of the

identified benefits of incorporating sustainability management in music events include environmental preservation, waste reduction, cost reduction, improved brand image perception and gain of a competitive advantage. In terms of gaining a competitive advantage, event organizations can obtain competitive value through matching their offered product to the event consumer demand. By doing so, event organizations can ensure that their event receives the desired recognition, positive word-of-mouth and increased visit intention.

Various research studies confirm that modern-day consumers are becoming more environmentally conscious when making purchasing decisions (Cleveland et al., 2005; Gelder, 2020; Chan et al., 2000). Consumer environmental awareness and demand to purchase goods which are considerate to the surrounding environment, lead to the so-called “green consumerism” (Cleveland et al., 2005). In order fully explore ecologically mindful consumers, consumer green self-efficacy and environmental consciousness were examined in this study. The results from the conducted online experiment reveal that consumers who are appreciative of waste management practices, tend to have higher levels of green self-efficacy (H1). Furthermore, this effect is strengthened when consumers obtain higher levels of environmental consciousness (H2). As discussed in the literature review, environmental consciousness often triggers green self-efficacy among consumers. This assumption was confirmed by accepting H2.

Moreover, as aforementioned in section 2.3, positive word-of-mouth is considered an effective way to attract customers and build a positive brand image (Silverman, 2011). Because of the intangible nature of experiences such as events or travels, generating positive word-of-mouth is considered an efficient way to attract potential clients (Jalivland et al., 2012). Thus, receiving positive word-of-mouth from consumers is important in the experience economy and particularly, in the music event industry (Litvein et al., 2008). Additionally, literature states that positive word-of-mouth often triggers visit intention among consumers (Jalivland et al., 2012). Following this line of reasoning, it is important for event organizations to know how to provoke positive consumer word-of-mouth and increase visit intention. Therefore, it is valuable to consider if sustainable event practices will have a positive impact on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention.

As green consumerism is a current global trend (Hall, 2012), it was proposed that incorporating ecologically mindful practices within music events and festivals, will have an impact on consumer recommendations and intention to visit events which apply sustainable procedures. Results from an online experiment confirm the assumption that incorporating waste management practices within music events has a positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention (H3, H4). Therefore, it can be concluded that green consumerism has also emerged in the event industry and modern-day event attendees are appreciative of sustainable practices in music events.

The experiment also examined the impact of consumer green self-efficacy on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention. It was proposed that consumers who obtain higher levels of green self-efficacy will be appreciative of waste management procedures during music events and will share positive word-of-mouth and higher intention to visit this, or similar events. Research results show that green self-efficacy has an overall positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth (H5) and visit intention (H6). Therefore, participants who behave in an ecologically mindful manner in their everyday life, are more likely to enjoy sustainability management within events and share positive word-of-mouth and express higher visit intention.

7. Limitations

The online experiment conducted targeted native English speakers based in the United Kingdom. This condition was provided in order to ensure that online participants understood the experimental condition and all survey questions so that they could answer thoughtfully and reliable data could be generated. Even though the experiment targeted respondents from the United Kingdom, the sample of 381 respondents was comprised of 28 nationalities. This leads to the conclusion that respondents who come from various backgrounds were considerate of sustainability in events. Nevertheless, the sample tested is still not representative of a worldwide population as it mainly consisted of respondents with European nationalities. Due to the rather international nature of music events, it is important to collect information

which is representative of various nationalities. With that being said, this research could be improved if it was conducted measuring a bigger sample which included more participants from across the globe. Additionally, this experiment can be held in other languages so that it reaches a larger audience. This would allow the collection of reliable data which is representative of a larger sample.

Moreover, the experimental condition included in this online experiment might not have been fully representative of sustainable event management practices. As the manipulated variable was waste management, the experiment examined the effect on consumers of the presence and absence of waste management procedures within events. However, other sustainable event management practices could be examined in order to gather data about whether consumers enjoy other ecologically mindful efforts.

Furthermore, as the experiment was conducted online, participants could not be monitored when providing responses. Therefore, participants may have misread some questions or rushed to complete the survey. This may have caused the collection of inaccurate data.

8. Recommendations

To be able to gather data about how sustainable event management practices influence consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention which considers consumers worldwide, a larger sample should be examined. This way researchers would receive data which is representative of a larger population and is therefore more reliable and applicable for event organizations internationally.

Additionally, the experimental condition could be improved by including more sustainable event procedures, adding more detailed information or presenting the stimuli in a visual form. This way, experiment participants would receive more information about eco-friendly practices and more detailed and accurate data could be collected.

Furthermore, this research study aimed to fulfill the knowledge gap on whether event consumers have a positive opinion on sustainable event management practices and how sustainable practices influence consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention. This research considered the impact of consumer green self-efficacy and general environmental consciousness. As this study confirms that modern consumers tend to be environmentally conscious and also appreciative of sustainable initiatives among events, event management teams can benefit from the derived conclusions in this thesis. Given the results from the conducted online experiment, it is recommended that event organizations take into consideration the significance of sustainable practices not only from an environmental point of view, but also from a business perspective. As this study confirmed the assumption that sustainable event management practices and more specifically, waste management, has a positive influence on consumer word-of-mouth and visit intention, it is advised for event teams to think of ways to incorporate such practices in order to satisfy the demand of today's event goers.

Overall, this research study shows that environmentally conscious consumers are also event goers. Hence, it is important for event teams to be reflective of their audience and offer consumers events which they will enjoy. Modern event organizations could consider replacing conventional with sustainable and producing events which are environmentally considerate. This way event enterprises can gain the previously discussed benefits of incorporating sustainability within events and also generate positive consumer word-of-mouth and increased visit intention.

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