It's a good time (for learning)

Attendee engagement with CSR efforts at a transformational festival

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ABSTRACT

Many consider it important for organisations to reflect on their position in society and hold themselves to a certain ethical standard. To do so, organisations incorporate corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices into their business models, which is also shown to have additional benefits for the organisation. For festival organisers, the environmental impacts of large temporary gatherings are undeniable which has resulted in many festival organisations taking measures to make their events more sustainable. However, CSR is not a recognised concept for most festival organisations and CSR strategies are often informally implemented but not formally ingrained in the business strategies of the organisations. As festivals have the potential to educate attendees on social responsibility and inspire behavioural transformations, considering the way that social responsibility is implemented and communicated to the attendee is important. It was found that through active efforts of the festival organisation, attendees experience a sense of shared responsibility during the event to engage in collective efforts to be socially responsible for the festival itself and for the world as a whole. By testing out new socially responsible behaviours through engagement with Boom's social responsibility efforts and values, the attendees are able to develop new habits and gain a new sense of purpose around caring for others and for the environment. They internalise these values and often apply them into their day-to-day lives, stretching the engagement with the festival's CSR mission well beyond the event itself. Furthermore, engagement with the festival's CSR efforts and values and the resulting new sustainable habits and behaviours are now part of the attendees' identities and are something that connects their identities to the festival. This made attendees eager to spread their message and engage in positive word of mouth.

KEYWORDS: *Music festivals, audience research, corporate social responsibility, communitas, consumer-company identification*

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1. Introduction

Festivals play an important role in cultural meaning-making and there is much research focusing on the economic, political and sociocultural benefits of festivals (Johannson & Toraldo, 2017, p. 220; Wilson et al., 2017, p. 195). In the context of increasing globalisation, festivals as a form of world tourism have become an important part of the global cultural economy as they are a mechanism for generating local economic development and creating stronger ties between visitors and the event location (Pereira et al., 2021, p. 1; Wilson et al., 2017, p. 195; Zifkos, 2015, p. 6). Furthermore, hosting a festival helps creating jobs for local communities in the short term (Wilson et al., 2017, p. 201). However, whilst the economic benefits of hosting a festival cannot be disputed, the organisation of such large-scale events also comes with a large impact on the surrounding environment of the host community and the environment as a whole. The unintentional negative impact of festivals, especially mega-festivals, has been studied over the last decades, which has inspired a surge in the desire of festival organisations to "green" their events (Mair & Laing, 2012, p. 684). In the contemporary music festival scene, it is therefore not unusual for festivals to integrate measures to decrease their environmental impact wherever possible or bring benefits to the host community or environment. Small- as well as large-scale music festivals around the world have implemented measures to help diminish the ecological impact of their events such as waste management and recycling efforts (Mair & Laing, 2012, p. 684).

In recent years, organisations in all kinds of sectors have started getting involved more in corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices. Many people consider it essential for organisations to reflect on their roles in society and hold themselves to ethical standards (Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010, p. 1). Besides ethical reasons, much research about CSR concerns itself with the benefits of engaging in CSR for the business (Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010, p. 2). Mair and Laing (2012, p. 692) found that for music festivals, the motivations to implement greening strategies are different from the motivations in most businesses. The most prominent motivations to be socially responsible found in music festival organisations are not related to financial matters but rather to the personal and organisational values of the festival directors, the consumer demand, and especially the desires of the festival organisers to play an advocacy role and educate attendees (Mair & Laing, 2012, p. 692).

This last motivation is especially relevant, as festivals do have the potential to educate attendees on ways to live more sustainably (Zifkos, 2015, p. 16). In their research of a community music festival, Sharpe (2008) describes how leisure events can be a useful context for fostering social change. Whilst festivals are primarily centred around celebration and fun, they have always been associated with resistance to established cultural narratives and counterculture (Sharpe, 2008, p. 219). However, Sharpe (2008, p. 119) also recognises the commercialisation of culture, where festivals are increasingly being created with economic rather than social values as the primary interest. This has resulted in the boundaries between leisure and consumption being blurred and festivals having a lower

potential to be a space for counter-hegemonic narratives regarding consumer culture and capitalism. According to Sharpe (2008, p. 220), "any effort to foster social change is likely to demand an active and intentional effort."

Transformational festivals (TFs) make an active and intentional effort to foster social change by holding social values at the core of the festival. According to Van den Ende (2022, p. 198), TFs developed as a countercultural social movement in response to ecological and social devastations in the modern world. TFs are a specific type of music and arts festival, often revolving around psychedelic and trance-like electronic dance music (Li & Zhang, 2023, p. 2; Ruane, 2017, p. 3). Through these festivals, they aim to reconnect attendees with feelings of community and with their natural environment (Van den Ende, 2022, p. 198). Essential in TFs is their aim to provide opportunities for transformative experiences, including personal transformations and self-discovery but also interpersonal and communal ecstatic experiences, with the ultimate goal being large-scale social change (Mohr, 2017, p. 21; Ruane, 2017, p. 3). TFs aim to inspire individual transformation through active engagement and co-creation in workshops, seminars, art projects and performances as well as providing experimental spaces for self-expression and spiritual practices (Li & Zhang, 2023, p. 2). Ultimately, TFs aim to inspire social change by creating a temporary community centred on showing an alternative way of being that focuses on personal growth, environmentalism, social responsibility and creative expression (Beaulieu-Prévost et al., 2019, p. 2056; Yuhas, 2022, p. 51). The largest, most well-known and well-researched TF is Burning Man in the United States (e.g. Beaulieu-Prévost et al., 2019, p. 2056; Rowen, 2020, p. 696; Yuhas, 2022, p. 59). Other well-known examples are Shambala Gathering in Canada, Rainbow Serpent festival in Australia and Boom Festival in Portugal (Beaulieu-Prévost et al., 2019, p. 2056; Li & Zhang, 2023, p. 2).

In this research, Boom Festival will be analysed as a case study. Boom Festival is organised by a company called Good Mood Productions LDA (Boom Festival, 2023f). More recently, a non-profit organisation was launched by the Good Mood Productions LDA as a separate entity which manages the land that the festival is held on (the "Boomland", which was bought by Good Mood Productions in 2016) and which contributes to the social responsibility projects of Good Mood Productions in the form of local community-based projects and the organisation of the Being Gathering, a bi-annual event that is held on the Boomland in the years that Boom Festival is not held (Boom Festival, 2023f).

Over the years, Boom Festival has expanded in terms of size and vision, but it's mission stayed the same: spreading a sense of togetherness among international music lovers (Boom Festival, 2023e). Moreover, Boom focuses on creating positive societal change through the festival and the land on which the festival is held. By providing attendees with an alternative reality that they can freely explore, Boom aims to inspire both individual and collective transformation (Boom Festival, 2023e). The festival has become a pioneer in festivals with a positive societal impact, which is reflected in the

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awards they have won for their environmentalist and social responsibility efforts over the past decades (Boom Festival, 2023a). Because of this, this research will study Boom Festival in terms of the reception of and engagement with their social responsibility efforts by attendees.

Because of its location centred in Europe, Boom Festival is relatively easily accessible to attendees from a wide range of countries in Europe, attracting almost 40,000 visitors from 169 countries and territories (Boom Festival, 2023g). Furthermore, Boom Festival is different from Burning Man in the organisation of the event. At Burning Man, whilst there are an organisation and a team of volunteers behind the event taking care of infrastructural organisation such as coordination of resources, portable toilets and medical and fire protection, the temporary city that is created is mostly dependent on participants creating the art, activities, and providing the resources such as food, drinks and shelter (Chen, 2009, p. 2). Boom Festival is more top-down organised: one primary organisation organises the programme and is responsible for all of the resources and infrastructure used at the festival. It is still a participatory event, but more so in the individual sense than in the sense of organised, collective participation and co-creation. This makes it especially suitable for analysing how attendees engage with the CSR efforts organised by the festival organisation.

Analysing a festival such as this, which has sustainability as a core practice but does not have sustainability as the singular theme, could help further the literature on *corporate social responsibility* (CSR) in events and its reception by attendees. It broadens the research on social responsibility communication by analysing it in terms of the co-creative setting of TFs, which offer more opportunities to actively participate in the CSR initiatives of the festival. Furthermore, Boom Festival as a highly international event provides an interesting setting for this research: it is an event that connects a global audience to a global social responsibility perspective. Besides contributing to the existing literature on CSR initiatives and audience reception in festivals, this research could be used by other festival organisers and policymakers around festivals to assess the educational potential of festivals in terms of social responsibility. International festivals such as these bring people from many different places and walks of life together, and could be an interesting arena for social responsibility education on a large scale. Furthermore, this research could be useful for festival organisers in the integration of CSR activities into the core strategies and practices of the organisation. Whilst engaging in CSR to create a competitive advantage is not the reason that festival organisers do it (cf. Mair and Laing, 2012, p. 692), integrating CSR activities could still be beneficial to the organisation and streamlining CSR efforts throughout all different facets of the festival organisation could help in communicating the efforts taken to the consumer and make it easier for the consumer to make socially responsible choices in their purchases.

To gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of festival attendees with Boom's social responsibility initiatives, the following research question will be addressed in this research: *How do Boom Festival attendees engage with the social responsibility efforts of Boom Festival?* To answer

this research question, it is important to first gain more insights on the way that Boom presents their social responsibility efforts to their attendees. To do so, we will ask the following sub-question: *How does Boom Festival communicate their social responsibility efforts?* After analysing the ways in which Boom presents their social responsibility efforts, I will explore how the festival attendee experiences Boom's social responsibility communication and efforts by answering the second sub-question: *How do Boom Festival attendees experience the social responsibility efforts of Boom Festival?* Finally, we will explore how the festival attendee identifies themself with this message and subsequently with the festival before, during and after the event: *How do Boom Festival attendees identify themselves with Boom Festival through their social responsibility efforts?*

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 The rave

Festivals as cultural celebrations of life have been happening for centuries, but the origins of festivals as countercultural escapes from a capitalist society can be traced back to hippie culture and the free festivals of the 1960s (Partridge, 2006, p. 42; Yuhas, 2022, p. 50). Free festivals were free in two ways: on the one hand, no profit was made by the organisers and they contained an economy based on mutual aid rather than money, and on the other hand the festivals held freedom and free expression as their most important value (Partridge, 2006, p. 42). The psychedelic hippie culture that emerged at these free festivals grew significantly in the 60s and 70s. Many of these hippies travelled eastward during the 1960s and 1970s, where they found a utopian destination in the Christian town of Goa in South-Western India (Partridge, 2006, p. 46). In the 1980s, a DJ in Goa brought post-punk electronic music from Europe to Goa and developed a new Easternised form of electronica named psychedelic trance, the name of which was inspired by the abundant use of LSD in the hippie scene (Partridge, 2006, p. 46). This psychedelic trance music and the corresponding psychedelic culture were then brought back to Europe and the rest of the world and mixed into the late 1980s rave culture present in Europe (Partridge, 2006, p. 47, 51-52; St John, 2006, p. 1).

In Europe, raves were all night dance parties, usually underground events outdoors or in secretive locations, where participants danced to electronic dance music (EDM), usually under the influence of drugs (Hutson, 2000, p. 35). Unlike the free festivals guided by idealism and alternative values, raves were regarded in early academic discourse as hedonistic, meaningless escapes from reality by scholars such as Baudrillard (Hutson, 2000, p. 36; St John, 2006, p. 2). Nevertheless, ravers claimed to have spiritual and transformative experiences at raves and more of the discourse on raves now recognises the meaningfulness and transformative ability of raving as rituals of self-expression (Hutson, 2000, p. 36; St John, 2006, p. 3). In his analysis of online testimonials from ravers in the late 1990s, Hutson (2000, p. 39) compares rave experiences to religious experiences and explains the healing possibilities of raves through the creation of trance-like states of flow and play. According to Hutson (2000, p. 42), in this state, there is a loss of self-consciousness and a transcendence of individuality, which brings ravers into a "therapeutic, non-differentiated state of being, in unity with the gods and the world." The ritualistic aspect of raving has been documented by Durkheim as 'collective effervescence' (Vandenberg et al., 2021, p. 142). Research by Vandenberg (2021, p. 149) of live music consumption in a digital setting during the COVID-19 lockdown shows how live music consumption is primarily a social ritual where the formation of collective consciousness is based on physical proximity, and individual live music consumption is not able to achieve the same effects.

2.2 Raves as liminal spaces

2.2.1 Liminality

The theoretical basis surrounding raves' potential for transformative experiences is based on the theory of liminality and communitas by Victor Turner (e.g. Jaimangal-Jones, 2010; Li & Zhang, 2023; Wu et al., 2020). Liminality refers to a state or process which is away from and between the normal, day-to-day cultural and social states (Turner, 1979, p. 465). During liminal phases, the regular social rules and structures are abandoned. In this phase, play and experimentation rule: the absence of social order and the subsequent equality of all creates possibilities for endless self-expression (Turner, 1979, p. 466). A similar process can be found in festivals: when going to a festival, one leaves their own social structures behind and enters a liminal zone in which day-to-day structure and social order are abandoned. Participants lose the social status that they have in their day-to-day lives, creating an equal playing field and a sense of unity among participants (Hutson, 2000, p. 42).

2.2.2 Communitas

That the usual social structures are disintegrated in the festival space, does not mean that there are no roles at all in the liminal space. In contrast, this phase allows for the formation of new, temporary social structures and identities (Wu et al., 2020, p.3). At raves and festivals, unity and egalitarianism are embodied ideals precisely through the differentiation and free expression of the individual, where everyone can be very different but still share the same experience on the dance floor (Rill, 2006, p. 656). Participants develop new and individual identities, often wearing elaborate and eccentric costumes and expressing themselves through unconventional dancing styles (Li & Zhang, 2023, p. 3). St John (2006, p. 6) and Li and Zhang (2023, p. 4) compare raves and festivals to the concept of the carnival in Christian celebration, where grotesque behaviours and personas are taken on and celebrated.

This alternative reality that is temporarily created within the festival offers a sense of unity and belonging, resembling the concept of communitas as Turner describes it (Turner, 1979, p. 469; Hutson, 2000, p. 42; Wu et al., 2020, p. 3). According to Turner (1982, p. 47), when people are in a liminal state together a homogenous, unstructured communitas forms during which everyone is in unity but at the same time this experience allows them to develop themselves individually due to the loss of social structures and boundaries. This sense of communitas can only exist impermanently, because when it is institutionalised, homogeneity and individuality must succumb to the new social structure.

2.2.3   Social benefits of communitas

Nonetheless, the temporality of communitas does not mean that the experience does not have any lasting effects (Buechner et al., 2020, p. 91). In their analysis of formation of communitas in a music festival, Wu et al. (2020) found that attendees do take the identities and connections that they formed within the liminal festival space with them after the festival. This presented itself in different ways. Firstly, attendees experienced a sort of reintegration time where they kept engaging in behaviours that were present during the festival such as ways of interacting with others and wanting to express themselves in certain ways (Wu et al., 2020, p. 10). Secondly, attendees considered themselves to have a new, alternative identity that existed alongside their original one. They kept this new identity alive through the formation of normative communitas (Turner, 1982, p. 49). When communitas forms during a liminal experience, those in it have the tendency to maintain these feelings of belonging and the communitas on a more permanent basis. To do so, it has to denature itself by forming set social structures (Turner, 1982, p. 49). Wu et al. (2020, p. 10) found that the normative communitas formed by festival attendees did not replace their original social structures, but formed a new way for participants to express their secondary identity and keep it alive through forming (online) communities and friendships.

The experiences of communitas, even if they do not last, can be transferred to other contexts, and those who experienced it return to society refreshed with new ideas (Buechner et al., 2020, p. 92). People who experienced communitas do not forget the experiences of unity and new ways of expressing themselves, and try to realise them in new ways in their existing society (Buechner et al., 2020, p. 92). In their case study of transformational learning and communitas in democratic and dialogic schools, Buechner et al. (2020, p. 106) found that co-creation is important in supporting learning from a state of communitas. According to the authors, by combining reflective efforts and participative practices, learning becomes more dynamic and differences become a source of growth. The sense of communitas is strengthened, as is the ability to learn from it and apply it in other areas of life.

2.3 Co-creation in TFs

In TFs, co-creation is a vital aspect. The audience is integrated into the creative and participative programming and co-create the festival experience through self-expression and play (Van den Ende, 2022, p. 196). TFs offer a wide range of immersive activities such as workshops and interactive performances, in order to support community, creativity and transformation. TFs are participatory and co-creative by nature, as this is what guides the transformational aspect (Van den Ende, 2022, p. 199). According to Buechner et al. (2020, p. 106), this helps form communitas by giving those in it a "form of shared, higher level purpose." According to Van den Ende (2022, p. 215), for festival attendees co-creative practices increase the desire to bring the practices of the liminal space

home in their usual lives. Hall et al. (2020, p. 235) mentioned that for their interviewees, the co-creative aspect of the TF helped them gain a more community-based mindset, where even outside of the festival they were less inclined to think from an egotistical standpoint. Because of the participatory nature of the festival, they perceive themselves to be part of a club rather than an attendee (Hall et al., 2020, p. 239). Fairley and O'Brien (2018, p. 329) further build on this by saying that people within this experience gain subcultural social capital, which they can take with them in their usual lives to better represent their subculture.

According to Hall et al. (2020, p. 224), this process of co-creation does not only exist during the festival itself: digitisation has provided TF participants with the technologies needed to shape their festival experience in advance of the formal start of the event as well as to keep the collaboration going after the festival. Because of this, communitas can be maintained outside of the liminal space of the festival. Wu et al. (2020, p. 5, 9) identified the same in their research of a Chinese music festival: before the festival, digital channels are used to build anticipation and afterwards they are used to connect with others and maintain the identities and philosophy of the festival. From these researches, it is apparent that co-creation plays a role in the building of communitas and in strengthening the experience of communitas after the festival and the possibility to apply it to life outside of the festival.

2.4 CSR

2.4.1   CSR

Many consider it necessary for organisations of any kind to navigate their role in and contribution to society and hold their business to certain ethical standards (Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010, p. 1). This has resulted in organisations actively integrating social concerns into their business models. According to the United Nations, "Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders. CSR is generally understood as being the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives while at the same time addressing the expectations of shareholders and stakeholders" (UNIDO, 2023). Research on CSR focuses on different levels of the effects of ingraining social responsibility practices into the business, from the macro social effects of implementing CSR strategies to the organisational-level analyses of CSR and organisational processes (Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010, p. 1). There exist all kinds of different CSR activities, relating to economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities (Lii & Lee, 2012, p. 71). Economic responsibility refers to the obligation for organisations to be productive and economically viable, whilst legal responsibility refers to the organisation acting in a legal way. Ethical responsibility is the responsibility to acknowledge and act according to social values and norms and to be a leader in appropriate behaviour, and finally philanthropic responsibility involves contributing to the improvement of society out of pure goodwill.

Overall, there are a number of reasons why an organisation might be interested in implementing CSR, such as creating a competitive advantage by integrating non-economic factors to buy their product, differentiating themselves from competitors, building a better brand reputation and goodwill among customers and creating a more positive attitude among employees (Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010, p. 3). Ultimately, the implementation of CSR activities can lead to an increase in purchase intentions and the firm's market value (Lii & Lee, 2012, p. 70). Beyond the core impact on the organisation that engages in the CSR activities, the CSR activities also have secondary impacts on the partner organisations (such as non-profits) that they work with and the social issue in general that the CSR activities are involved with (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004, p. 11).

2.4.2 CSR and C-C identification

According to Lii and Lee (2012, p. 70), the underlying mechanism that supports the economic growth of organisations that implement CSR activities is increased *consumer-company* (C-C) identification. As Lii and Lee (2012, p. 70) define the term, "C–C identification is the degree to which a consumer's self-definition overlaps with that same consumer's perceived traits of a firm". Social identity theory posits that consumers are inclined to develop socially identifying relationships with an organisation as a way of improving their own self-definition (Currás-Pérez et al., 2009, p. 548; Lii & Lee, 2012, p. 73). According to Currás-Pérez et al. (2009, p. 558), the CSR image that a brand has influences the distinctiveness and prestige of the brand, which in turn creates a higher brand attractiveness which allows it to better satisfy the self-definitional needs of the consumer. This in turn influences C-C identification and results in greater purchase intentions, the authors found.

Hur et al. (2018, p. 1260, 1265) extend this relationship between CSR perception and purchase intentions with their analysis of CSR perception and customer citizenship behaviours, the extra-role behaviours of customers such as providing constructive feedback, tolerating service failures and spreading positive word of mouth. When C-C identification is higher, customer citizenship behaviours are also higher, but even when C-C identification is controlled for, positive perceptions of an organisation's CSR still have a positive direct effect on customer citizenship behaviours (Hur et al., 2018, p. 1266). These findings are confirmed by Lii and Lee (2012, p. 77), who found that CSR activities can help create C-C identification even for those for whom CSR initiatives are not part of their self-identities. For these people, the positive organisational identity is still accepted and identified with as a way to increase the ego and likeability of the consumer (Lii & Lee, 2012, p. 70). The authors specify that for organisations partaking in philanthropic CSR initiatives (rather than sponsorship and cause-related marketing), consumers had significantly more favourable attitudes towards the brand and identified themselves more with the brand (p. 77).

Lee et al. (2021, p. 513) also analysed the way that different types of CSR efforts influence C-C identification. They found that CSR initiatives that are participatory and perceived as interactive

have a larger positive influence on the attitudes towards the organisation and higher purchase intentions. The increased interactivity with the company leads to consumers feeling more empowered in their relationship with the organisation and higher C-C identification (Lee et al., 2021, p. 513). Cha et al. (2016, p. 243) support these findings that participatory CSR initiatives are able to increase C-C identification more than non-participatory initiatives. They further make a distinction between personal and social identification, where personal identification relates to increasing self-esteem through associating oneself with brands and social identification relates to social bonding or being part of a reference group through associating oneself with a brand (Cha et al., 2016, p. 238). Perceived fit of the CSR initiative with the brand has a positive influence on both personal and social identification, but when CSR initiatives are participatory, the influence on personal identification is greater than on social identification (Cha et al., 2016, p. 243). Ultimately, this means that when CSR initiatives are participatory, overall customer-brand relationships are strengthened but this effect is especially visible in the perceived congruency between the consumers identity and the brand and less in the feeling of the consumer being part of a reference group through associating with the brand.

2.4.3   CSR communication

Nevertheless, there can also be downsides to implementing CSR into a company's business strategy. Research has pointed out that in many cases, even philanthropic CSR activities seek to create some sort of exploitation of or connection with the cause, which is deemed pseudo-altruism (Lii & Lee, 2012, p. 71). When an organisation implements CSR activities into their business, stakeholders may perceive them to have extrinsic motivations to do so such as increasing economic profits, which can result in a sense of distrust in the CSR communication of the organisation (Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010, p. 3). Therefore, choosing the right ways to communicate one's CSR efforts is crucial. Communicating about CSR activities consistently is critical on different levels: within the organisation, it helps managers and stakeholders make sense of their position within the world, for consumers it aids them in deciding what responsible organisations to support and on a larger scale it helps create a culture of corporate accountability (Crane & Glozer, 2016, p. 1224). The challenge lies in defining what constitutes "effective" CSR communication, as the communication strategies need to be authentic to the organisation's goals, context and stakeholder groups (Crane & Glozer, 2016, p. 1242).

Over the last two decades, especially since the emergence of Web 2.0, there has been a rise in the view of CSR communication as a co-creative construction of the CSR activities between the organisation and stakeholders rather than simply a transmission of the activities of the organisation as a method of stakeholder management (Crane & Glozer, 2016, p. 1224, 1237). CSR communication nowadays also takes place more in the dialogical setting of social media (Wang & Huang, 2018, p. 326). Whilst a transactional paradigm is still very much prevalent in CSR research, more researchers

now look at the creation of value around CSR communication from a constructivist perspective (Crane & Glozer, 2016, p. 1237; Grant & Nylberg, 2011, p. 536). For example, the internet has allowed for value co-creation between the organisation and its stakeholders. Sarmah et al. (2015, p. 316) have found that CSR plans that were co-created in dialogue between the organisation and the other parties in the value chain were more effective than CSR plans just constructed by the organisation. Furthermore, interaction between the organisation and stakeholders on social media can bolster the stakeholders' image of the organisation's CSR efforts (Haigh et al., 2013, p. 65).

2.4.4   CSR in music festivals

Whilst the cultural, economic and political benefits of festivals are widely recognised so is the devastating ecological impact of large gatherings such as large music festivals (Johannson & Toraldo, 2017, p. 220; Mair & Laing, 2012, p. 684; Wilson et al., 2017, p. 195). Consumers too have rising expectations for those in the music industry to behave socially responsible (Green et al., 2016, p. 237). Most festivals implement strategies to create greener festivals and engage in ethical and philanthropic activities (Mair & Laing, 2012, p. 684; Richardson, 2018, p. 1270). In their research on greening practices in music festivals, Mair and Laing (2012, p. 692) found that the most prominent motivations for festival organisers to implement greening strategies into their events are not related to financial matters, but rather to the personal and organisational values of the festival directors, the consumer demand and especially the desires of the festival organisers to play an advocacy role and educate attendees. In their research on audience perceptions of CSR initiatives in music consumption, Green et al. (2016, p. 239, 243) found that those consuming music were not always eager to find CSR messages connected to their music consumption. According to the authors, the consumers felt that an artist sharing a social responsibility message could get in the way of their enjoyment of the concert or music album and that it could also negatively affect the perceived authenticity of the artist. Through interviews with stakeholders of music festivals, Richardson (2018, p. 1266) found that within the music festival industry, sustainability practices are important and ingrained into the everyday practices of organisations, but the organisers do not recognise these as "CSR". Rather than actively ingraining CSR practices into the business strategies or seeing it as a stakeholder management or marketing method, organisers value respect of the environment and society and transparency towards other stakeholders highly (Richardson, 2018, p. 1266).

Even though these sustainable practices are not as recognised by the organisations in the business strategies as they are in traditional organisations and not always wanted by the consumer, the sustainable practices of music festivals can have an impact on their attendees and society at large. According to Zifkos (2015, p. 16), festivals can help educate attendees on sustainable practices. Ulusoy (2016, p. 284) found that responsible consumption of events, even when unintentionally done and without ideological reasoning, can help people integrate social responsibility reasonings into their

identities. Mair and Laing (2013, p. 1123) found that sustainability-oriented events have the potential to promote pro-environmental behaviours amongst attendees in every stage of transformation, from pre-contemplation to already involved in pro-environmental behaviours. However, the challenge herein lies in attracting attendees that do not already engage in pro-environmental behaviours. The authors found that pro-environmental events are not very successful at attracting audiences that are not already committed to sustainable living (Mair & Laing, 2013, p. 1123). They propose that events should therefore aim to find ways to attract audiences that do not already lead socially responsible lifestyles. Ulusoy (2016, p. 287) confirms the potential for transformative experiences among those that do not already engage in socially responsible behaviours in her analysis of a volunteering trip. The author (p. 293) found that attendees joining the trip for ludic reasons transformed their social responsibility behaviours and philosophies through engaging in social responsibility efforts in a fun and engaging way with others. The attendees felt empowered and were able to incorporate responsible behaviours into their daily lives and long-term life plans.

2.4.5   CSR in Boom Festival

Whereas the transformational experiences of the volunteering trip researched by Ulusoy (2016) were largely accidental, TFs explicitly aim to support the attendee in creating transformational experiences. On their website, Boom Festival (2023c) mentions their vision to "cultivate a space in which to collaborate, exchange knowledge, fertilise different ideas and apply new ways of doing things in our everyday lives". For Boom Festival, their vision in terms of sustainable practices take on a social and an environmental aspect. For the environmental dimension, Boom has developed an Eco paradigm (Boom Festival, 2023a). On their website, they outline their responsibilities and priorities as an event organization, concrete action that they take and which programmes they are involved in. According to Boom Festival (2023a), their responsibilities include a "commitment to adapt a tailor-made Boom environmental paradigm that touches all the levels of the production while also generating change on a regional, local and world level." The environmental practices that are considered by the festival involve not only the land that the festival is held on, the attendees and the organisation but also regional communities and society as a whole.

One of the responsibilities that Boom Festival (2023a) says to have is to raise environmental awareness among attendees. They do this in multiple ways: during the festival, an "Eco team and Eco guardians" are present to raise awareness of the importance of respecting nature. Besides this, Boom hosts lectures and workshops with ecological themes such as permaculture and regenerative design during the festival. Boom Festival (2023c) also recognises a socio-cultural responsibility aspect as a large multinational gathering. They embody this responsibility through socially conscious programmes that help to benefit local and non-local communities and through the contribution of money to local NGOs (Boom Festival, 2023e). Towards attendees, this responsibility mainly presents itself in

avoiding corporate sponsorship at the festival, creating job opportunities for local communities and in the form of promoting "a borderless world": the festival aims to show attendees the possibility of a world without borders and social divisions, in which everyone is equal. The main concrete action taken to embody this ideal is the no-flag policy: at many large music festivals, attendees are inclined to take national flags to show the international aspect of the festival and to show where they are from (see Figure 1). At Boom, national flags are forbidden to represent unity between all attendees.

Figure 1.

Tomorrowland 2016 mainstage

By Me109zito, shared on https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomorrowland_(festival)

2.5 Final notes

In this research, a connection is explored between Boom's CSR practices and communication and the attendees' experience of communitas at the festival and feelings of connection to the festival. From this literature review, it is posited that TFs are spaces in which identification with ethically responsible behaviour is fostered by giving the attendees the opportunity to engage with social responsibility practices and ideas in a fun and participatory environment. In the following chapters, the method that is employed to collect the data for this research and conduct the analysis is outlined, followed by the results of the analysis and a final discussion on the meanings and implications of these findings in a larger societal and academic context.

3. Method

3.1 Choice of method

This research aims to explore how festival attendees engage with social responsibility efforts and values of a festival. As this relates primarily to the meaning-making processes of individuals around their experiences, a qualitative method is chosen for this research (Fossey et al., 2002, p. 717). Qualitative research allows for an interpretive stance, where the aim is to understand and contextualise the meaning of human experiences within a larger social context (Fossey et al., 2002, p. 717). Qualitative research fits in with a phenomenological paradigm (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p. 2). This philosophy considers the objective reality as being comprised of the subjective, individual lived experiences. For this research, a similar stance is taken. The lived experiences of a group of attendees is researched to make inferences about the interplay between Boom's CSR efforts and attendee experiences.

3.1.1   Data collection

To answer the research question of *How do Boom Festival attendees engage with the social responsibility efforts of Boom Festival?*, both the communication from the festival and the experiences of the attendees were analysed. To gain a deeper insight into the way that Boom communicates their social responsibility efforts and values to the attendees, data was collected from the festival. Boom uses multiple channels to communicate to (potential) attendees, namely Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, X (previously known as Twitter) and e-mail. Furthermore, there are a number of Facebook groups created by attendees in which attendees or future attendees post questions, photographs or other information and discussion topics surrounding Boom Festival. These groups were not used in this research as they were not created nor monitored by the Boom Festival organisation themselves.

Upon initial analysis, it became clear that contents on Instagram and Facebook are mostly similar, with some slight variations in formatting. YouTube and X were left out of this research as YouTube videos are a more active method of consuming information and therefore were assumed to be less of a constant way of keeping oneself updated with the festival and X content was not freely accessible. At the start of this research, Instagram posts were used as part of the content analysis. However, further in the research it became apparent that the contents of the Instagram posts were oftentimes smaller chunks of the e-mail newsletters accompanied by a photograph. Furthermore, from the interviews it became clear that most interviewees did regularly keep up with the e-mail newsletters as their primary mode of keeping in touch with the festival and most did not regularly keep up with the Instagram or Facebook posts from Boom Festival. Because of this, the choice was ultimately made to focus the thematic analysis of Boom's communication on the e-mail newsletters, which proved to be a rich dataset in itself.

To answer the sub-questions regarding the experiences of attendees, *How do Boom Festival attendees experience the social responsibility efforts of Boom Festival?* and *How do Boom Festival attendees identify themselves with Boom Festival through their social responsibility efforts?*, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the method of data collection. Semi-structured interviews are used to discover the subjective meaning-making of individuals regarding a specific situation or phenomenon that they have experienced (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p. 1). Being semi-structured, the interviews provide a unique balance between being relevant to the topic being analysed and its academic context, but also being responsive to the participants specific experiences (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p. 1). In this research, a 'semi-structured' approach was chosen. The questions followed a particular order, that they are asked in, namely the experiences before, during and after the festival. However, beyond this structure, the interviews were flexible, allowing for changes in the question order and follow-up questions on the basis of the interviewees' stories and were therefore relatively unstructured.

3.1.2   Data analysis

To analyse the data of the festival and the attendees, a thematic analysis was conducted. Thematic analysis in this research, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2022), is a qualitative method that involves "developing, analyzing and interpreting patterns across a qualitative dataset, which involves systematic processes of data coding to develop themes." (p. 47) Thematic analysis was chosen as the research method for this study because of the flexibility that it allows the researcher in taking on and acknowledging an interpretative, inductive stance as well as a being able to employ a theoretical lens. As this research pertains to the personal meaning-making and identities of festival attendees, this flexibility allowed for a nuanced interpretation of the data. Thematic analysis operates from a 'Big Q' approach, a qualitative paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 50). This involves acknowledging the stance of the researcher in a personal context, a wider cultural context and an academic context. Because of this, the data analysis process is viewed as a creative process of active construction of themes within a wider socio-cultural and academic context (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 52).

In their book, Braun and Clarke (2022) offer an extensive guide on how to incorporate reflexivity into research. As someone who has attended the festival that this research analyses, taking on a reflexive position was especially important to me. Having an insider perspective on the research population and the practices of the festival provides me with pre-existing knowledge that can positively influence my ability to understand the experiences of the interview participants, but it can also lead me to view others' experiences and the dataset through a subjective lens. Following a research method that includes researcher subjectivity into the core of the practice was therefore an important choice for this research. It allowed me to take on an interpretative lens whilst also putting

my own experiences into a critical and wider academic context. In section 3.3, the ways that reflexivity was incorporated into the research method is further outlined.

3.2 Data collection

3.2.1 Newsletters

A total of 25 e-mail newsletters to attendees were obtained from the newsletter archive of the Boom Festival website (Boom Festival, 2023d). These newsletters were sent out in relation to the Boom editions of 2020 (postponed to 2022) and 2018. The newsletters contained a wide range of topics, from practical information regarding ticket sales to updates on the land after the festival had finished (see Appendix A). A sample size of 25 was chosen as this contained at least a full 'cycle' of e-mail newsletters, from the initial e-mails regarding the theme of the next edition and updates in between the editions to the e-mails sent out after the festival to thank the participants and deconstruct the choices made at the festival. The newsletter archive contained more than 25 newsletters sent out in relation to the Boom 2018 and Boom 2020 edition, but some have been excluded as these were very short and only pertained to specific practical information not applicable to the research, such as the e-mail containing the dates for the next edition, the information regarding ticket sales or information on taking a child to Boom Festival. After selection of the sample, the contents of the newsletters were copied into a document, excluding pictures, and further analysed. The total dataset of newsletters comprised a total of 17950 words, with an average of 718 words per newsletter.

3.2.2 Interviews

To explore the experiences of attendees, fourteen interviews with attendees were conducted. These attendees varied in when they went to Boom Festival and how often they have attended, ranging from once to 12 times between 1998 and 2023. Combined, all attendees have attended the festival a total of 44 times. A purposive sample was chosen, in order to create a heterogeneous sample that includes varied voices and experiences (Robinson, 2014, p. 26). In a heterogeneous sample, any commonalities found are more likely to be applicable to a wider context (Robinson, 2014, p. 27). As this research is already quite specific, being a case study of one festival, this approachwas used to help establish whether theoretical insights developed from the research could be applied to wider contexts. Moreover, including participants who have attended the festival in different years increases the internal validity of the research by including both recent experiences and experiences that are further away, which may influence reflections on these experiences (Diefenbach, 2009, p. 883). Furthermore, since this research pertains to meaning-making and identity, cultural differences might affect the ways that participants made meaning of their festival experiences. All respondents were contacted through a Boom-related Facebook group. Respondents were chosen out of approximately 40 applications, based

on nationality, gender and how often they had attended the festival and in what years. The interview participants differed in gender and age, ranging from 26 to 58 (see Appendix B). The sample was also international, with participants from nine different nationalities.

As mentioned, the interviews were semi-structured, following a topic guide but open to adjustments and other topics based on the experiences of the interview participants. The topic guide was constructed based on an initial literature review. Similar to the research of Wu et al. (2020), the topic guide was based on the different stages of the liminal event experience, with questions regarding participants' experiences before, during and after the event (see the topic guide in Appendix C). This was done to gain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' engagement with the festival and their communication over time, as well as how their experiences have affected them over time.

To analyse the experiences of the participants before the event, questions were asked regarding their consumption of the festival's social media and the newsletters as well as their expectations of and feelings about the event. To examine the experiences during the festival, questions were asked regarding the participants' overall experiences and how this related to Boom's communication. After this, the post-event experience was discussed using questions that reflect on the experience and what the participants still think back about, as well as whether or not they still stay in touch with the festival in various ways and whether there are any transformative experiences that they have taken with them. Finally, some questions were discussed relating to how their festival attendance has affected their beliefs and identities more broadly.

Overall, an inductive approach was taken in the semi-structured interviews. Since the literature review was done largely after most interviews had been conducted, interview questions primarily focused on the overall experiences of the attendees. Through emergent patterns in the conversations, the literature review and thematic analysis were steered towards the theory of communitas and liminality as developed by Turner (Turner, 1979) and its subsequent operationalisations by many others (e.g. Buechner et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020). Initially, the research question centred on the cosmopolitan experiences and identities of Boom Festival attendees. However, as it became apparent that social responsibility efforts played a large role in the meaning-making of attendees' festival experiences, the research shifted towards a broader analysis of reception of and engagement with Boom's social responsibility efforts. Consequently, the topic guide reflects a limited view of the final analysis: the questions asked initially addressed cosmopolitan views, but as social responsibility came up naturally in many conversations, it was decided to explore this direction and take on a more inductive role in the analysis, starting from the patterns found in the data.

The interviews took between 35 minutes and 1 hour and 38 minutes, with an average of 1 hour and 4 minutes per interview. Because of the international reach of the project, all interviews were conducted online through either Zoom or WhatsApp video call. According to Nehls et al. (2015, p. 145), video-conferencing tools have the ability to transmit verbal and non-verbal cues similar to a

face-to-face setting, making them suitable for interviews that relate to personal experiences. After the interviews, recordings were transcribed using Otter.ai, a digital transcribing software, reviewed and adjusted wherever necessary and imported into Atlas.ti 24 for further analysis. Unfortunately, during the process recordings of four interviews experienced technical difficulties. For these interviews, notes were used in the analysis instead of transcriptions and overall experiences and opinions were paraphrased, but no specific quotes were used.

3.2.3   Research ethics and positionality

For the data collection of the newsletters, only publicly available information was used from Boom's own website. An e-mail was sent out to the organisation to ask whether they would like to be included in the research, which they declined, but they did give permission to use all publicly available information for the research.

For the interviews, measures were taken to ensure the privacy and informed consent of participants. The original message in the Facebook group stated my identity as a student at Erasmus University as well as the research aims for the study and the fact that participation would be fully anonymous. In the private messages received in response to this message, some participants had questions regarding the purposes of the research or the anonymity, which were diligently answered to relieve any doubts. However, in the original message the research aims were named as relating more to identities as world citizens. Over time, the research aims have slightly switched more towards a broader analysis of identities related to social responsibility as a whole. In the last interviews, this was made clear to the interviewees but in the earlier interviews this was not yet known.

Due to the completely digital nature of the meetings with participants, no informed consent forms were sent. Rather, at the start of the interviews the research purposes were discussed again and the interviewees were informed of their anonymity and that they had the possibility to step out of the interview at any time, leave out any information that they did not feel comfortable sharing and could always reach out at a later time or date to ask me to refrain from using any specific information or step out of the research altogether. None of the interviewees made use of this possibility. Finally, the participants were asked if they were okay with me audio recording the interviews for transcription purposes. After handing in the thesis, all recordings were deleted. Upon starting the recording, Zoom gave a notification to the participants that the recording had now started. All of the participants were okay with the recording of the interview.

When making the transcription, names of interviewees and personal information such as specific cities or towns or names of relatives or friends were deleted from the transcription in order to anonymise them. The interviewees were given numbers in the initial transcriptions and pseudonyms in the final results. Both numbers and pseudonyms can be found in Appendix B.

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As mentioned in section 3.1.2, reflecting on my role and positionality as a researcher was of high importance to me in this research. As someone who attends (transformational) music festivals and has attended Boom Festival, reflecting on the ways that this influences my perspective on both the literature and the attendees' experiences is important. According to Orb et al. (2001, p. 94), the primary purpose of qualitative research is to understand a phenomenon from the participants' point of view. During the interviews it was therefore vital to refrain from steering the conversation in the direction of my own opinions or perspectives. This was primarily done trough asking questions that were very open-ended and broad and having participants share as much as possible without interfering too much with the direction that they were going in. Some more directed follow-up questions were asked in response to their stories, but I phrased my questions using the language that they used to describe their experiences themselves.

Whilst my positionality as a festival attendee was something that I had to consider in how I lead the conversations, it was also beneficial in establishing rapport with the interviewees as it allowed to build trust and allowed the interviewee to focus less on explaining the background of their experiences (Weller, 2017, p. 614). It was very easy for me to empathise with the participants' experiences and because of this they were very willing to describe their experiences. As some participants experienced very personal things and some of the topics that they talked about included topics that are sensitive to some such as drug use or trauma, it was beneficial to this research that I was able to connect with them from a place of understanding. Almost all participants were very eager to share and gave very extensive answers to the questions, which meant that I was able to tailor the conversations to their particular experiences and perspectives.

3.3 Data analysis

3.3.1   Thematic analysis process

Both the newsletters and the interviews were analysed using thematic analysis as per Braun and Clarke (2022). As Braun and Clarke (2022) describe it, the thematic analysis process consists of six steps. These steps involve familiarisation with the data, coding, theme generation and writing. It is important to note that the process is highly personalised and the 6 steps are not necessarily followed in sequential order (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 47). Rather, it is important to think of these steps as a guide and the overall thematic analysis process as an iterative process. Besides the process of data analysis being iterative, this research contains two separate data analyses (namely the newsletter analysis and the interview analysis) of which, whilst presented separately, the process has been interconnected. In the context of reflexivity, it is important to note that throughout this research, the processes of data collection and analysis for either of these analyses have influenced the other.

To start with, data collection of the newsletters started before the data collection of the interviews. This allowed me to familiarise myself somewhat with the content of the newsletters,

bringing about initial interpretations and hypotheses for not only the newsletter analysis itself but also for the outcomes of the interviews. As the interview guide was made before the data collection of the newsletters, these effects were limited. After data collection of both the newsletters and the interviews, the choice was made to start the initial coding with the interviews rather than the newsletters. The reason for this was to stay as close as possible to the original meaning-making processes of the interviewees without interference from the interpretations of the newsletter contents. After this, the newsletters were coded before heading on to the theme generation process of both. In the initial theme generation process of the interviews, patterns were visible to me that corresponded heavily with phenomena found in the literature review. This provided a framework for interpretation that in turn, influenced the interpretation of the newsletter codes. Ultimately, both the newsletter analysis and the interview analysis resulted in a coherent whole that might not have been interpreted in exactly the same way separately.

3.3.2   Newsletters

After collecting and preparing the newsletters, all newsletters were read through to familiarise myself with the dataset. Besides the newsletters, Boom's website, YouTube and social media were also read through in order to familiarise myself with the message that the festival spreads and the way in which they do this. In the initial coding process, 112 pieces of text received a total of 54 codes. Some codes that were similar were fused together, leading to a final total of 42 codes. During this stage, I focused on multiple levels of the message: their choice of words and other small-scale language choices, the content of the newsletters and the overall choice of topics and how these were spaced out during the cycle of information surrounding one edition. A codebook was created with specific codes and my initial thoughts and interpretations were noted in a journal.

After the coding process, codes were scanned through in order to create groups of codes that fit together, find codes that represented a different perspective and see if an overall story was present. After clustering the codes into groups, these groups were reviewed in light of the code clusters that were already generated from the interviews. As it turned out, both the code clusters from the interviews and the code clusters from the newsletters corresponded with a similar theoretical basis. This theoretical basis was then used to shape the themes from these code clusters and in writing out the resulting theory. After writing out the themes, the newsletters were reviewed again to see in what ways they fit with the interpretations made in the analysis and this was used to re-shape the results.

3.3.3   Interviews

After each interview, the interview was transcribed. During this process, I was able to look at the conversation very closely and look for things that initially stood out. After all interviews were done, the interviews were laid out next to each other to see what the main topics of the conversations

were and which interviewees had similar or conflicting experiences or thoughts. The interviews were imported into Atlas.ti 24 for the initial coding process. During this process, 271 pieces of text were given a total of 102 different codes. Later, this was comprised into 59 codes, as some codes were very similar. After the initial coding process, by going through the codes it became clear that many related to either communitas or feelings of identification and group forming with the other attendees, or C-C identification and feelings of connection to Boom as an organisation and a concept. This formed the basis for the theme formation.

After this, all codes were divided up into subgroups that fit together as subthemes. By writing out all codes into a mind map, the connections between subgroups and codes were found and an overarching narrative of which codes influenced each other and which codes seemed to contradict and how this could be was formed. After writing out the original narrative of the themes, the narrative was connected to the individual interviews to see if it still fit with the original experiences of the participants. Once the themes were fully fleshed out and coherent with the stories of the attendees, the themes were further reflected in terms of their connection to the newsletters and the literature (see Appendix D).

4. Results

The analysis of the newsletters sent out by Boom and the interviews conducted with Boom attendees each resulted in the construction of two principal themes. The themes, along with their subthemes, will be presented in the sections below. As shown in Table 4.1, the first two themes relate to the newsletters sent out by Boom and the last two themes relate to the experiences of the interview participants. Interesting to note is that even though the analyses of the newsletters and the interviews were conducted separately, the themes are interconnected: theme 1 and 3 relate to the concept of communitas, and theme 2 and 4 relate to the concept of C-C identification. An overview of the codes that belonged to each theme can be found in Appendix E and F.

Table 4.1

Outline of themes found in the thematic analysis

Analysis	Theme	Subtheme	Description
Newsletters	Inspiring collective effort	The power of community	Boom positions attendees as part of a Boom community, which is part of a larger community of humans as a species.
		Collective effort	As part of this community, attendees are said to have a social responsibility and asked for active participation in collective action.
	Assuring commitment to the cause	Communicating efforts	Through transparency and diligent communication, Boom justifies their socially responsible identity and establishes the attendees role in this.
		Communicating vision and mission	By communicating their vision and societal mission, Boom establishes their socially responsible identity and allows the attendee to identify with the organisational mission.
Interviews	Togetherness through CSR	Boom as a liminal, experimental space	By being away from all regular social structures, attendees are able to test out new behaviours, including socially responsible behaviours. They start opening up to other attendees.

		Communitas	Attendees experience a sense of community and belonging during this shared experience, especially through shared socially responsible values and participation in socially responsible acts.
	Supporting transformation	Building a CSR reputation	Due to Boom's social responsibility reputation, attendees felt more eager to participate in the festival and felt a sense of trust in the festival organisation.
		Boom as facilitator	By being socially responsible, attendees feel that Boom cares for them and actively provides them with a positive culture that is supportive of learning and transformation.
		Boom as changemaker	Attendees connect their personal growth to experiences at the festival, resulting in greater identification with Boom after the festival and desire to engage in positive word of mouth.

4.1 Inspiring collective effort

4.1.1 The power of community

Throughout the newsletters, Boom starts to create feelings of community before the festival and Boom aims to keep these feelings between the editions. These feelings of community can be divided into two types of community: Boomers as a community and a community of humans as a species. In twelve newsletters, readers were referred to as part of the human species or references were made to all humans living on earth together. Language like this functions to create a sense of interconnectivity between humans, a sense of shared experience as can be seen in newsletter 16: "We would like to thank all who understood the call not to fly national flags on dance floors. This allowed the collective to celebrate our oneness as a human species on the sacred Planet Earth." As the reader reflects on their position as part of a larger human community, this justifies the need to take on an active responsibility for the care of this community and the environment that the community exists within: "May we continue to live together and learn from each other. May we create a better future, side by side." (newsletter 15).

As the idea that humans across the globe are interconnected is present in the text, so is the idea that Boom attendees (referred to as Boomers) are interconnected. In six of the newsletters, Boom is referred to as a global movement, party or community: "Boom Festival was once again home to a worldwide tribe reuniting individuals from across 147 different countries - proving borders are meaningless." (newsletter 16). What unites this community of Boomers is a similar mindset. In four of the newsletters, Boomers were referred to as like-minded. By presenting Boom as a community that has similar intentions and aims to take responsibility for their place in the larger world, attendees are able to see Boom as a project that they are able to participate in rather than simply an event that they can consume. This helps to position the attendees less as audience members and more as co-creators and active participants of the event. The extension of the co-creation from being able to actively participate in the festival and being part of the Boomer community, to taking on a role in the creation of a sense of global community and ultimately the creation of a better Earth gives the event greater importance: "We as a community of Boomers are part of the solutions we have been waiting for!" (newsletter 22).

4.1.2 Collective effort

In the newsletters, it becomes apparent that this shared responsibility for the human community and for the Earth is what drives the need for a festival like Boom. Active participation of Boom participants is called upon throughout the newsletters. In fourteen of the newsletters, Boom is presented as a collective effort in some way. Boom does not hesitate to name the co-creative nature of the festival: "It is the co-creative spirit of the global Boomer that makes Boom what it is", is named in newsletter 21. Whilst some newsletters contain active calls for participation in the sense of volunteering or a creative contribution, it is also named in newsletters that attendance to the festival is a form of participation as well: "We each have a part to play at Boom: on a dance floor or behind the scenes; serving food or being served; we cooperate, so we are all; and we are contributing to a powerful community bond." (newsletter 8). This collective participation functions not only to create a sense of community and a more co-creative event, but also to instil a sense of social responsibility and care for the environment in the attendee: "We must work together to ensure zero trace and the only way to do that is by reflecting and learning from our experiences and by raising awareness."

The impetus behind the co-creative nature of the festival and the resulting community bond is even more apparent in more individual calls to participation. In twelve of the newsletters, Boom mentioned their role as an inspiring force for personal social responsibility:

> "Radical self-responsibility is key to activate our potential as game changers and even when
> we are surrounded with natural disasters, political turmoil, social unrest, we can choose to
> focus on what can be done and refuse to be overwhelmed by hopelessness." (newsletter 22).

Four of the newsletters contained more specific calls to individuals to engage: "Be here to engage with constructive debate and address the issues that truly matter." (newsletter 20). Overall, by inspiring individuals to think about the event from a certain socially responsible mindset and consider the potential influence that collective action can have, sense of community is further built and the like-mindedness of Boomers that was mentioned earlier is further established even before attendance to the actual event.

The sense of community established before the festival was reinforced through mentions of gratitude for the participation of Boomers: "It goes without saying that Boom would not be what it is without the creative spirit that Boomers bring to the festival." Messages such as these were present in eight of the newsletters. They function to reinforce the active role of the participant, worker or volunteer in the Boom community and to show that their active participation has an influence on the community as a whole. Furthermore, Boom strengthens the collaborative basis of the event by letting attendees know that they listen to feedback and implement this wherever possible and letting the reader know the considerations behind the choices that are made. In newsletter 14, all choices and changes made to the festival for the 2018 edition are outlined and argued. For example, it was explained why certain choices were made with regards to water use during the festival: "So while we took Boomers feedback into account by adding an additional 54 showers, we also kept shower times limited between the hours of 06h and 14h and between 17h and midnight in order to minimise water consumption."

4.2 Assuring commitment to the cause

4.2.1   Communicating efforts

By communicating the considerations regarding certain choices in the festival, Boom does not only strengthen the feeling that the attendee has something to say about how the festival is made, it also serves to create a sense of transparency and believability around the intentions of the festival organisation. This works specifically with regards to the social responsibility efforts that the festival engages in. This transparency is further underpinned by mentioning that they are a self-sufficient event, free of sponsorship, in newsletters 11 and 16. Two of the newsletters (newsletters 14 and 16), revolve specifically around outlining the choices made around the socially responsible efforts of the festival. After every edition, Boom sends out an "Eco letter to the Boomers", where they "touch base and communicate some details about the festival's program for sustainability and the measures we are taking to fulfill our commitment to preserving the environment and promoting sustainability on a social level." (newsletter 14). They outline the specific campaigns and themes of their social responsibility efforts and substantiate their claims with statistics and data. For example:

"In 2017, the Portuguese unemployment rate amongst young people under the age of 25 soared at 23.9 percent. Meanwhile, there was a 7.9 percent rate of unemployment amongst those between the ages of 25 and 54 (source: Pordata). In light of these figures, one of our main priorities is to act local by helping to create more jobs for people. Between October 2017 and October 2018, 84 percent of people working for Boom were Portuguese. A total 214 of those employed were from the region of Castelo Branco, representing 13.3 percent of total staff during that period." (newsletter 14)

By holding themselves accountable to the attendees and showing how they take responsibility, the festival substantiates their mission and vision when stating their intentions and trying to influence the attendee to gain a sense of community and collective effort, and inspires the attendee to take responsibility for their participation in socially responsible behaviour as well. The festival positions themselves as having a nurturing role in the socially responsible behaviour of the attendee. In newsletter 20, they name how they are a "wake up call - for the seeds of change to be spread afterwards" and what projects they invite to the festival to support this. Moreover, they let the readers know how they aim to inspire transformation on an individual level and on a social level through their programming.

4.2.2 Communicating vision and mission

By communicating their specific efforts to inspire socially responsible behaviours in others and behave socially responsible themselves, Boom substantiates their mission and vision. In nine newsletters, they notify the reader of their mission, by saying things such as "Care for the natural and social environments form the crux of Boom's DNA" (newsletter 13) and "Our ultimate aim is to inspire a responsible lifestyle, ultimately enabling environmental regeneration, social and cultural transformation." (newsletter 3). By showing that they are an event with a positive social impact, they convince the attendee of Boom's importance:

"The festival celebrates the plurality of cultures. Sadly, cultural projects in Portugal barely get one percent of the public budget. This fact only goes to underscore the importance of cultural agents like Boom and the role they play in promoting and cross-pollinating local talent with a stream of international talents." (newsletter 16).

The attendee, whose co-creation in the event is established in the newsletters, can now identify with the positive social impact of the event as something that they are a part of. As Lii and Lee (2012, p. 73) found, consumers identify more with organisations with a positive organisational identity as this is in line with self-definitional needs. Stating the positive societal mission and outcomes of the festival

and establishing the attendee's role in this could thereby positively influence the way that attendees identify themselves with Boom Festival.

4.3 Togetherness through CSR

4.3.1 Boom as a liminal, experimental space

When the interview participants arrived at the festival, many experienced a new and different social atmosphere. The participants specifically experienced an unusual amount of freedom and openness. The liminality of the experience lies at the basis of these feelings. Charlotte* describes a moment where she was able to share a traumatic experience in her youth with a stranger at the festival and ultimately was able to release a lot of emotion around this experience, feeling "lifted forever":

> "It was so genuine. I think maybe because you are not connected, like nobody has an agenda here. Nobody has the kind of, they don't need you to do anything. They don't need you. You know, they're not going to see you again, really. So it's somehow very pure."

Being away from the usual social structures that the participants exist within in their daily lives, they experienced a freedom to express themselves in ways that they might not have been able to do at home. Besides sharing intimate moments, Charlotte recounts feeling healed by the freedom and playfulness of the festival: "Just people doing kind of crazy things, just people allowing each other to be as weird as they want. And just acceptance and embracing."

This feeling of the festival being an experimental space where one is able to test out new and unusual behaviours is shared by many of the participants. Eight out of fourteen participants described the festival as a playground for adults. New experiences are at the centre of the festival, but playing with new behaviours does not mean that these behaviours cannot be serious. Many of the participants mention testing out new activities and taking an interest in new subjects regarding positive personal and societal transformation. According to Evelyn, the workshops organised by Boom facilitate this: "there was so much at Boom that like, even if you wanted to dip your toe, you could, but if you wanted to go to like, the more spiritual meditation stuff all day, you could too." Paulo, an engineer from Brazil who has always been interested in sustainability and took a special interest in workshops and talks regarding permaculture at the festival, saw that even those who do not primarily care too much for sustainability take something away from the festival:

> "It is impossible to stay six days in a row just frying dancing and so it's nice to be chilling around, to do some walking. This makes it a very nice place to reflect about these things [sustainability and oneness of all humans], to read, to take your time, to connect with people, with your friends, to discuss topics. So I believe it's a good time for learning. I would say that

even if you are not interested in these things and you went to Boom only for the party, I think definitely you got something from there afterwards. Because you have so much information around you so that when you are walking, you see the [environmentalist] signs, you talk with different people. So if you allow yourself, definitely you will learn a lot."

Other participants found themselves testing out new behaviours related to social responsibility as well. Liam describes seeing people hold up their leftover foods at the food court at the festival to offer it to anyone hungry rather than throwing it away, and decides to try the same. Whilst it makes him feel rather awkward, the gesture is appreciated by others and it results in him making new connections. Charlotte too feels a sudden urge to engage in more socially responsible behaviours at the festival after seeing how socially responsible other attendees are:

"Everybody's so conscious. In fact, I think I spent a day, we spent about six hours picking up cigarette butts. Because I got the idea to do like of all the cigarettes I've ever dropped in my life. And I was like: 'Okay, I'm gonna pick them up now'. I think I did about six hours of cigarette butt picking up."

4.3.2   Communitas

Feelings of communitas, the sense of belonging and unity felt in a group when having a liminal experience together, were widely experienced by the interview participants (Turner, 1979, p. 469). The open and expressive environment created in the liminal experience of the festival allowed participants to connect with others more easily and on a deeper level. Evelyn, a woman from Ireland who after coming to the festival alone decided to meet up with someone from the Boom Facebook group that she was in, felt an instant connection after visiting a meditation workshop together and sharing a vulnerable moment. She describes feeling connected to him forever as "something happened here where we could just be so unapologetically ourselves".

During the interviews, many participants described instances and feelings of solidarity and connection with others. For some, this took place more in the spontaneous, short-lived interactions with others at the festival throughout the day, and for others they described "joining a tribe" or making new friends. Four of the participants described Boom as a journey that they were on together with the other attendees: "people have chosen to go to Boom for whatever reason, so you're already on the same sort of page of the book, exploring the chapter together", says Arthur, who has been going to almost every edition of the festival since 2006. Even though one of the participants felt that at the festival, individual experiences were so different from each other that it is hard to communicate what exactly the Boom experience entails, participants do describe going through the journey together. Charlotte and Amélie describe how going through the experience, and especially the hardships of the

festival, create an instant bond with other attendees. Amélie for example says that "the hardships add to it. You got to cope with it. But everyone's got to cope with it there." For some, this bond extends even beyond the borders of the festival. Charlotte describes an experience of meeting a colleague who had also been to Boom, and says that she felt an instant connection:

"I met a teacher at my school the next year, and she had been to Boom, and that was it. She and I knew who we were from that. Because it's a real, like, it's not an easy experience is it? It's hardcore. It's for four days and three, four days, and you're hot, and you have to walk a lot. And you're being opened up everywhere, and you're vulnerable. And there's a lot going on there."

Feelings of having a shared experience occur especially when it comes to partaking in care for each other and the environment together. Paulo describes how being together with others who care about the environment and the land that they were on gave him a sense of belonging:

"To be there is nice because it's a place where they are aware about things, they are not just throwing a party for crazy people. The people there are aware about the world that they live in, about the things that are happening. And I think it's kind of organic, the type of people that goes to these things. (…) But I think it's a feeling of belonging I would say, I can see myself there in different people."

The sense of community felt at Boom is sometimes strengthened by the inability to experience the same amount of care for others and for the world outside of the festival. Almost all of the participants have some trouble reintegrating into society after coming back from the festival. Bruno, a man from Mexico who also organises his own festivals, says that he tries to take this loving spirit with him after the festival, but that he has a hard time replicating this in Mexico where this kindness is reciprocated less. Because of this, he always looks forward to the next edition: "When you are in Boom it is like: 'Oh, finally I'm at home after two years.'" Liam too experiences a disconnect between his experiences at Boom and outside of the festival. He recounts an experience where after giving away his leftover food to strangers at Boom and making new friends, he tries to do the same at Belgian festival. After going up to a group and offering his fries, one of them throws the fries into a crowd of people. He says that this experience "broke my heart. At that moment I realised that we were back home, and that even though I want to bring [the Boom spirit] back, I need to be realistic and change my expectations of the world."

However, experiences such as these where attendees do not experience the same socially responsible behaviours outside of the festival that they do within, does not mean that they are not able

to take the experiences with them at all. Both Bruno and Liam try to bring the sense of community and kindness of the festival into their own worlds, by creating their own spaces for this. Bruno organises his own festivals, and Liam is opening his own wellness studio, that he calls a "mini-Boom", together with his girlfriend and friend with whom he attended the festival. Other participants too try to hold on to feelings of communitas after the festival through connecting with Boom and with other Boom participants online. Arthur mentions that keeping in contact with Boom online helps him feel connected to the community until the next edition of Boom:

> "Obviously, you feel a bit disconnected, when you get back to reality and get in the world of working and stuff like that. But with online, sort of social media, Facebook, Instagram, with Boom, you definitely feel part of it. And you know, receiving newsletters and stuff, it's still part of something."

Especially the newsletters sent out by Boom after the festival regarding the outcomes of the sustainability initiatives of the festival (the Eco newsletters) are enjoyed by the participants: "the Eco newsletter and reading that actually, I really enjoyed the fact that we've been part of something that yeah, won awards for sustainability and something that's just a little deeper than just partying.", says Amélie.

4.4 Supporting transformation

4.4.1 Building a CSR reputation

Five of the interviewees chose to go to Boom specifically because of the social responsibility values that they have. Mariska for example says that rather than being made more socially aware by the festival's social responsibility efforts, she only goes to festivals that are already socially responsible because she is: "I'm choosing these festivals because I feel that they are aligning with the values that I care for." Over time, Boom Festival has built a reputation for being a socially responsible festival. Whilst the ethos of the festival has always been present, they have built a reputation for being a socially responsible festival through communicating their efforts to the outside world. Angelo, a 42 year old man from Portugal, has been going to Boom every edition since 1998, the second edition of the festival. He saw the festival grow from a small party in the forest to the large gathering that it is today. According to Angelo, the values present at Boom have always been the same, but over the years the festival has been able to scale them up and communicate them much more to attendees. The trust that the attendees have in the social responsibility efforts of Boom has been built over time. Through communicating their efforts and their philosophy, they are able to bring along attendees in this vision. Many participants spoke of the "spoken philosophy" of the festival or the "core values" or "core

beliefs". The participants place value on the festival communicating these values openly. Evelyn, who views herself as a world citizen and does not identify so much with her Irish nationality, was happy that Boom Festival openly requests attendees to refrain from bringing national flags and placing an emphasis on national identities:

> "I like that kind of like no flags, you know, no specific identity, we are all one, kind of element. And that's probably like a mild philosophy of that, like an undertone through other festivals I've been to, in that, like, who gives a fuck? You know, no one really cares where you're from, are you ready to have a good time? Are you nice, you know, do you want to share your stuff? But Boom, it's like, you know, part of their kind of spoken philosophy, which is nice."

By openly and clearly setting intentions for themselves and the attendees, Boom creates a sense of transparency that the attendees valued and which motivated them to spend their money and time at Boom rather than elsewhere. Amélie, who explained that she had limited funds for things like festivals which has kept her from going to a lot of festivals in the last years, said she would "rather spend a lot of money [at Boom] than at different places. I know it's used for good things."

Furthermore, a few of the participants recounted comparing their own festival experiences with the festival's communication afterwards. When asked if he feels that his own experience at the festival is similar to the way that Boom communicates it on their platforms, Arthur says: "generally what they sort of feedback from newsletter wise, I think it's all within their vision and stuff from a bigger picture. Sometimes sort of in the moment you may not necessarily know it is individually, but when they sort of portray it within a newsletter, it makes sense of their vision of reasoning, of doing things." When the experience and values that Boom communicates correspond with the actual experience at the festival, it makes the participants feel more like they are part of something, resulting in greater identification with the festival. Evelyn explains this feeling in relation to the statement that "we are all one" that Boom oftentimes communicates in their newsletters:

> "The philosophy was reflected so you really believe it. So then people really want to participate in something. You know, for example in our government, they have a policy and you look around and it's like, nowhere to be seen. So why would anyone believe in that policy? Or try to follow it. It's ridiculous. So, [at Boom], you're like, oh, there's this philosophy, and here I see it before my eyes so, you know, we all want to participate. We want to be part of the group as humans, we're social."

4.4.2   Boom as facilitator

By being transparent about and engaging in their social responsibility efforts and holding them and other attendees accountable, the participants feel that Boom is able to facilitate the culture at Boom and the experiences that attendees have. Gestures to have attendees engage in socially responsible behaviour inspire the attendees to participate inside and outside of the festival. Liam for example says that receiving a pocket ashtray at the start of the festival made him aware of the amount of cigarettes that pollute the environment at other large festivals and ultimately made him more aware of the trash that he produces and disposing of it in the proper ways, a lasting change.

Even though Boom is presented as a 'free' space, and the liminal experience places it outside of the everyday social rules, that does not mean that there are no social norms. Similar to what Turner 1979, p. 467) describes in his description of the carnival and other such liminal ritual experiences, there is not necessarily a complete loss of social rules and status but rather a reversal that comes with its own social customs. Boom actively communicates new social rules in their Boom guide (2023b), such as not asking "Where are you from? … We encourage you to avoid the most obvious question when meeting new people and get to know them as who they are, rather than where they are from." Attendees navigate the alternative social rules present at the festival and some describe having to change their mindset to do so. Charlotte describes having some experiences where she asks new people where they are from or what they do for work and consequently feeling out of place and realising that that is not how she wants to connect with others at Boom:

> "It was just so literally written down: these are the rules. We don't do this here. Don't make that the first question, right. … I'm sitting beside somebody, and so I thought: 'What am I going to say? How am I going to say this? How am I going to meet this person?' And I think I said: 'So what are you really passionate about?' as an opener. And he just like, opened, you know, and I thought, yeah, that's a lot better than 'where are you from?' What are you passionate about? What do you love? You know, anyway, so I think it taught me a different way to connect."

Through the newsletters and the Boom guide, the festival is able to actively shape a certain culture in which people are socially aware towards the environment and towards one another. Amélie says of this that "not everyone is reading the Boom guide. But if many people do, they take the others with them. … So it sets the mood."

This culture supports the learning experiences that almost all of the participants had in some way. Ten of the participants explained how for them, Boom was a starting point for growth in some sort of way. The lessons that the participants took from the festival differed, but all of them were supported by the open environment that the festival provided. For example, Paulo learned about the

idea of "oneness", the notion that we are all interconnected as humans, and said that the festival brought him on a path of becoming a more conscious person, leading to him reading up on philosophy in order to get a better understanding of the psyche. Many saw the festival as a way to either educate themselves on social values or to reinforce their existing social values. Arthur mentioned that the festival educated him on caring more for the environment and for others, and has made him more receptive to learn about and care about global social issues. For Evelyn, the festival was a starting point for actively thinking about her purpose, and through the Boom culture of small acts of kindness towards others, she gained a different outlook on her work as an occupational therapist and realised that her purpose is to spread kindness and to help and support others around her. For Amélie, the festival helped her develop tolerance and understanding towards others after having a hard time reconnecting with people after shielding herself off from others during the Covid-19 period: "you can take away the things and carry them out in the world, and live a bit more in love with yourself and all the others. Be tolerant and understanding. Yeah. And refresh that every two years."

4.4.3   Boom as changemaker

As participants attribute their personal transformations to Boom, they are able to connect their larger personal development to experiences that they had at the festival, and ultimately their identities are interwoven with their experiences at Boom Festival. For example, Amélie first came into contact with yoga at festivals, something that she has been doing for over 10 years now. Liam said that the first time he truly enjoyed doing yoga was at Boom, and because of this experience he is now training to become a yoga teacher as his profession. For Arthur, learning about permaculture at the festival made him interested in sustainability and has resulted in him ingraining new sustainable practices into his everyday life. Experiences such as these function to connect the participants to the festival, as new identities and habits that are formed can be directly or indirectly attributed to Boom. Mariska, who attended the festival once in 2022, was the only one with a very contrasting experience. She said that she did not necessarily learn anything new from her attendance to Boom. Overall, the experience was similar to what she had previously experienced at smaller festivals and whilst she liked that the festival was environmentally friendly and the culture was open and supportive, it did not change anything in her own life or identity. Coincidingly, she also did not feel part of a 'Boom community' so much.

The connection that some of the participants feel to Boom often manifests itself in 'spreading the love' to others or word of mouth. In the interview with Rafael, he talks about how these ways of interacting and connecting with others at Boom stayed in his mind after the festival and that he misses this in his daily life. He then brought friends along with him to later editions so that he could share this with them. Paulo was so enamoured with the sustainability efforts taken at the festival that he thinks back about these a lot and told his friends about how environmentally friendly the festival was. To the next edition, he will bring his friends along. To him, this is a way to contribute to keeping the festival,

and thereby the social responsibility efforts that he appreciates, going. For Arthur too, the open and socially conscious environment that he encountered at Boom Festival is something that he wants to share with as much people as possible. He went to his first Boom Festival in 2006 and is still bringing new people along almost twenty years later: "Definitely got some people hooked on the on the Boom bug. I'm planning to go funny enough to the next Boom and there's a couple of friends who have never been before. So I'm still bringing new people along." For others, this connection presents itself in replicating the Boom philosophy and environment in other places, such as Bruno learning from Boom and using these experiences in the organisation of his own festivals, Liam creating a wellness studio in his hometown with a similar environment, and Evelyn and Elodie applying the behaviours and sense of purpose that they found at Boom into their own careers as occupational therapist and flight attendant.

5. Conclusion and discussion

5.1 Conclusion

In this thesis, a thematic analysis of 25 newsletters from the Boom Festival organisation and 14 interviews with attendees of the festival was conducted with the aim of exploring attendees' engagement with CSR values and efforts in a large sustainable festival. The research question explored in this research is *How do Boom Festival attendees engage with the social responsibility efforts of Boom Festival?* To do so, three sub-questions were answered, the first of which relates to the way in which Boom communicated their social responsibility values and efforts: *How does Boom communicate their social responsibility efforts?* It was found that Boom takes on a socially responsible identity in their communication towards attendees by transparently and diligently communicating their social responsibility values. They did so through explicitly stating the social vision and mission of their event and by showcasing their CSR efforts and providing the attendees with specific outcomes and statistics of these efforts. By assuring the attendee that they are taking on a socially responsible role, they justify their request to the attendee to do the same. They position the attendee as part of a Boom community, connected by a shared vision of caring for each other and for the Earth. As part of this community of attendees, Boom attendees have a shared responsibility to actively participate in collective efforts to make not only the festival a better place but also the environment. They are further asked to internalise this Boom mission and send it out into the world through spreading love and caring about others.

The reception of this communication and Boom's CSR efforts at the festival was explored by answering the sub-question *How do Boom Festival attendees experience the social responsibility efforts of Boom Festival?* From the interviews that were conducted with festival attendees, it became clear that for attendees, Boom's social responsibility values and efforts are one of the primary aspects that stand out about the event. Boom has a reputation as a socially responsible festivals, and this made the attendees feel cared for by the festival and made them more eager to participate in the festival, because they felt more trust in the festival organisation and that the socially responsible behaviour at the festival results in a positive culture. Attendees felt inclined to participate in socially responsible behaviour as well, and this increased their feelings of belonging during the festival. By taking on a shared responsibility, participants experienced a sense of community.

The last sub-question, *How do Boom Festival attendees identify themselves with Boom Festival through their social responsibility efforts?,* relates to whether and how attendees feel a greater connection to Boom Festival itself through their social responsibility efforts. Within the liminal festival setting created at Boom, attendees had the opportunity to test out new behaviours and identities including new socially responsible behaviours. The festival supported a culture of learning and transformation. Attendees experienced personal growth as a result of experiences that they had at the festival, and for many this personal growth related to more socially responsible behaviours such as

kindness to others and care for the environment. Similar to what was found in Wu et al. (2020, p. 10), after the festival the attendees have gained a new identity alongside their existing one. For Boom Festival attendees, this identity is often connected to the vision and mission that Boom expresses in their communications and through their CSR efforts. Attendees therefore connect their newfound sustainable habits and interests to Boom, resulting in a greater identification with the message of the festival and with the festival itself. As a result, attendees were inclined to spread the Boom message through positive word of mouth about the festival and by taking friends with them to later editions.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Relevancy to current research

This research made a connection between consumer engagement with social responsibility efforts in events and feelings of belonging and identification of the attendee with the event during the event and afterwards. The topic of CSR in festivals is explored in different ways, with a lot of research focusing on the organisers' side (e.g. Laing & Frost, 2010; Mair & Laing, 2012; Richardson, 2018). In this research, the focus is on the participant experience of CSR practices in festivals. This research aims to broaden the literature on CSR in the festival industry by focusing on transformational festivals, which have a participatory nature and social responsibility as a core practice.

In their article on CSR perception and music consumption, Green et al. (2016, p. 243) found that consumers think that it interferes with their enjoyment of music consumption such as attending a concert or buying an album when there is a focus on social responsibility messages. Music events and such provide a way for them to escape daily realities, and CSR messaging interferes with this. The interview findings of this research stand in contrast with this. In this research it is argued that the difference is that the CSR efforts in the case of Boom Festival are of a participatory nature. In Green et al. (2016, p. 237, 243) the primary CSR messaging consists of the artist being involved in charity causes or preaching for social responsibility on stage. In these types of CSR efforts, there is only an indirect involvement of the consumer as their money supports an artist supporting a cause. In the case of Boom Festival, the participants were able to participate themselves in a number of ways in CSR efforts, which made them feel like they were part of something. They were thanked for this by the festival and it was often reinforced in the newsletters that they were an important part of the collective effort.

The connection between participation and CSR perception is coherent with the findings of Lee et al. (2021, p. 513), who found that participatory CSR campaigns help build a relationship between the organisation and the consumer as they contain higher perceived interactivity and make the customer feel empowered. In turn, this creates higher C-C identification which ultimately increases purchase intentions (Lee et al., 2021, p. 513). This could be seen in the interview participants saying that they felt more comfortable spending their money at Boom Festival than elsewhere, because they

know that the money would go to something that they believe in. Furthermore, the findings are in line with research of Cha et al. (2016, p. 236), who analysed the connection between customer participation in CSR efforts and brand loyalty in brand coffee shops in Korea. They also found that customer participation strengthens the relationship between the customer and the brand. Moreover, Cha et al. (2016, p. 243) also considered the difference between personal identification with a brand and social identification with a brand. They found that CSR participation has a greater influence on personal identification than on social identification (Cha et al., 2016, p. 245). However, in this research it is argued that for Boom Festival attendees, feelings of communitas and feeling like one is part of a group with a socially responsible vision is precisely what drove the participation in CSR efforts and what ultimately drove feelings of identification with Boom. This research thereby extends the research on participatory CSR campaigns and consumer-company identification by placing it in the context of participatory music festivals. It can be argued that the inherently social setting of a festival such as Boom and the resulting communitas that forms, is a basis for social identification with the festival through participatory CSR efforts. The connection between greater participation in CSR efforts and greater consumer identification can therefore still be made, but the participatory nature of the organisation itself might make a difference in whether this is more important for personal or social identification with a brand.

Furthermore, with regards to the outcomes of the individuals after participating in CSR efforts, Mair and Laing (2013, p. 1125) found that pro-environmental behaviour changes as a result of attending sustainability-focused events occur primarily in those already interested in sustainability. Even though the events offer the potential to support environmental behaviour change at any stage of change, they posit that people that are not already interested in sustainable behaviour are not likely to visit a sustainability-centred event. The findings of this study of Boom Festival attendees further confirm the potential of events to support environmental behaviour change, with many of the interview participants discussing their behavioural changes or finding a sense of purpose in socially responsible behaviours. However, as some of the attendees explained that they were not primarily interested in or very aware of Boom's social responsibility efforts beforehand, it can be argued that there are factors that could still drive attendance to socially responsible festivals, such as the popularity of the festival (as Boom is a very well-known festival within its music genre), social responsibility not being the main selling point of the event or presence of non-CSR related activities. In Ulusoy's (2015, p. 287) research of social responsibility behaviour transformations in AB trips, it was found that the trips offered enough other qualities that attendees did not primarily go for the social responsibility participation, but did end up transforming in their behaviours and identities because of their attendance. More research on which other factors would drive attendees to participate in CSR activities at events could be done to gain a deeper understanding of how to facilitate social change in those not primarily interested.

Finally, in his critique of "sustainable" festivals, Zifkos (2015, p. 13) calls for a more holistic and critical view of what exactly entails a sustainable festival. According to Zifkos (2015, p. 13-14), sustainability efforts at festivals often only focus on decreasing the environmental impact of the physical event and do not include other dimensions of social responsibility, consider the educational potential of the festival in inspiring socially responsible behaviours in the attendee or the potential to contribute to the greater good. This study agrees with this view on what a sustainable festival should be, and contributes to this research a case-study of the educational potential of a festival that includes a holistic and especially a participatory CSR strategy. As Zifkos (2015, p. 12) and many others have said, the environmental impact of any festival cannot be ignored. However, this research contributes to gaining a deeper understanding of festivals as potential changemakers for socially responsible behaviours, the effects of which extend far beyond the borders of the festival site.

5.2.2   Relevancy to festival organisers and policymakers

This potential for festivals to be changemakers in society should be considered by festival organisers and policymakers alike. This research argues that as places where communitas is formed and where there is potential for the creation of new behaviours and social roles, all festivals, not just TFs, offer an opportunity to be changemakers in society. By taking on an active responsibility to not only show ideal behaviours as an organisation, but to include attendees in these socially responsible efforts, festival organisers can have a positive societal impact whilst increasing brand loyalty and C-C identification in attendees. Especially with an eye on the findings of Mair and Laing (2013) and Ulusoy (2015) in the section above, it could be very beneficial for non-sustainability oriented festivals to include participatory CSR practices as this would increase the chances of supporting transformation in socially responsible behaviours in attendees that are not that interested in social responsibility to begin with.

As festival organisers often do not actively consider CSR practices as part of their business strategies (Richardson, 2018, p. 1266), this research is a call to festival organisers to consider CSR efforts as an integral part of their business strategies and design. Richardson (2018, p. 13-17) found that festival organisers and stakeholders do aim to act ethically and socially responsible, but that they do not have set standards or methods for this across different stakeholder parties and between organisations. Stakeholders were wary of being forced to comply on grounds of limited resources (2018, p. 19). However, this does not mean that considering the way in which a festival can operate from a certain socially responsible philosophy cannot or should not be done. Developing a more explicit social responsibility philosophy, communicating this to attendees more effectively and actively considering ways in which attendees can be invited to participate in the philosophy could greatly benefit not only the festival but also the cultural sector as a whole.

For festival organisers, it could mean that attendees feel more connected to the festival and its message as a result of changed socially responsible behaviour that has its origin at the event. As this research and previous research has shown, it can influence brand citizenship behaviours and purchase intentions in the form of increased word of mouth and revisiting the event. For the cultural sector as a whole, actively carrying out a socially responsible philosophy and helping to support social responsibility behaviour transformations in attendees could show policymakers the importance of cultural events as changemakers in society. The creation of an explicit and tangible CSR strategy and audience research of the reception and influence of this strategy could potentially help in asking for support from municipalities and governments in facilitating events.

5.3   Limitations and future research

Whilst thinking about the potential educational potential that one might have is relevant for any event at any time, this research is limited in some ways. Firstly, this research is a case study of only one festival. Being a transformational festival specifically, Boom Festival attendees might be more open to behavioural transformation in general and participation in social responsibility efforts in particular. Further research is needed to explore the effects of participatory social responsibility efforts and communication in other types of festivals.

Secondly, the interview participants may have been biased in their answers in wanting to come across in a socially desirable way. Social desirability involves the bias of subjects to deny socially undesirable traits and give socially desirable answers, saying things in a way that reflects favourably on the subject (Nederhof, 1985, p. 264). As the topic of social responsibility is linked to ethical behaviour and being a socially desirable citizen, it could be that participants gave answers about their development in this area that were socially desirable. Nederhof (1985, p. 264) speaks of self-deception and other-deception. Self-deception involves a person believing more socially desirable statements about themselves than are true in actuality. As some of the attendees attended Boom Festival six months or even several years ago, it could be that the reflections on their experiences have changed from how they viewed their experiences when they had them.

Thirdly, the participants for this research were recruited through a Boom Festival-related Facebook group. It could be that the people that are a member of this Facebook group already feel a greater connection with the festival and its socially responsible ethos than attendees who choose not to become part of the group or that have left the group after the festival had finished. As the Facebook group largely pertained to practical information exchange about the festival this bias was hopefully limited, but as the festival happened over half a year ago, those not interested in the festival after attending could have definitely left the group.

In the future, the validity of this research could be improved by turning it into a longitudinal study where the participants are recruited at the festival itself and re-interviewed some time after the

festival has finished to review whether there were any changes in their feelings of connection to the festival, interest in social responsibility and in social responsibility behaviours. Following participants in a longitudinal research and re-assessing the influence on them and on their efforts to spread the socially responsible ethos if applicable could also help assess the reach of socially responsible events in spreading their ethos beyond the event and its attendees itself. Furthermore, similar research to this could be done for other events that include participatory CSR efforts such as other types of music or cultural festivals, holidays and corporate events. By analysing different types of events, characteristics that influence the connection of the attendee to the CSR efforts in any sort of way could be found. Finally, a comparative research could be done of festivals with a social responsibility orientation and those without, to assess any differences in engagement with CSR efforts of the festival and subsequent feelings of identification with the festival.

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Appendix A. Overview of newsletters

Newsletter #	Title	Topic
1	2020 rewind	Update on how Boom organisation is dealing with the pandemic.
2	Pandemics and art in the Anthropocene	Newsletter about pandemic representation in art.
3	Website Relaunch, Bazaar & Ravesilience	Newsletter about new developments in relation to the suspended 2020 edition.
4	The Great Pause vs The Great Reset	Newsletter about how Boom organisation is dealing with the pandemic and what they are doing to unite people in these times.
5	Boom 2020 Rescheduled to July 2021	Statement about why Boom Festival 2020 is postponed.
6	Boom 2020 practical info	Practical information about Boom Festival 2020 edition.
7	December update	Update about where Boom organisation is currently standing in the process of the 2020 edition.
8	Participate at Boom 2020	Call for attendees to apply for ways to participate in creation of the Boom Festival 2020 edition.
9	October update	Update on thoughts, insights and ideas for the production of Boom Festival 2020.
10	Boom 2020 tickets update	Information regarding Boom Festival ticket sales and the global ambassador programme.
11	Boom 2020 Tickets guide	Guide to buying Boom Festival tickets and the ambassador programme.
12	First spring updates	Update on the Boomland in the spring after Boom Festival 2018.
13	Boom February 2019 update	Update on sustainability awards for the Boom Festival 2018 and eco practices.
14	Eco Letter to the Boomers 2018	Outline of social responsibility efforts that were part of Boom Festival 2018.

15	Boom Festival 20 years documentary release	Announcement of documentary about the history of Boom Festival.
16	Letter to the Boomers 2018	Letter of gratitude towards attendees and the development of the Boom community over the years and how this has supported their ethos.
17	Thank you Boom team, artists and facilitators	Letter of gratitude towards team, artists and facilitators.
18	Thank you Boomers	Letter of gratitude to Boom attendees of the 2018 festival.
19	Boom 2018 Accommodation & Transport	Practical information regarding accommodation and transport and how Boom attendees can make use of these in a sustainable way.
20	Official program release: activism as the main focus at boom 2018	Release of the Boom Festival 2018 theme 'Activism' and how activism can be found in different areas of the festival.
21	Latest updates	Updates on questions that Boom attendees have asked the organisation.
22	Liminal village 2018: activism as the main theme of Boom	Outline of the theme of 2018 'Activism' and the different types of activism.
23	A celebration beyond the line-up	Justification on why Boom is not about the line-up of music artists.
24	Boom 2018 tickets	Guide to getting tickets to Boom Festival 2018 and the intentions for Boom Festival 2018.
25	Boom Festival 2018	Launch of Boom Festival 2018 and practical information.

Appendix B. Overview of interviews

Interviewee #	Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Nationality	Went to editions
1.	Elodie	F	36	Portuguese/French	2023
2.	Bruno	M	34	Mexican	2016, 2018, 2022, 2023
3.	Benedita	F	34	Portuguese	2022, 2023
4.	Evelyn	F	36	Irish	2022, 2023
5.	Liam	M	30	Belgian	2016, 2022, 2023
6.	Charlotte	F	58	English	2018
7.	Dirk	M	40	Belgian	2018, 2022, 2023
8.	Angelo	M	42	Portuguese	1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2022, 2023
9.	Mariska	F	30	Hungarian	2022
10.	Amélie	F	32	Austrian	2014, 2023
11.	Arthur	M	37	English	2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2022
12.	Nadia	F	41	English	2022
13.	Paulo	M	31	Brazilian	2022
14.	Rafael	M	26	Portuguese	2018, 2022, 2023

Appendix C. Topic guide

Topics	Subtopics	Prompt
Introduction & background	Introduction	Overview of research and aims of study, informed consent, privacy & ethics
	Demographics	Age, gender, nationality
	Background	When did you attend Boom? How many times have you attended? Have you attended other festivals that you would consider to be similar to Boom? Do you attend other types of festivals? Why are they different from Boom Festival?
Experience of the festival	Before the festival	How did you first learn about the festival? Why did you choose to go to Boom? Did you follow Boom's social media beforehand? Did you know what to expect from the festival beforehand? Did you keep updated on the festival through e-mail newsletters?
	During the festival	How was your overall experience of the festival? What activities did you most like doing at the festival? Did you feel that the experience was similar to or different from the way it was communicated by Boom? Are there specific moments that you can recount that are characteristic of Boom Festival?
	After the festival	What are moments that you still think about the experiences you had at Boom? Did you stay in touch with people you met during Boom? Did you stay in touch with the festival through e-mail newsletters or social media? Do you feel part of a Boom community?

Transformative experiences		Are there things that you learned at Boom that you have taken with you after the festival, and if so, what are they?
		Do you think that you are in any way a different person than you were before you attended this festival?
		Are there chances that you have made in your day-to-day life because of experiences that you had at Boom?
Social responsibility	Experience	How much did you connect with people from nationalities different from yours at Boom?
		How has this changed the way you look at other nationalities and cultures?
		How do you feel about the prohibition of markers of national identity at Boom?
	Cosmopolitan beliefs - personal	How has Boom Festival influenced your willingness to connect with other cultures?
		Do you feel any more or less attached to your own nationality since attending Boom?
		Do you feel part of a global community? How has attending Boom influenced this feeling?
	Beliefs regarding social responsibility	Has Boom in any way changed your perceptions about global social issues (such as climate change or the refugee crisis) and why?

Appendix D. Themes and their relations

Boom festival organisation

- The power of community
- Collective effort
- Inspiring collective effort
- Communicating efforts
- Communicating vision and mission
- Assuring commitment to the cause

communitas

sense of belonging

C-C identification

Festival attendee

- Boom as a liminal, experimental space
- Communitas
- Togetherness through CSR
- Supporting transformation
- Building a CSR reputation
- Boom as facilitator
- Boom as changemaker

Appendix E. Overview of codes – newsletters

Inspiring collective effort	The power of community	Community of Boomers	Boomers are a community (14)	"Join this community. Together We #ChooseTomorrow" (newsletter 3)
			Nationalities coming together (6)	"Boom Festival was once again home to a worldwide tribe reuniting individuals from across 147 different countries - proving borders are meaningless." (newsletter 16)
			Inspiring community (7)	"We're calling tribes from all dancefloors to rekindle the community-building essence of psychedelic parties" (newsletter 3)
			Creating collective energy (3)	"Dancing in the open air at Boomland, with friends from all over the world, on a dance floor emanating an eruptive and transcendent energy - do you miss it?" (newsletter 4)
			Boomers are like-minded (5)	"…practicing an alternative way of trading products within a community of like-minded beings." (newsletter 4)

			Boom is a global community (7)	"…where Boomers scattered like fractals across the globe can come together to share a kaleidoscopic picture of what unites us." (newsletter 4)
			Boom is a collective experience (3)	"As the dust begins to settle, we all reflect on our collective experience and on how to take the spirit of Boom back home and apply it to our everyday lives." (newsletter 18)
		Community of humans	Part of human race (8)	"This allowed the collective to celebrate our oneness as a human species on the sacred Planet Earth." (newsletter 16)
			Shared experience as humans (6)	"In some way, Covid-19 touched the lives of almost every human being on this planet." (newsletter 1)
			Living on Earth together (9)	"We would like to thank all who understood the call not to fly national flags on dance floors. This allowed the collective to celebrate our oneness as a human species on the sacred Planet Earth." (newsletter 16)
			Humans are interconnected (3)	"Boom is a celebration of our interconnectivity. It is

				our honour to co-create it with you." (newsletter 8)
		Gratitude	Gratitude for Boomers (18)	"We felt an immeasurable wave of support from all of you - from those with and those without a ticket, from all generational layers of the Boomer community." (newsletter 4)
			Giving back to participants (3)	"we're hosting a happening as a way of giving back to a community that has given us so much already" (newsletter 3)
			Thankful for participation (8)	"Boomers made a significant contribution with their assertive and intelligent questions, you are a fabulous audience - Thank You!" (newsletter 16)
	Collective effort		Transforming together (3)	"When we choose hope and action, we are able to see that there are myriads of associations, collectives, initiatives, individuals, actively working at the solutions" (newsletter 22)
			Boomers co-create Boom (17)	"We each have a part to play at Boom: on a dance floor or behind the scenes; serving food or being served; we cooperate, so

				we are all; and we are contributing to a powerful community bond." (newsletter 8)
			Creating a better future (13)	"May we continue to live together and learn from each other. May we create a better future, side by side." (newsletter 15)
			Inspiring transformation (5)	"With the Boom Festival, we aim to inspire and nurture human development." (newsletter 5)
			You are needed (5)	"Boomers are the life-force of the festival. Boom is made by and for Boomers - you are the oxygen that pumps air into Boom and the vibration that carries this festival forward." (newsletter 11)
			Spread the Boom spirit (7)	"we hope you are all having a smooth transition and have returned home feeling energetic, vibrant and full of inspiration and creativity in order to cultivate freedom and love wherever you are." (newsletter 18)
			Inspiring reflection (8)	"Rethink our present and future with nature. Now is the moment to reframe

				Working towards goal together (6)	"We must work together to ensure zero trace and the only way to do that is by reflecting and learning from our experiences and by raising awareness." (newsletter 16)
					our practices." (newsletter 4)
				Collaboration not competition (3)	"We co-create because we cooperate. Boom is an organism with interdependent functions that work towards completing the different stages of production." (newsletter 8)
				Boom is a collective effort (3)	"Co-creation is a modus operandi which allows Boom to be a space for artistic expression and freedom for its community. We invite all Boomers to bring forward their ideas and initiatives!" (newsletter 23)
				Responsibility to be involved (3)	"The world urgently needs each and every one of us … to fly the flag for positive social change; and to cultivate freedom and love in honour of both humankind and Mother Earth rights." (newsletter 16)

			Inspiring activism (6)	"Boom is a wake up call - for the seeds of change to be spread afterwards, we need projects to inspire action." (newsletter 20)
Assuring commitment to the cause	Communicating efforts		Showcasing CSR (8)	"Our Eco Letter is an assessment of the humble contribution that we aspire to continue making." (newsletter 14)
			We care for the Earth (4)	"Care for the natural and social environments form the crux of Boom's DNA." (newsletter 13)
			Boom is self-sufficient (4)	"Boom is a self-sustaining vessel for celebrating culture in Portugal where art is not a government priority." (newsletter 16)
			Working towards goal together (6)	"Let's aim to a regenerative Anthropocene." (newsletter 7)
			Spreading the Boom spirit (7)	"Yet while the vibe at Boom remains unique, one of the biggest challenges is taking it home with us." (newsletter 16)
			Supporting Oneness (4)	"Our intention is to enable a state of ultimate unity - Oneness - by holding a space where people can experience a social celebration, bringing together music, art,

				culture, sustainability, well-being and knowledge, while immersed in nature." (newsletter 5)
			Boom nurtures growth (3)	"It is also a portal designed to remind us of our humanity, compassion and love for each other. It is fertile soil for us all to plant the seeds of our ideas; to nourish and cultivate them, and to transform them into positive action in our everyday lives." (newsletter 24)
			Boom supports transformation (9)	"At the Liminal Village and the Being Fields we look at the world and explore new models to support human development." (newsletter 4)
			Creating a better future (13)	"In other news… We're using ticket sale revenues to help manifest positive social change." (newsletter 9)
	Communicating vision and mission		Boom is a free space (3)	"thousands of people from 175 countries would have come together to celebrate individual and collective transformation in a free space amidst nature." (newsletter 3)

				Creating a better future (13)	"How do the different souls of this global movement intertwine, support each other and make an effective impact at a global level?" (newsletter 22)
				Our mission is a better Earth (11)	"… with the well-being of people and planet at the very core." (newsletter 3)
				More than a festival (2)	"all of the concepts which make Boom so much more than a festival - an experience of life celebration and human development." (newsletter 4)
				Stating Boom mission (8)	"Our ultimate aim is to inspire a responsible lifestyle, ultimately enabling environmental regeneration, social and cultural transformation." (newsletter 3)
				Ensuring commitment (4)	"At the same time, our hearts and minds are always aligned with your intentions" (newsletter 21)

			Boom is important (4)	"Sadly, cultural projects in Portugal barely get one percent of the public budget. This fact only goes to underscore the importance of cultural agents like Boom and the role they play in promoting and cross-pollinating local talent with a stream of international talents." (newsletter 16)

Appendix F. Overview of codes - interviews

Togetherness through CSR	Boom as a liminal, experimental space	Boom as a journey (5)	"People sort of have chosen to go to Boom for whatever reason or what say you're already on the same sort of page of the book and that yeah, exploring the chapter together." (Arthur)
		Boom as a playground (8)	"It's this really like, for me, it's just like an adult playground. You know, when kids just thrash about the playground, and they're all like, You're their friends. And then they're all moving and everyone's just playing and laughing like that's, that's what it reminds me of when I'm there." (Evelyn)
		Boom is an ideal model (4)	"Even if it is just every two years, you live in that set up community. I know probably this would not work as a whole year thing. And but yeah, you can take away the things and carry them out in the world, and live a bit more in love with yourself and all the others." (Amélie)
		Exploring new ways of living (13)	"But I want to believe that it helps those people that go to the festival to realize that this is a possibility that we can be more united, we can live in a more cohesive and cooperative kind of energy. And Boom is just like a taste of it. It's just a way for us to experience that, which would be much harder in our daily lives, because of how the world is constructed." (Rafael)

		Free expression (9)	"Like, something happened here where we could just be so unapologetically ourselves." (Evelyn)
		Safe space (4)	"People feel easy to approach, I think. To talk or to say anything. You feel less judged than on the daily basis." (Paulo)
	Communitas - Opening up	Connect more easily (21)	"On the most random occasion it feels like a connection can spark at any moment. So that for me has been always the biggest impactful thing, how easy it feels to make connections there." (Rafael)
		Learning tolerance (6)	"Yeah, for me, the thing that really changed me is that I understand or learned that I can really be friends with girls or with people that are different, you know." (Bruno)
		Shedding layers (6)	"So for me, it's like, you're an onion. So the first couple of days, you have shed a little bit of your outside stuff, you know, your little cages that we carry, or little judgments or whatever chips people are carrying on their shoulders" (Evelyn)
		Sharing with strangers (10)	"and it feels so special to like be able to connect with people who I don't know but in such a short timespan because of that vulnerability that we are allowing ourselves to have with these people" (Rafael)
	Communitas – pre-event	Anticipation (5)	"So I think Boom has this special magic that you only start thinking about that, you only want to go there and I hadn't even known it. And I was

			already with this magic inside me." (Elodie)
	Communitas – Boom community	Boom attendees as a community (15)	"I think there's a look in the eye, if you will, there's a sort of, I don't know if it's a club. If someone's been to Boom, you're just gonna hug him, right?" (Charlotte)
		Experiencing together (7)	"The togetherness of the experience. It's like, everyone's, everyone's there feeling the one super hot day. And everyone's relieved when there is wind and when the temperatures are cooler." (Amélie)
		Healing together (4)	"It feels like it's the giant healing playground for adults, where you can, you know, go into your childhood and go into whatever, whatever hurt and that there's space for it there, there is a place for it." (Charlotte)
		Feeling part of Boom (7)	"Once you know you're a part of it, it feels really good to go back because you also feel like you're contributing to it just by being there." (Rafael)
		Making friends (14)	"I tried to make friends from different countries. Like, for example, the people from Israel, for me that is so unique and different." (Bruno)
		Group forming (6)	"And, and it was funny how humans create tribes and groups when they are let out in the wild. We still have tendency to form groups, and I thought it was interesting." (Elodie)
		Solidarity with strangers (15)	"at Boom, I was like, it was really nice being nice to people and nice helping or sharing… And like, that's the kind

			of world I want to live in, you know, I'm going that direction, why wouldn't I help you?" (Evelyn)
		Spontaneous interactions (17)	"Yeah, it's just whoever crossed your path you'd connect with and if if they were if they were Irish or if they're American or Australian or Israeli it would just be a matter of whoever crossed their path. As simple as that." (Arthur)
		Boomers are conscious (5)	"To be there it's nice because it's a place where they are aware about the things, it's not just they are just throwing a party for crazy people so the people there they are there aware about the world where they are living, about the things that are happening." (Paulo)
		Not the same outside of Boom (7)	"Whatever, everyone can be whoever they want, you know, but I think outside of Boom, that wouldn't be like, I don't want to say acceptable, because I don't really agree with that as a term that people should conform to." (Evelyn)
		Individual experiences (contradicting code, 3)	"I think the problem about Boom and your question is that it's impossible to really explain. Because you can, you can have one experience and they can have another experience. For example, they can show you pictures of whatever, but if you are not there, you cannot really experience." (Bruno)
	Communitas – International community	Global community (6)	"The globalness of it makes you feel connected. So I think if I'd go to I know, South America, go to a festival

			there. Probably I would meet someone who's been at Boom. That's a really nice thing." (Amélie)
		Losing nationality (5)	"I'm from Mexico, right? But when I'm in Boom, I become a Boomer, not a Mexican." (Bruno)
		Connecting with other cultures (13)	"Someone who's working in consulting in, I don't know, a car company in England. If they would have just stayed in their lane they would probably never know a yoga teacher from the south of Spain, or something. Like there was so many people have so many different social classes we could say. And we connect without even knowing." (Amélie)
		Learning from other cultures (7)	"Yeah, I think sort of, from going to Boom and be exposed to other cultures or meeting people from other cultures, I feel like that has exposed and made me more knowledgeable of stuff. Whereas if I hadn't gone and then I would have maybe not made friends with certain people to then be exposed or, you know, be taught about their culture." (Arthur)
		We are all one (14)	"From the outside, I do feel like in Boom, you definitely feel the sense of like, doesn't really matter where you're from. So maybe in a way, it did help me because it's like, it makes it clear that everyone is kind of on the same level. Regardless of where they come from, it's not about where they come from. It's about like, who they are as a person." (Rafael)

Supporting transformation	Building a CSR reputation	Boom is authentic (6)	"Not just sort of like at other festivals I might have experienced, sort of like a toxic positivity as sort of like just a hip-aside kind of, everything's gonna be all right. It's all one love. We're all connected, but like never going into the pain and never going into, it is always just positive. And I think this felt more authentic to me. Yeah. A little frighteningly authentic." (Charlotte)
		Boom cares for attendees (5)	"And that you should care for everyone, you should look out for other people and also, yeah, you are not angry and fed up if you feel that the festival also cares for you and provides things like a lake, a nice shower, good food, free water." (Amélie)
		Supporting local initiatives (2)	"And I'd rather spend a lot of money there than at different places. I know it's, it's used for good things. So fine with me. And I know, I could be spending four euros at the club for Coca Cola Company Coke. But there I'm spending four years for a can of off brand coke that's, I don't know, supporting a small business." (Amélie)
		Boom's message is transparent (5)	"I never, like, studied that anything with events or something I never got into the business. But I'm actually really interested in how do things work. And so I appreciate that they are transparent and show the festivalgoers what it's like." (Amélie)

		Boom philosophy (13)	"Yeah, generally what they sort of feedback from newsletter wise, I think it's all within their vision and stuff from a bigger picture. Sometimes sort of in the moment you may not necessarily know it is individually, but when they sort of portray it within a newsletter, it sort of it makes sense of their vision of reasoning of doing things." (Arthur)
		Believe in CSR efforts (22)	"I think their philosophy of We Are One you know, probably does get people in a certain headspace when they arrive. Yeah. And then you people being so nice to each other. So that's really reflected. The philosophy was reflected so you really believe it." (Evelyn)
		Boom is about caring for each other (15)	"It's not about friendship, it's about just helping. If at the end, they want to become my friends, perfect. But if I do it, because I want a friend, that is bad intention. I just want to help you. If at the end, we connect, perfect, but I just want to help you." (Bruno)
		Chose Boom for its values (7)	"Well, I feel like it's kind of a little bit the other way around, I feel like I'm choosing these festivals because I feel that they are aligning with the values that I care for." (Mariska)
		More than a festival (3)	"But mostly the talks, I went to there, the level of activism and the people that spoke were, I don't know, it was like more than one festival." (Charlotte)

	Boom as facilitator	Boom as educative (3)	"So I believe it's a good time for learning. I would say like even if you are not interested in these things, you went to Boom only for the party, I think definitely you got something from there afterwards. Because you have so much information around you. So that even when you are walking you see the signs, you talk with different people. So if you allow yourself definitely you learn a lot." (Paulo)
		Refreshing values at Boom (5)	"I have probably been made more aware of these and... I mean, [Boom's] values, they were not new to me … But it's just... Yeah, it makes you reinforce your values, you could say." (Amélie)
		Boom sets the stage (6)	"And I think then, you know, not everyone is reading the Boom guide. But if many people do, they take the others with them. So it's most people picking up after themselves. It's okay for someone to leave their water bottle behind. You know, someone else will pick it up for them. It's alright. So it's, it sets the mood, the whole thing and it like gets the publicity popped up what Boom does for its people and you really reinforce it." (Amélie)
		Boom rules facilitate culture (8)	"I guess I really liked that that was upfront at Boom, that that whole thing [nationality] was just taken out of the equation." (Charlotte)
		Finding purpose at Boom (9)	"And I think I had like a different vision on like, my purpose like in the

			world because I never really thought about it as a concept like what what is my purpose? So like, oh, yeah, you know what, I'm an OT, like, I like doing what I do, or like, you know, supporting people to be themselves and I want to be supported to be myself. And that you know, we're all free and we all deserve the same thing, that kind of stuff." (Evelyn)
		Intention to learn (7)	"So if you allow yourself definitely you learn a lot, I believe so in that and I think I think they really did that very well like I have never been to any festival like that with that kind of mindset." (Paulo)
	Connection to Boom after festival - Boom as changemaker	Applying experiences outside Boom (25)	"And sort of the whole side of that is something I've come away with a bit of an interest and sort of looked into, sort of how you can be a bit more sustainable growing stuff. And just looking after stuff, things like that. It's definitely given me something, I just think the whole ethos on sort of just recycling and reusing, just trying to, you know, not throw everything away. In the society we live in, if it's just dead, you can just buy something else to replace it." (Arthur)
		Part of something bigger (6)	"Because I really like the concept. I like the transparency. And I was like, like the Eco newsletter and reading that actually, I really enjoyed the fact that we've been part of something that yeah, won awards for sustainability

			and something that's just a little deeper than just partying" (Amélie)
		Developing gratitude (4)	"Yeah, definitely. It's definitely give me a bit more of an insight on life on how to sort of be with people and just yeah, be a bit more chill with certain things. Appreciate. appreciate the small things." (Arthur)
		Developing new identities (8)	"It's a path that you start to be more conscious. I started to read about Hegel, about the psyche, about like, start to read stuff you start to develop yourself, your knowledge about yourself. So I think it's part of that." (Paulo)
		Inspired to engage with CSR (17)	"When I was there, I was fully in activist mode, I was definitely going to set my calling." (Charlotte)
		More open to connection (8)	"I think for me, a lot of it was like, inspiring to just feel like there's more people in the world with this kind of mentality and intention of bringing unity and love into the world. For me, it really helped to feel more comfortable being open with people that I don't know, just kind of realizing how easy it can be, how [not] stressful it can be to just have a conversation with someone that I've never met before." (Rafael)
		Spreading the love (8)	"I tried to express and continue this vibe from the festival of love, loving people, helping people, realizing that everybody needs help at some moment of their lives. Yeah, and I definitely continue this radical love spirit into

			society. Actually, I try to maximize it a lot, a lot, a lot, like, in a very extreme way, so that people start realizing how important it is, actually." (Elodie)
		Starting point for growth (8)	"Yeah, it's completely, it's definitely opened me up by educating me a bit more on the stuff going on. It's always a tough one to sort of, how much of that you can change but I suppose you've got to start somewhere and stuff like that. That is sort of Booms ethos. You know, starting with education, making people aware of certain things." (Arthur)
		Sustainable habits (8)	"Yes, definitely. For example, I take showers with less hot water. And I also try to use a natural products like biodegradable, like the soap, the toothpaste, and you're much more environmentally aware actually" (Elodie)
		Word of mouth (10)	"For everyone that I invited to the festival I mentioned about the bathrooms, about the showers, that because they have an amount of time for you to take the shower so they are also aware about spending water there." (Paulo)
		Trouble taking it home (contradicting code, 5)	"I went to Boom, and I was like: 'Oh, my God, I want this forever, always like this. Why can't the world be like this?' But really, you're in and out of this, aren't you? You can't sustain that" (Charlotte)

		Hard to reintegrate (contradicting code, 5)	"I feel like I opened doors, but I also felt like, a bit fragile after Boom. I didn't know it was going to fragilize me as in all of a sudden, I felt life was a bit different. Like, I would feel things that maybe I wasn't so conscious about." (Elodie)
	Connection to Boom after festival – Keeping in touch	Enjoying memories (2)	"And after, especially after my Boom last year, I spent the rest of the summer in the Facebook groups and enjoying the memories." (Amélie)
		Interaction with Boom community (4)	"And it's nice, because it does feel like there's this active community that's thinking about Boom, even when it's not happening, which is definitely my case." (Rafael)
		Keeping updated with CSR efforts (8)	"Yeah, like, if they put something on Instagram, like, I would usually look through there, like, oh, look at what we've done with the land or look at these regeneration projects. I would usually look through, but I'm not a super duper social media person." (Evelyn)
		Keeping in touch (6)	"Every friend that I make there is so nice, because I really try to make a connection all the year, not when I'm Boom. So normally, I send a meme or a chat or 'how are you?'" (Bruno)
		Not part of the community (contradicting code, 2)	"Whenever the festival is happening, even when I'm not there, then I feel a bit more connected in the group. But because then a lot of people are posting and then I can see that and what is happening … But otherwise, I

			wouldn't say that I'm a super big part of this community." (Mariska)