

Risk and drug-taking in tourism: A content analysis of the implementation of drug testing at New Zealand's music festivals for the harm minimisation of young festival visitors

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Abstract

As in several other countries, the emergence of dance-music culture and ‘raves’ in New Zealand during the 1980s stimulated the relationship between drugs and youth, generating dynamic situations in which the ingesting of so-called ‘party-drugs’ such as methamphetamine, MDMA, cocaine, LSD and other psychoactive substances has become common. For many young people, aged approximately 18–29 years old, travelling to a music festival is a rite of passage within a hedonistic or a self-indulgent daily life where identity and social capital are constructed, pleasure is ‘used up’, and alcohol and drugs are omnipresent. Nevertheless, youth party-drug consumption is usually perceived by politicians, experts and wider society as deviant and associated with risk-taking and indiscretion, as evidenced by an array of physical, psychological and social problems.

There has been an active drug policy debate in New Zealand for several years involving the availability of drug testing services at music festivals. Drug checking is not a new approach and has been offered across Europe for a long time now. In New Zealand, Section 12 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 stops music festival organisers from permitting drug testing at their events for fear of prosecution. This research intended to examine the nature of this festival drug testing policy debate.

Data were sourced from prevailing academic studies, public domain sites such as online newspaper articles, television and radio media. The narratives that supported drug testing emphasised the evidence arising from the existing knowledge of youth, the significance of informed decisions and offering information and education. The arguments opposing drug testing comprised the belief that there is no safe drug consumption, that festival drug testing would create a false sense of safety, and that the evidence obtained so far is misleading. Both the parties, those in favour and those against festival drug testing, shared a common goal: to keep people safe. Nevertheless, the beliefs and values underlying this objective are varied.

The polarised drug policy debate continues to be fixated on matters of fact, instead of matters of concern that could result in beneficial outcomes. A more ‘civilised’ mode of communication that establishes knowledge, involves values, and is handled with humility may be more valuable in moving the debate forward.

Table of contents

Abstract	ii
Table of contents	iii
List of figures	v
Attestation of Authorship.....	vi
Acknowledgement	vii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Research background.....	1
1.2 Research aims and questions.....	7
1.3 Significance of the research	7
1.4 Research methodology and methods	8
1.5 Structure of the dissertation.....	8
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Introduction	9
2.2 Music festivals.....	9
2.3 Theories on motivations for visiting a music festival.....	10
2.4 Millennials travelling to music festivals	11
2.5 Music festivals' visitors' experiences.....	12
2.5.1 Escapism.....	12
2.5.2 Feeling of community	12
2.5.3 PLUR.....	13
2.5.4 Role of music in music festivals	13
2.6 Deviance or risk behaviour of young tourists	14
2.7. Drug use at music festivals.....	16
2.7.1 Who specifically takes drugs?	16
2.7.2 Drug consumption as a motivator to attend festivals	17
2.7.3 Drug-taking experience of music festivals attendees.....	18

2.7.4 The normalisation of drug-taking	19
2.7.5 The difference between ‘recreational’ drug-use and ‘problematic’ drug-use	20
2.8 Harm minimisation	21
2.8.1 Taking zero-tolerance measures	22
2.9 Drug checking services	23
2.9.1 What are drug checking services?.....	23
2.9.2 Understanding the drug-taking behaviour before providing the drug testing services	25
2.9.3 The change in behaviour of the drug takers after drug testing	26
2.9.4 Drug checking services operating around the world.....	28
2.9.5 Drug checking service in Australia.....	29
2.9.6 The drug testing scene in New Zealand	31
2.10 Conclusion.....	32
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	34
3.1 Introduction	34
3.2 The objective of the study	34
3.3 Research paradigm.....	34
3.4 Research method.....	35
3.5 Actors in the debate	36
3.6 Data analysis method	36
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	39
4.1 Introduction	39
4.3 The Drug testing policy debate.....	44
4.3.1 The terms of the political and legal debate.....	44
4.3.2 The terms of the socio-scientific and community-based debate in New Zealand ..	53
4.4 Goals of advocates and opponents of festival drug testing	63
4.5 Value positions	64
4.6 Drug testing is a ‘Matter of concern’	65

4.6.1 Applying Stenger's theory in the debate	66
4.7 Conclusion.....	69
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION	71
REFERENCES	75
APPENDIX A - Timeline of major incidents in the drug testing debate in New Zealand (May 2014- November 2020).....	97

List of figures

Figure 1. Content analysis process (Giannopoulou et al., 2010)	36
Figure 2. Ecstasy/MDMA seized by customs NZ (Flahive, 2019b)	47

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed by Ananya Goutham Kolavara

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research background

Events have become an increasingly popular motivator for travelling and have been developed to be a vital part of the tourism experience. Around the globe, different types of events have been used by locations as image enhancers, attractions and creators of competitive advantage in a global market jammed with potential leisure experiences. Consequently, events have experienced considerable growth in size, number, and audience (Abreu-Novais & Arcodia, 2013).

Music festivals are an essential type of special event. These special events are unique, with music being the primary focus, usually involving a variety of performances from various artists. Furthermore, these festivals typically comprise of activities and entertainment beyond the music itself. Due to this distinctiveness, music festivals can attract an audience for a multitude of reasons (Bowen & Daniels, 2005) which will be discussed in detail in the literature review chapter. The number of millennials attending music festivals almost doubled between 2016 and 2017, with this growth attributed mainly to the escapism element of multi-experience at multiday festivals (Hudson et al., 2015).

Music festivals further can be said to be a critical component of music tourism and have existed for hundreds of years. Many historians estimate that they trace back to Ancient Egypt in 4500 BC, comprising of political festivals and religious rites with dance and music (Hudson et al., 2015). During the sixth century BC, ancient Greece held its first recognised music festival known as the Pythian Games, as a forerunner to the Olympic Games, which included competitions for music and poetry. In the modern history of music festivals, the Monterey Pop Festival, which took place during the summer of 1967, is deemed to be one of the critical turning points for music festivals. It took place in June during the ‘Summer of Love,’ and was an iconic moment in the history of music that shaped a new generation and further inspired numerous artists in the future. Two years later, perhaps the most well-known music festival in recorded history was set up, i.e., Woodstock, in 1969. The event motivated a massive crowd of approximately 400,000 attendees to travel by any means available to a small town in New York to attend the festival. Since then, the music festival industry has expanded to be extensive and is one of those rare industries to have progressed well in times of economic decline (Campbell,

2011). In the 1980s, the initial electronic music ‘raves’ emerged and, subsequently, a broad range of electronic music events has grown considerably to become recognised as a component of mainstream culture (Anderson, 2014; Valente et al., 2019).

Music festivals are a significant element of local cultural economies and attract potential tourists. These events comprise characteristics of social and cultural interaction at both regional and international levels and are called ‘festivalscapes’ (Little et al., 2018). The past few decades have seen the establishment of exceedingly popular music festivals like Woodstock in the US, Glastonbury art and music festival in England, and a rock festival called Rock Am Ring in Germany. Of late, electronic dance music events have been cited to be the ‘festivalisation of culture’ (Bennett et al., 2014). These festivals form an atmosphere in which a united membership shares the experience; consumers rise above the noticed differences between faith, class and ethnicity and therefore subsist as a group entity (Little et al., 2018; St John, 2015). Music festivals enhance a destination’s image and identity, strengthening perceptions of the place and the people who stay there, hence yielding potential as vehicles for branding cities, towns, and villages (Hudson et al., 2015). Music festivals are generating more sources of revenue, value chains, and recognition for destinations everywhere. For instance, the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, in Indio, California, earned approximately US\$ 114.5 million and led to economic benefits for the local and regional markets (Sound Diplomacy et al., 2018).

The feeling of ‘community’ also plays a vital part in the development of tourism and purchasing power (Bowen & Daniels, 2005). Hence, the live performance of music is a considerably profitable enterprise (Gibson & Connell, 2005). Fans of musicians usually travel great distances to these ‘destination venues’ to watch the performance of these bands, even though they have the chance to see the same band or artist closer to home at a different spot (Campbell, 2011).

Music festivals are becoming increasingly popular among young people internationally as places for leisure, entertainment and socialising (Dilkes-Frayne, 2016; Martinus et al., 2010; McCarthy, 2013). Millions of youngsters around the globe take part in music festivals, nightlife and day-party events (Barratt et al., 2020). According to a study conducted by Harris Poll and Eventbrite, millennials value experience over ownership. They found that 78% would preferably spend money on an experience rather than on material goods, in comparison to 59% of baby boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964). The beauty of a festival lies in its capability to create a world of its own and to reshape the surrounding architecture. This new

era pulls in people eager to escape, engrossed in the music, art, and atmosphere (BCG Global, 2005).

Today's youth generation, i.e., teenagers and millennials under 25 years, are dominating electronic dance music (EDM) concerts or festivals, and the number of youths visiting these events continues to grow as components of EDM are being merged into other recognised music genres. The growing popularity of EDM festivals on almost every continent has spawned the transition of EDM music from underground, usually illegal raves into the dance club culture and, on a broad scale, to multiple-day music festivals (Johnson et al., 2012; Myer, 2011).

These events are designed to deliver pleasure and entertainment, and inevitably they are not at all times free from harm (Barratt et al., 2020). Festivals are often highly anticipated events, seen as a break from everyday life, and can provide an occasion for alcohol and drug use (Borlagdan et al., 2010; Luckman, 2003). Young festival attendees tend to have higher rates of drug use than the general youth population and, accordingly, festivals may provide key sites for targeted prevention and harm reduction (Dilkes-Frayne, 2016; Hesse & Tutenges, 2012; Lim et al., 2010; Martinus et al., 2010; Wilson, 2006).

The consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs are a part of the scene, along with music, dancing and socialising. As raves and music festivals have become more famous over the past years, so has the drug culture in the music festivals. MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine) and LSD (Lysergic acid diethylamide) are the most well-known festival drugs and constitute a significant part of the festival experience for many youths attending the festivals. There is much risk involved while taking drugs. Therefore, it is essential to recognise their symptoms as well as the effects of an overdose. Year after year, there are a number of deaths occurring in music festivals that may have been avoided had the right preventive measures been taken. It is important for festival attendees to have knowledge of the relationship between music festivals and drugs to make sure they are having an enjoyable time while staying safe (Brande, 2017).

Recently, there has been an increase in the policy debate around the world about balancing the cultural and economic value of the festivals, concerts and nightlife with regulation which can efficiently decrease the health hazards faced by visitors. There is substantial policy difference across the globe with regard to, for instance, whether countries or states offer drug checking services and/or legalise the personal use of drugs, and the way they design such policies. In such a multifaceted and hyper-politicised field, it is ever clearer that establishing better

responses demands much better knowledge of the real-world experiences from people who are involved in nightlife and party scenes (Barratt et al., 2019).

According to Brunt (2017), initially, injection rooms and syringe exchange programmes were predominantly geared towards problematic, demeaned drug users. However, the drug users that have trailed in the slipstream of the EDM revolution of the early 1990s and changing nightlife settings are not characterised by high unemployment or major problems in other areas. Except for their penchant for nightlife and decadent or hedonistic lifestyles, most of the recreational drug users have comparatively few drug-related problems and are not that different from those who do not use drugs (Butler & Montgomery, 2004; Tossmann et al., 2001). Novel psychedelics (new or unusual drugs) have become increasingly popular, particularly among the young and highly educated, whose intention in using drugs is generally to broaden their horizons (Orsolini et al., 2015).

The nature of these illicit recreational substances is usually unknown and the locations in which they are consumed, for instance, large and densely populated music events and crowded nightclubs, carry definite risks. Thus, as compared to the uncontrollable and chronic usage of drugs, treatment of which involves withdrawal and dependence, a recreational or incidental pattern of drug use might require the treatment of severe intoxication symptoms. The aim of lessening severe harms among drug users at clubs and dance festivals has led to the spread global of initiatives like accessible drinking water, the establishment of adequate ventilation, and chill-out locations. There are also first aid teams present in such surroundings (Bellis et al., 2002). Moreover, in most cases, the dosage and constituents of these drugs are not known, and since the drug users are unaware of the effects of many of these illicit hard drugs, further harm minimisation initiatives focused on recreational drug users, like drug checking or drug testing services, have been developed (Brunt, 2017).

Pill testing or drug checking is a harm reduction service which lets drug users check the purity and content of illegal drugs. Even though pill testing has been assessed globally, with illustrated value as a health promotion and harm reduction approach, the use of such services in New Zealand, as well as Australia, remains a contentious matter (Day et al., 2018).

Globally, music festival visitors account for unusually high levels of illicit drug use compared with the general population (Erickson et al., 1996; *European Drug Report 2015: Trends and Development*, 2015; Hungerbuehler et al., 2011). In the United States of America and Europe,

some organisations provide anonymous drug testing services to the community (DanceSafe, n.d.). Countries such as France and Spain (which have a related harm reduction approach on drug consumption) and Australia, have dynamic drug testing services offered as a harm minimisation approach by local governments and civil society (Kriener, 2001; Spruit, 2001). On-site drug testing services were initiated in the Netherlands and Austria (Butterfield et al., 2016) in the 1990s and, for harm minimisation and prevention, Dutch citizens have been able to test their illegal drugs at Drug Information and Monitoring System (DIMS) facilities which is a government-funded service (Brunt & Niesink, 2011). Using this service has been shown to impact user behaviour (Benschop et al., 2002). The Trans European Drug Information (TEDI) programme saw drug testing services being provided at many festivals throughout Europe, facilitating reports on the global drug market and forming some harm minimisation techniques that are associated with drug testing (Brunt, 2017). Drug education and psychosocial counselling, and the recommendation of alternatives, can be provided to at-risk people whilst drug testing is being done (Kriener, 2001a). Drug testing has resulted in alertness to circulating dangerous substances; this has led to a decrease in the amount of such products on the market in following years (*European Drug Report 2015: Trends and Development*, 2015; Ventura et al., 2013). It may also facilitate the implementation of early warning systems by informing drug-takers of risky substances before further harm can arise (Brunt, 2017; *European Drug Report 2015: Trends and Development*, 2015).

Nevertheless, some issues exist concerning drug testing being identified as supporting drug consumption and the drawbacks of the precise substance detection of reagent testing kits (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2010). These kits do not identify new drugs and some non-drug elements are not detected (Lefkovits, 2016). The CheckIt drug testing service in Austria uses on-site laboratory-grade testing (Kriener, 2001a), which gives more precise and comprehensive evaluations for clients about a wide variety of substances. There is also the opinion that drug testing could aid drug dealers by acting as a quality control mechanism (Day et al., 2018; *DrugsData*, n.d.)

Drug checking organisations were primarily formed as a way to scrutinise trends in drugs by obtaining data on detecting drugs, their availability, and drug dose, and discovering new substance use (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2016). This method enabled interaction with drug takers to facilitate harm minimisation programmes to take place. The main goal was to collect information regarding particularly dangerous substances to

enlighten drug takers, medical experts, lawmakers and testing laboratories, and consequently to guide problem-directed warnings or mass media campaigns if necessary (*European Drug Report 2015: Trends and Development*, 2015a). As from 2015, 31 drug checking organisations were functioning in 20 countries (*European Drug Report 2015: Trends and Development*, 2015a).

On-site drug testing at music festivals has become a topical issue in recent years, with arguments for user harm minimisation and education versus counter-arguments on legislative issues and the perceived safety of drug use in regard to tested substances.

In New Zealand, every summer, like in many other countries, music festivals take place countrywide. These recreational music festivals offer a setting for enjoyment, celebration, socialising, and relaxation. Likewise, they create an opportunity for experimenting with drugs and consuming excessive amounts of alcohol, with several festival-goers seeking to boost their experience through the use of illegal substances (Johnson et al., 2020). Stimulating substances, like MDMA, cocaine, and cathinones, exemplify the majority of drugs used at music festivals (Biolcati & Mancini, 2018; Gerace et al., 2019; Scott, 2020). LSD and ketamine are also standard. These drugs are utilised to experience and boost light and sound sensations, intoxication and relaxation (Biolcati & Mancini, 2018; Gerace et al., 2019). The use of multiple drugs and/or alcohol, also known as polydrug use, is extensive at music festivals as a result of the availability of drugs and the social environment of such concerts and festivals (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2002). When an individual consumes unidentified illegal substances of unknown strength, mixing multiple drugs and alcohol can cause severe harm, including many of the drug-associated deaths reported at such festivals (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2002; Johnson et al., 2020; Measham, 2019; Scott, 2020).

In New Zealand, a voluntary group called KnowYourStuffNZ offers free drug checking services at music festivals (*KnowYourStuffNZ Home Page*, 2020b). The Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 imposes restrictions on organisations like KnowYourStuffNZ (Bullock, 2017). Festival organisers and management are avoiding involving such services and practices to encourage harm reduction because of the fear of prosecution. Other general law jurisdictions, as mentioned earlier, have figured out a path to permit drug testing organisations to operate within the law (Morrison, 2019). There have been numerous hospitalisations of young party-goers and

many drug seizures at New Zealand's music festivals which has led to a robust policy debate dividing political parties over this issue and few experts and society taking part in this debate.

Therefore, this study analyses the nature of the debate, which affects the implementation of festival drug testing service in New Zealand.

1.2 Research aims and questions

The primary aim of the research is to examine the nature of the policy debate by answering the following research questions:

1. What are the political, legal, social and expert debates concerning the implementation of drug testing at music festivals in New Zealand?
2. What are the main objectives behind supporting and opposing the implementation of drug testing at music festivals in New Zealand?
3. How are values and beliefs affecting the opinions of different people involved in the debate and further affecting the implementation of drug testing at music festivals in New Zealand?

1.3 Significance of the research

The research gap in terms of the drug policy debate concerns the implementation of festival drug testing, a debate which has a political, legal, ethical and social context and focuses mainly on the speakers' values and beliefs in regard to scientific knowledge. The findings of this study are significant because, by analysing both sides of the argument in this particular policy debate, it will be easier to understand the different perceptions of individuals on this policy debate, thus determining a pragmatic approach to drugs. This study also focuses on taking a 'matters of concern' approach rather than taking a 'matters of fact' approach while making an important decision, especially on a contemporary topic like this one. Furthermore, considering these objectives, this research could result in obtaining a better outcome, i.e., keeping young music festival visitors safe at New Zealand's summer festivals. Thus, this study is relevant because there is no prior research on this topic in New Zealand.

1.4 Research methodology and methods

The interpretive research paradigm, based on the relativist ontological position and the constructive epistemological view, is used in the research. A simple content analysis was used to review and extract the data needed. Data were sourced from prevailing academic studies, public domain sites such as online newspaper articles, and TV and radio media.

1.5 Structure of the dissertation

The remaining dissertation consists of four chapters: the literature review, methodology, findings and discussion, and conclusion. The critical content of the respective chapters is summarised below:

Chapter 2: Literature Review. This chapter provides a detailed discussion about music festivals, motivational theories for visiting a music festival, millennials travelling to festivals, the visitors' experience in a festivals, deviance or risk behaviours of the young tourists, drug use at music festivals, harm minimisation and, finally, the drug testing service at festivals. The chapter provides the background to the research gaps.

Chapter 3: Methodology. This chapter explains the methodology implemented in this research. This study primarily focuses on the policy debate by adopting a qualitative interpretive approach. The methods and methodology are explained in this chapter. The data is analysed using the content analytical method.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion. This chapter begins with a media table comprising of various significant incidents happening in New Zealand related to drugs and drug testing at festivals. The main part of this chapter discusses the policy debate in detail with the first section on the political and legal debate and the second section on the socio-scientific and communitybased debate. Furthermore, the underlying goals of the speakers, their values and beliefs are discussed.

Chapter 5. Conclusion. This chapter discusses the relevance and recommendations of this research, and its future research implications are also mentioned.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed discussion about music festivals, motivational theories on why people visit a music festival, millennials travelling to festivals, the visitors' experience in festivals, deviant or risk behaviours of the young tourists, drug use at music festivals, harm minimisation, the drug testing service at festivals worldwide and, finally the current scenario concerning festival drug testing in New Zealand. The chapter provides the background to the research gaps discussed in the third chapter.

2.2 Music festivals

Getz (1997) defined music festivals as events with a musical theme; the participation or attendance by the public can be seen as a crucial distinguishing component which plays a key role in income generation, culture promotion, and development of the host destination's image. Andersson and Getz (2008) stated that even though most music festivals and events are intangible, periodic, limited in duration, and take place at the same destination every season, music festivals typically have a unique emphasis in terms of the regional setting of the event, objectives, type, character and whether it is a charitable or commercial event.

Bowen and Daniels (2005) described musical festivals as events wherein music is the most significant cultural value passed on, and that the music generally coexists with other activities directly connected to the theme of the festival, like street markets and theatre or the participation of aspiring artists. Furthermore, the tourist season could be prolonged when there is a development of a festival or an event at a strategic period in the year (Getz, 1997). The significance that music festivals have for tourism indicates that, at times, the music happens to be the primary reason for celebrating a host destination (Gibson & Connell, 2005b). For this reason, the tourism industry based upon music festivals has been growing each year, even through economic recessions, with approximately 800 music festivals of different types taking place in 60 countries around the world (Duarte et al., 2018; Hudson et al., 2015).

2.3 Theories on motivations for visiting a music festival

The push and pull theory is a broadly used theoretical lens used to formulate and analyse motivations for attending events. The foundation of this leisure and tourism framework is that motivation can be categorised into two different types, which are the push factors and the pull factors (Dann, 1977, 1981). Snepenger et al. (2016) stated the main reason for an individual to travel is that they are pushed by internal imbalances and the necessity to find an ideal degree of arousal, likewise pulled by the contributions of a specific destination. On the one hand, push factors are theorised as those psychological forces within a person that act as a catalyst for travel; they constitute demands like escape, relaxation or rest. On the other hand, pull factors are the external forces which are stimulated by the product or a place and motivate individuals to visit a specific destination, reside in a certain hotel, or take part in a particular activity, for instance, a special event (Dann, 1977).

Iso-Ahola (1982) suggested another event motivation theory called the ‘seek-escape dichotomy’, a frequently used social-psychological model of tourism motivation in the event motivation literature. The study suggests that people engage in leisure activities due to two motivational factors: firstly, the desire to escape from the routine life and, secondly, the desire to look for intrinsic rewards. These two elements are always present in any kind of leisure activity; however, the intensity of each one can differ according to the people involved, the situation or the type of activity. An individual may wish to escape from his or her personal life, which can be his or her personal troubles and failures, and/or interpersonal life, which can be family members or co-workers, and there might be a need to look for personal rewards like relaxation or interpersonal rewards such as communication or socialisation (Iso-Ahola, 1982).

Crompton and McKay (1997) devised the following motives to attend a festival: cultural exploration, novelty/regression, recover equilibrium, known group socialisation, external interaction/socialisation, and gregariousness. This study of motivations revealed that attendees display different motives according to the type of event.

Nicholson and Pearce (2001) examined four different types of events held in New Zealand to compare motivation for attendance over the four events. The study included a food festival, a wine, food and music festival, an air show, and a competitive music festival. For the events that had a music element, the new dimensions consisted of external interaction/socialisation, novelty/uniqueness, variety, entertainment/excitement, escape, and family. The authors

determined that, as socialisation was significant across all events, the rest of the motivations differed depending upon the event. Even though music is culturally bound, culture was rarely counted as a motive to attend a music festival. Most music festivals comprise activities and attractions beyond the music alone (Bowen & Daniels, 2005b).

The last but primary motivator that this research mainly focuses on is drug and alcohol consumption, Monterrubio et al. (2015) looked at push and pull motivations in connection with drug and alcohol consumption and their findings showed larger drug and alcohol use among students who chose “to go wild” and “party reputation” as travel motivations. Drug use, binge drinking and sexual activity among students on spring break in Acapulco, Mexico, were examined, and results suggested that students are involved in significant drug use and heavy alcohol consumption (Monterrubio et al., 2015).

Drug consumption as a motivator to visit festivals will be discussed later in this chapter, after explaining and discussing the literature related to visitors’ festival experiences, youth tourists and their risk behaviours.

2.4 Millennials travelling to music festivals

It is apparent from the study carried out by (WYSE Travel Confederation, 2014) that youth travel has grown outside its initial state as a focused tourism niche. According to Jennings et al. (2010) and Leask et al. (2014), millennials (or Generation Y) are inclined to pay above average prices for assured memorable experiences, in this case, music festivals. Over the years, millennials have been spending more time at live events, and companies, brands and artists are putting more resources into building those experiences. Millennials want to increase their expenditure on experiences instead of physical things in the coming years, indicating a shift from materialism and a rising passion for real-life experiences. Millennials are not the only generation requiring experiences, but they are instrumental in developing the experience economy. Individuals want to have more experience and to live a more experiential life. ‘FOMO’ (i.e., the fear of missing out) is the overwhelming feeling that if one skips the party, such as a music festival, one is losing out on a once-in-a-lifetime experience. FOMO is not only a cultural trend but it is an epidemic. Experiences assist in shaping identity and create lasting memories. (BCG Global, 2005; Valente et al., 2019).

The average age of festival-goers was 23 and 25 years of age in the studies conducted by John (2017) and Kruger and Saayman (2016) respectively. McDonald (2014) also discovered that EDM festivals primarily attract the youth generation. Furthermore, research indicates that hosting EDM festivals, which are geared towards attracting youth, is perhaps a valuable attempt to increase travel among youth (Kruger & Saayman, 2016). These events offer opportunities to create self-identity, meaning and social integration, and both the behaviours and the experiences that youth are bound to get are potentially affected by these immersive festivals (Little et al., 2018; Packer & Ballantyne, 2011). This is explained in detail in the next section.

2.5 Music festivals' visitors' experiences

Some of the positive aspects of a music festival-goer's experience are discussed in detail below.

2.5.1 Escapism

Little et al. (2018) conducted a study on the Electronic Daisy Festival described an 'opportunity to escape', which depicts an individual's withdrawal from his or her everyday lifestyle while attending a music festival. Firstly, there is the psychological escape one attains from daily life stressors and obligations, like employment or school. These festivals provide escapism from the thoughts or troubles originating from one's life. Secondly, there is physical escape, i.e., the escape from one's physical environment (Little et al., 2018). The motivation theory of IsoAhola (1982) proposes that people are motivated by the need to achieve intrinsic rewards and the yearning to escape their daily life. The act of travelling is itself another way to escape. Thirdly, the study on the Electronic Daisy Festival depicted the societal escape or the deviation from societal norms and pressures that are expressed at the festival. The participants in the study stated that they had a feeling of not being judged by the other individuals and not worrying about being their authentic selves while at the music festival. Li and Wood (2016) also described the concept of 'spiritual escape' in their study.

2.5.2 Feeling of community

'Communitas' illustrates the deep feelings of community articulated by the festival attendees. Turner (1995) termed festivals as communitas: group congregations that can unify visitors, eradicate social discriminations such as class or ethnicity, and are outside the limits of mainstream society. As defined by Stone (2008), these music festivals and events have "an

intense community spirit, resulting from a shared experience associated with an atmosphere of social equality, sharing, intimacy and togetherness” (p. 215).

Having an opportunity to effortlessly interact with numerous strangers who are passionately connecting with you, is practically unheard of. This idea of social understanding, connection, and enjoyment from these interactions at music festivals stems from innate human social behaviours being accomplished. This is termed the ‘human tribal inclination’. Even if it is short-term, it seems that individuals at music festivals experience this tribal connection and achieve a deep sense of pleasure from it. The festival grounds deliver a non-virtual experience of occupying oneself with like-minded people (Stone, 2008). Therefore, it can be said that music festivals, which are similar to tribal festivities, provide an occasion on which to accomplish primary social needs, as determined in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943).

2.5.3 PLUR

Little et al. (2018) discussed the beliefs of peace, love, unity, and respect (PLUR) at music festivals. DJ Frankie Bones from the UK, was recognised during the 1990s for presenting and eventually forming current-day ideals of PLUR. When conducting his huge warehouse parties, he wanted to make sure of a conflict-free atmosphere where people could just have fun and enjoy the music. The culture of PLUR tries to engage in an environment of harmony or an implausible utopia among festival attendees.

2.5.4 Role of music in music festivals

Given the function of social facilitation by music, the positive assessment of others with the same musical taste, and the bonding ability of music, it is understandable that people will have a deep sense of community and social cohesion at music festivals.

Thousands of people signing up to visit these music festivals and excitedly paying a heavy price to be associated with these factions might appear to be illogical for some reasons. Nevertheless, several consumers look forward to different economic contributions of experiences (Manthiou et al., 2014). According to Quesada (2012), pure musical experience is one of the contributions; he also describes the listener’s personal experience, auditive and sensorial experience. Auditive and sensorial experience is considered to give imagination, frequency in sounds, intensity, and spectral composition as significant factors. Likewise, personal experience can stimulate the listener’s mood, emotion, and degree of attention from the latest condition. Finally, pure musical experience takes account of music as a historical and realistic form of brain memory.

The phenomenon of emotional experience is indisputable for several reasons. Emotions occur from different experiences of an individual. It can be a happy, sad, or even angry emotion which is resulting from the experience achieved, which will eventually influence an individual's judgment of the experience (Maruszewski et al., 2015).

Emotional music delivered by a singer can be inferred in a different way by different individuals. Psychologists have discovered that listening to music 'lights up' complete areas of the brain linked with a complex array of emotions, i.e. instigating various responses such as an expressive reaction (distinct facial expression, vocalisation, or body posture), subjective experience (internal thoughts and feelings) and physiological response (normally arousal). Music lets individuals open up and liberates the emotions they are already feeling (Carissa et al., 2020). For example, crying is an emotional reaction that is possible through music. These strong emotional responses from festival-goers exhibit an in-depth connection with the music, and it is this moment that becomes an unforgettable moment for them (Gabrielsson & Lindström, 1995; Waterman, 1996).

2.6 Deviance or risk behaviour of young tourists

At a music festival, it is believed that the deviant or risk-taking behaviour of a young person is standard and can lead to some severe consequences. These types of behaviours are discussed below and are linked with the 'escapism' factor explained above.

Festivals are generally described as "playgrounds for adults" (Stone, 2008, p. 215), occasions for expressing playfully what is generally unachievable in daily life. Music festivals give the opportunity to meet and dance and vindicate the excessive and abusive consumption of food, alcohol and drugs (Picard & Robinson, 2006, p. 11). The playgrounds for adults take advantage of an occasional revelation of tradition in displaying the actual behaviour of individuals outside social norms (Picard & Robinson, 2006). The liminal environment allows for challenging and violating the usual social norms (MacLeod, 2006). When the attendees enter festivals, they are introduced again to a world where everything seems conceivable (Picard & Robinson, 2006).

Motivations have changed to increasingly focus on "fun" and "getting away from everyday responsibilities"; the core values of "fostering communal spirit" and "providing an opportunity for attendees to act out of the ordinary" have been sustained. In the past and now, festivals

empower people to reflect on universally agreed-upon social norms by creating a space outside their realms (Muhs et al., 2020).

Daniel Briggs' (2013) book, *Deviance and Risk on Holiday*, cross-examined the organisation of the night economy of Ibiza, Spain, which is a top attraction for its rave and EDM setting, where the youth swarm together in summer to indulge in drug and alcohol stimulated hedonism. He stated that this type of intoxication is nothing new. Illicit drug consumption, binge drinking and hedonistic and self-indulgent behaviours were standard for the youth. That means that deviance and risk were in fact anticipated, and even supported, in this holiday space. These activities are often initiated when the youth get any time out of the challenges of home in places which are individually and characteristically intended for their blowout (Briggs & Turner, 2012).

Young tourists are described as pleasure-seekers who want to move beyond daily routines into states of excitement, abandon and some degree of (self-) destruction. Briggs (2013) argued that the interest in alcohol and drug-based leisure has fundamentally developed to be a first-world hegemony. It is so deeply etched into the popular culture and constitution of youngsters that they can barely imagine other leisure options outside those offered by the night-time markets of city centres. Holidays, thus, become an occasion to increase their devotion to hedonism and are universally commercialised for this reason. They have a proposition of making irresponsible decisions to spend money or experience 'life' or do 'crazy' things (Briggs, 2013).

Since a holiday is a limited time, it must be captured and as much as possible must be extracted prior to the unavoidable return to the ordinariness of routine; the fixed period that acts as a motivation to break through, particularly when a self-deconstruction begins to separate some of the apparent failings of personal life, which only increases the need to 'make the most of it'. Overseas, their identity is anonymous and a new self-indulgence is personally justified and socially reinforced with approval for experimentation and discovery of their fetishes and fantasies in a more profound realm that gladly matches up these conditions in these spaces. Regardless of the fact that things turn bad, 'what happens' is interpreted as stories for life, and this time will not come around again. Hence, the behaviours, and even some of the obscene impacts, are developed as somewhat real stories which they can tell back home (Briggs, 2013; Briggs & Turner, 2012).

Even though people from different age categories may travel to a destination with nightlife arenas, youth especially have been noted for their risk behaviours while in such settings (Kelly & Barker, 2016). Turner (1967) defines 'liminality' as a state which involves a period of time in which a person may feel unsure about what happened before and what is yet to come; i.e., when a person is in the liminal stage, law, moralities and social structure are less meaningful as people try to explore their new identity and start to create a new status. This can result in risk behaviours. Due to 'situational disinhibition', people may think they have fewer responsibilities and are less concerned about what others may think (Maticka-Tyndale et al., 2003). Situational disinhibition is a condition wherein irresponsible behavioural incidents on vacations may be believed to be tolerable. It defines a sense of lessened self-consciousness linked to a specific location (Milhausen et al., 2006). Many people report these hedonistic and liberal behaviours when they are on holiday far away from their place of residence (Monterrubio et al., 2015). Hence, drug consumption can be seen as a risk behaviour for the youth generation, and it also acts as a significant motivating factor to enhance the experience of attending a music festival, which will be briefly discussed in the next section.

2.7. Drug use at music festivals

2.7.1 Who specifically takes drugs?

Hidalgo et al. (2015) stated that most of the individuals who use drugs at recreational events or festivals seem to be socially integrated and that their drug use is enclosed within a specific setting, while their educational and occupational goals are usually being achieved. Jenkinson et al. (2014) stated that half of all participants in their study described lifetime illegal drug use and one in four stated consumption a month before the interview, drawing attention to an intensified risk for harmful drug-related physical and psychological outcomes in this group. The study emphasised the Melbourne Big Day Out music festival held in Australia; it concluded that the festival attendees had greater expectations of being involved in alcohol-, drug-, and sex-related risk behaviour than other Australian youths, and that they may also be of a higher socioeconomic status considering the admission costs of these festivals (Jenkinson et al., 2014). Drug-taking is highly predominant within young drug markets because most of the individuals would share drugs with their friends (Coomber & Turnbull, 2007).

2.7.2 Drug consumption as a motivator to attend festivals

The rave and hardcore scenes are associated with unnecessary drug consumption. Some studies affirmed a connection between alternative EDM styles and abuse of drugs at festivals. Festival attendees at ‘trance nights’ or ‘hard house’ are more inclined to consume MDMA (Moore & Miles, 2004). A decade ago, festival attendees in Rotterdam gabber parties (Gabber is an early hardcore, it is a style of electronic music and a subgenre of hardcore techno) were found to ingest amongst the highest rates of cocaine, i.e., at 73%, amongst club-goers, followed by methamphetamine and poppers (inhaler containing nitrites such as alkyl nitrite) (Hunt et al., 2010). Therefore, drug consumption can be considered to be a probable motivational dimension.

The argument over the consumption of hard drugs usually consists of two contrasting interpretations. On the one hand, consuming drugs at dance festivals is viewed as a case of a high risk that needs to be supervised (Hunt et al., 2010). On the other hand, the pleasure arising from attending music festivals and drug-taking is considered to be significant to the youth and their development (Pennay & Moore, 2010).

Over the past few years, sensible and recreational drug-taking achieved rising acceptance within society, and individuals getting high on alcohol or drugs at clubs or music festivals is classified as more ‘normal’ (Wilson et al., 2010). Even though there are negative relations and risks, the consumption of illegal drugs is normal amongst festival attendees. Intoxication is presumed to improve experiences of *communitas* and self-expression. Inebriated leisure experiences are depicted as increasing harmony amongst festival-goers (Bramham & Wagg, 2011) and allowing deeper experiences of *communitas*. Ecstasy is usually said to enable self-actualisation and self-discovery (Lyng, 2005) which leads to the ‘enlightenment’ of drug takers. Drug users notify having an opportunity to shift intoxicated experiences into their everyday life, transferring realisations made by their ‘drug self’ to their ‘everyday self’ (Hunt et al., 2010). It can be emphasised that leisure intoxication at events has become more accepted. Festival attendees ingest illegal substances like ecstasy and LSD to improve the festival experience and enable enhanced self-expression and *communitas* (Muhs et al., 2020).

The offering at modern-day festivals has become more and more diversified, and now includes workshops and experiences besides the music performances. The festival grounds can be seen as enabling experiences distinct from the attendee’s daily life, nurturing *communitas* and contributing a safe space for non-stereotyped drug-taking. Festivals were designed to deliver a

liminal space in which people can manifest and configure their existential self through, dance, self-expression, and exchange with other attendees (Muhs et al., 2020).

2.7.3 Drug-taking experience of music festivals attendees

The unique environment of nightclubs and festivals, such as music, sound and lights, appears to encourage practices like dancing and drug-taking, improving the pleasure achieved through them (Bennett, 2002; Duff et al., 2007). Now, the consumption of particular drugs in many young individuals' lives can often be set up within specific locations like night clubs and electronic music concerts and festivals (G. Hunt et al., 2014). According to the study conducted by Valente et al. (2019), participants specified various motivation factors for drug-taking such as “fun”, “curiosity”, “feel less tired”, needing to “loosen up” or to “stay awake” or wanting to “improve social relations”. At these events, the role of drug use is said to enhance or elongate the experience of the user (Johnson et al., 2020).

A festival attendee experiences the escapism factor, the music, and the feeling of community in a more intensified manner when they take drugs. The literature suggests terms such as to ‘lose it’ or to ‘go off’ describe the delightful phenomenon that occurs when the music takes one away, one relinquishes and gets lost in the music (Fitzgerald, 1998).

The blend of dance, music, and drugs that shapes the experience of ‘losing it’ has narrowed to be an experience of the disintegration of one’s self and an escape from reality. A festival goer described how ecstasy heightens all five senses to the point that music becomes hypnotic, the sense of touch becomes pleasurable, and a crowd becomes comforting (John, 2004). With the help of MDMA, the rave-assemblage embodies a relationship where the higher the sensory powers, whether physical, auditory or visual, the more the de-subjectification. Taking drugs such as MDMA has a crucial rhetorical part to play in the apparent disappearance from reality (John, 2004). At the rave scenes, “loss of subjectivity” is a common idea which first originated from Bradby (1993) and Redhead (1993). Jordan (1995) depicted the “loss of subjectivity” as a fundamental viewpoint in an argument proposing that the ‘Body without Organs’ (BwO) of raving is the indistinguishable condition that encourages the connections that the rave machine makes between its distinct components, like music, drugs and lights, and the drugged body. This indistinguishable condition is a collective euphoria generated by thousands of individuals creating “the links of music to dance, dance to drugs, drugs to dance, drugs to time, time to music” (Fitzgerald, 1998 p. 52), creating a state of raving and subsequently leads to the BwO

of raving. An ecstatic body is the BwO of the rave-machine, and the de-subjectivised state of ecstasy is a desire of the raver (Jordan, 1995, p. 130).

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) addressed the term 'smooth space' which is characterised by the setting of the dance floor, the LSD trip, globetrotting, trance, and mediation. Jordan (1995) noted that the psychedelic experience meets all the requirements of a religious revelation which is comparable with the scientific discovery of cosmic biological and social order. Similarly, Merkur (1998) stated that the process of self-actualisation takes place through the intake of psychedelic drugs, and Airault (2002) noted that the young people wish to 'lose it' because of the 'oceanic feeling' they get through drugs. Pini (2001) described the adverse effects of psychedelic drugs and how a drug taker can get inconsiderate, feel fear, feel pain and be broke.

2.7.4 The normalisation of drug-taking

According to Reynolds (1999) illicit, drug-taking was an early-identified rave trait and referred to 'club drugs' which allowed all-night dancing, such as ecstasy/MDMA, acid, ketamine, and GHB.

The experience of illicit drug-taking is collective among festival-goers as compared to individuals of the same age in the population as a whole (National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, 2007). However, it is uncertain whether illicit drugs are a 'normal' and accepted component of recreational activities among young people visiting festivals, or whether illicit drug consumption continues to be condemned and restricted to only specific types of festival-goers (Wilson et al., 2010). Indeed, one of the effects of the extensive popularity of dance club cultures is that drugs and drug-taking have moved from marginal subcultures to the condition where they are broadly experimented with and widely used in late modern consumer culture (Moore & Miles, 2004), hence boosting persistent interest in the concept of normalisation.

During the 1990s, in the United Kingdom, the concept of normalisation was formed as a method of examining and interpreting the unprecedented increase in the participation of British youth in illegal drug-taking, mostly 'recreational' drugs like ecstasy and amphetamines (Parker et al., 1999). Parker et al. (1999) stated that normalisation is implicated in an increase in positive attitudes and opinions among young people towards illegal drugs, which synchronise with fast growth in the availability of illicit drugs. When positive attitudes tally with growth in availability, there are increased probabilities in the degrees of experimentation and regular

usage, which increase to the level that illicit drug use can be interpreted as normalised, i.e., a usual and tolerated element of an individual's leisure patterns. The model was useful for mapping and identifying the increasingly established use of illicit recreational drugs in the leisure and consumption patterns of the youth during the 1990s. The concept of normalisation is focused on how a 'deviant', usually subcultural, population, or their deviant behaviour, can be introduced into a larger assemblage or society (Parker et al., 1999). Based on the prevailing trend that approximately almost half of the youth have tried an illegal drug, Parker et al. (1999) implied that their normalisation thesis best illustrates the processes and changes that have created a state where young people incorporate drug use as an essential feature of their leisure and cultural environment. Many of the adolescent and young adult drug takers simply fit their leisure into hectic lives and consequently fit their drug-taking into their leisure and 'time out' (Parker et al., 1999, p. 707).

On a broader level, normalisation describes not only the growing tendency of young people to use illegal drugs but also the fact that the youth are more 'drug wise', as long as they are often in circumstances where they are offered drugs or are inclined to think about taking drugs in the future. Therefore, drugs cannot be considered to form a part of an unknown, unusual and unconventional world that is extraterrestrial to the majority of 'ordinary' young people (Shildrick, 2002). It has been stated that modern-day societies have experienced broad scope of 'social transformation' and that the current extent of drug use generates another instance of how post-modern trends are influencing young people's lives, resulting in a situation where youths from all social and educational backgrounds become drug users (Parker et al., 1999).

2.7.5 The difference between 'recreational' drug-use and 'problematic' drug-use

According to Shildrick (2002), the normalisation theory stands on an essential distinction between recreational drug use and more problematic or chaotic drug consumption. The massive majority of youths who had taken illegal drugs were 'ordinary' as long as they were not targeted for their known use of illegal drugs, and the large majority of drug takers were not 'problematic' but, instead, they were 'recreational' drug users (Parker et al., 1999). What signifies 'recreational' drug use is not obvious or self-evident, and what signifies recreational drug use for one young individual may be 'problematic' use to another. The experiences of the youths studied by Shildrick (2002) imply that 'recreational' drug consumption may be more complicated than has earlier been envisioned. For some people, their drug consumption had

been problematic for them in one way or another; for instance, a small number were or formerly had been addicted to heroin.

2.8 Harm minimisation

‘Harm reduction’ is defined as certain “policies, programs and practices that aim to reduce the harms associated with the use of psychoactive drugs in people unable or unwilling to stop” (Harm Reduction International, n.d.). Harm reduction strategies are essential at music festivals because the majority of young people experiment with recreational drugs for the first time at these festivals. Harm minimisation interventions at music festivals also give an essential opportunity for education and awareness around the risks linked with recreational drug consumption. This may interrupt drug-taking paths, as education and awareness have been shown to be critical factors in regulating risky behaviour. These interventions give a chance to impact the rate of recurrence, possible intensity, and dangers connected with upcoming drugtaking in people (Alcohol and Drug Foundation, n.d.).

While people are purchasing drugs in the illicit drug market, including individuals who are very well-informed of the dangers and are knowledgeable of strategies to reduce them, they will be dealing with some challenges that determine their ability to implement learned behaviours. Because of their unfettered position in the market, illicit psychoactive drugs are likely to have unpredictable levels of adulteration and may be recurrently mixed with other harmful substances (Coomber, 1997; Giné et al., 2014; Martins et al., 2015). The lack of awareness regarding the content of drugs is linked with numerous cases of severe intoxication and death (Valente et al., 2019; Ventura et al., 2013b).

Along with the risks involved with the consumption of excess alcohol and drug intake, other dangers can occur from attending nightclubs, concerts, and festivals such as heatstroke, accidental injuries, violence, and hearing loss (Hughes et al., 2008, 2011). The outdoor dance and music festivals that last for several days may involve further risks resulting from lack of rest or sleep, large crowds, extreme temperatures, and sun exposure (Munn et al., 2016).

Erickson et al. (1996) indicated in their study that rock music concerts have a reputation for having high numbers of cases of medical problems, most linked with drug-taking and trauma, and treating anxiety and aggressiveness in drug-intoxicated patients which is mainly comprised of supportive care. With the revival of psychedelic agents, unpleasant reactions may appear.

According to the study, the most common diagnoses were minor trauma or illegal drug intoxication. Most of the patients confessed to taking illicit drugs or ethanol while attending the concerts. Minor trauma and drug consumption were widespread in audiences attending first aid stations at these concert events (Erickson et al., 1996b).

Duff (2005) stated that individuals who maintain that the use of illicit substances has already become normalised further claim that drug policy must change to accommodate the ‘safer use’ of such illicit substances, rather than concentrating exclusively on strategies aimed at preventing or punishing the consumption of recreational drugs (Duff, 2004; Wodak & Moore, 2002). Greater focus on the cultures and frameworks of young people’s drug use should enable the development of more effective drug education and harm reduction strategies (Parker et al., 1999). According to a study conducted by Gamma et al. (2005), individuals who take MDMA, for instance, were characteristically cognisant that their drug consumption involved risks and searched for harm reduction information actively. They also utilised a range of strategies to lessen drug-associated problems, which included drug testing before ingestion, prevention of dehydration and heatstroke by drinking water, or consumption of antioxidants and antidepressants to prevent serotonergic neurotoxicity (Gamma et al., 2005).

Some health researchers have reported that national prohibitory classifications and the obstinate dismissal of harm reduction strategies are unreasonably compromising public health and increasing risks for uninformed young people (John, 2004). Reynolds (2012) suggested that the living dream of taking drugs may have turned nightmare with partying transforming from a ‘paradise regained’ (the positive experience of a festival attendee as explained earlier) to a ‘psychic malaise’ (the harmful effect of drugs). This started happening due to the extreme and routinised use of adulterated ecstasy/MDMA and increased polydrug abuse, for instance, mixing ecstasy with ‘crystal meth’, alcohol and other substances causing the individuals to lose their peaceful sheen and become ‘a soul-destroying grind’ (Reynolds, 1999).

2.8.1 Taking zero-tolerance measures

Many individuals insist that music festival organisers should ultimately accept drug use at their festivals by offering various harm minimisation services onsite. Drug education organisations like DanceSafe in the US offer different harm minimisation services at festivals, such as educating young people to stay cool and hydrated at the festival, providing cool-down zones where people can take a break from dancing, and pill testing kits to check if a pill is cut with possibly risky contaminants. Unfortunately, music festival organisers generally do not support

drug education organisations out of fear that they will be penalised or criminally prosecuted for permitting or promoting drug use on the festival’s premises (Mohr, 2018).

For instance, in the US, the underground trend for raves in the 1990s ultimately went down after the RAVE Act was passed. The 2003 RAVE (Reducing Americans’ Vulnerability to Ecstasy) Act prohibits “an individual from knowingly opening, maintaining, managing, controlling, renting, leasing, making available for use, or profiting from any place for the purpose of manufacturing, distributing, or using any controlled substance, and for other purposes” (Anderson, 2014, p. 50).

Now, rave parties have come alive in a more commercialised way. A worldwide EDM industry, controlled by entertainment organisations such as Made Events, Go Ventures, and Insomniac Productions, has taken raves to labelled corporate festivals, stadiums and extra-large nightclubs. Music festivals attract thousands of young people from all over the world. As in the 1990s, the popularity of music festivals today has been dominated by drug-related disasters. The 2003 RAVE Act in the US is believed to be a poorly conceived law that has not only failed prevention of drug-related harm at raves but has unintentionally triggered its increase. By discouraging Electronic Dance Music business organisers from offering health services to sick or dehydrated party-goers, for fear of indicating to authorities that they know about the drug use at their events, the RAVE Act, an artefact of the last century’s ‘war on drugs’, does more harm than good as it discourages promoters and production companies from taking the drug-related precautions essential to safeguard their visitors. The companies walk a high wire between avoiding dealing with the law and managing to put on a safe and profitable event (Anderson, 2014).

2.9 Drug checking services

2.9.1 What are drug checking services?

At a drug checking service, individuals can submit samples of their substances to have their contents tested and examined for purity. The results are given to the customer. The analytical service can be established either on-site, for instance, at large events or festivals, or off-site.

Along with this, brief health interventions are offered simultaneously, and are intended to reduce harm. Quick turnaround drug testing services may have minimised harms occurring

from the latest incidents of mass intoxications at events like music festivals. Drug checking is used to improve monitoring of new psychoactive substances in some countries. The drug checking services further include identification of new psychoactive substances (NPSs) and other contents of the substance, supervision of NPS availability and use, identification of evolving dangers from certain NPSs. They also allow users to seek help and obtain health information to lessen possible harms. They offer alternatives for individual behaviour change and provide information that could impact supply dynamics (Butterfield et al., 2016b). Drug dose estimations give useful data for estimating drug use in a population and drug markets. By using this data on population drug use, it is will be easier to understand public health and legal effects, inform policy and support resource allocation, although legislation can be a forbidding issue for drug checking services (Johnson et al., 2020).

Drug testing services deliver an unbiased viewpoint to help support drug users in making informed choices about their health and safety. Usually, the drug checking services in nightlife venues and music festivals are focused mainly towards non-addicted, recreational drug users. Non-addicted drug users are provided with inadequate services within harm minimisation programmes, although they form a large majority of drug users. Despite the fact that many organisations provide services mainly to drug-dependent people, only a few organisations meet the needs of the vast majority of non-addicted, recreational drug users (About Us | DanceSafe, n.d.-b).

The concept of drug testing services means they need to make sure there is no foul play in supporting drug distribution. There are possibilities that individuals would have the misapprehension that, by getting their drugs ‘checked’, their use is disregarded or determined as safe. Prevailing drug testing services face up to this delusion through meticulous engagement with drug testing users to explain that all drug use is dangerous and that the only entirely harmless alternative is to avoid drug use. This message is addressed to the drug testing users who are obtaining guidance about harm minimisation that is personally tailored to people with different individual attributes and to the identified qualities of the drugs they may use. (Butterfield et al., 2016b). However, the limitations of drug testing services involve validation of the consumption of drugs, the social obligation of the drug checkers towards consumers of tested drugs, and the drug dealers utilising these services as a quality control mechanism (Benschop et al., 2002b).

Most relevantly, this type of approach impacts drug consumption behaviour where, in comparison to extensive anti-drug campaigns, drug testing on-site can change behaviour at the period of consumption, chiefly by influencing peers and social networks (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare n.d.), including health staff (Gamma et al., 2005; Murphy et al., 2006). Testing can also include an off-site testing service before events that encourages drug takers to plan, even though it is less frequent, as these services usually necessitate drug takers to provide identification, increasing the apparent chances of being identified by police (Brunt & Niesink, 2011b). Although the findings of research on its efficacy are varied, it is evident that drug testing has helped to reduce the frequency of drug overdoses and deaths, and that it also improves healthcare services and increases knowledge of harm reduction values (Brunt & Niesink, 2011b; Chinet et al., 2007; Kriener, 2001b). The increase in the promotion of support services, support for public health campaigns and prospects for research are additional advantages, noticed globally, that have encouraged evidence-informed and more efficient prevention and cure (Kriener, 2001b). These consequences have also assisted in extending the discussion beyond philosophies of individual criminality and morality to comprehend social, economic and welfare debates, which challenges conservative thinking about perceptions like harm, risk and social concerns by reflecting social frameworks of drug consumption to recognise the connection that individuals and surroundings have on drug-associated problems (Rhodes, 2002). It is essential, nevertheless, to highlight that drug consumption is harmful and cannot be perceived as free of harm, nor is drug testing a ‘silver bullet’ (Butterfield et al., 2016b; Winstock, Griffiths et al., 2001).

2.9.2 Understanding the drug-taking behaviour before providing the drug testing services

Conventionally, pleasure is removed from most of the preventive campaigns and health messages. Nevertheless, this type of prejudice and drug users’ drive should be covered while planning for interventions. Because preventive messages are focused only on the risks of drug use, they are unsuccessful, especially with the young drug users who do not associate themselves with discourses that neglect the pleasurable and beneficial impacts of drug use. Discussing their behavioural intentions at drug checking (explained in the next section) after they receive their test results is still inadequate (Anderson, 2014).

The most relevant source of information for young drug takers is their peers. As a result, it can be implied that information about the composition of drugs and harm reduction approaches

might be circulated not only to the immediate customers of the service but also among their social networks (Valente et al., 2019).

Reyna and Rivers (2008) stated that “dual-process decision making” is used while providing harm minimisation services. The decisions (to take drugs) are understood together via (1) *theories of reasoned action*, taking into consideration self-efficacy, beliefs and values, perceptions of control; and through the less tangible idea of (2) ‘*willingness*’ to take an action, which is determined by how partakers recognise their perceived prototype of a person engaging in a given behaviour.

According to Fishbein and Ajzen, (2011), by examining the various aspects of the behaviour of consuming drugs, the theory of reasoned action and, further, the theory of planned behaviour, suggest that this pattern of behaviour is affected by several factors. They include the perceptions of the subject, the possible effects of the behaviour, performing the behaviour with a perceived capacity, other individuals’ viewpoints, and the context in which the behaviour occurs. The authors implied that behavioural intention is generated from a mixture of attitude toward the behaviour, subjective standards and observed behavioural control, and that it is an instant determining factor of actual behaviour. These theories are used in predicting a vast range of behaviours, predominantly health-related ones, and also provide a theoretical base for many harm reduction intercessions with individuals who takes drugs in party scenes (Valente et al., 2019).

Rhodes (2009) emphasised the social structural perspectives of the individuals and the place and time the behaviours might occur. An individual’s capability to make health-related decisions is likely to differ based on their age, gender, socio-economic status, background, and the unbalanced access to the facilities which are essential for good health and wellbeing. Furthermore, Ajzen and Fishbein (2004) have emphasised that the relative significance of subjective norms, attitudes, and perceptions of behavioural control for the estimate of objectives would differ from behaviour to behaviour and between various segments of the population.

2.9.3 The change in behaviour of the drug takers after drug testing

By means of notifying partakers of the chemical quantity and quality of their substances and possible dangers linked with usage, and by emancipating drug users to make informed decisions, a drug checking organisation may be expected to improve users’ decision making

away from ingesting dangerous substances. Since the drug testing organisations have volunteers of a similar demographic, it may change participants' perceived risk prototypes of individuals who make informed decisions about consuming dangerous substances (Saleemi et al., 2017).

A study regarding the availability of this type of harm minimisation facility (Valente et al., 2019) depicted the support for clients because those who get their drug tested before taking it value the information obtained and take it into consideration while making a decision about whether to actually use the drug or not. Moreover, most participants in the study, i.e., 95% of them, considered drug checking services to be beneficial. Another significant result in this study was that around 94% of the individuals who discovered that they did not have the anticipated substance stated intending not to take the substance at all (Valente et al., 2019). When the analytical results revealed, the sample contained "the expected substance plus adulterants", only 32% of substance users who got this result indicated they would not use it. When the result was "only the expected substance" majority of the participants, i.e., 98% of them, stated they would use it. There was a statistically significant link between users' behavioural intentions and the results of drug testing. When the reason for not using the adulterated substance was questioned, 43% of participants in this study said that they did not know the substance that was found in the test, 28% said it was toxic, 23% stated that they did not like the substance, and some of them stated they required more data about the drug. For the people who wanted to use the tested substances, different reasons were given for this behaviour. Most of them said it is only an expected substance, for some, it was a familiar substance, the others said it was new, and they wanted to try it. There were a few who also mentioned that it was adulterated but not poisonous (Valente et al., 2019). From these findings, it can be assumed that behavioural intention is an instant determining factor of actual behaviour, as suggested by the theories of reasoned action and planned behaviour proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen, (2011).

The study by Valente et al. (2019) is an indication of the influence drug testing services can have on users' behaviours. People stating that they will not use an unknown substance is predominantly significant in this instance, taking into account the extreme levels of adulteration for some commonly used drugs such as cocaine or amphetamine, and the presence of comparatively unexpected substances like NBOMe by-products as adulterants of frequently used drugs, like LSD, at music festivals (such as the Boom Festival 2016 in this case). The research also included the actuality linked with the practices people use to evaluate the content

of their drugs when a drug testing service is not available, which can comprise of activities such as: “ask someone who has tried it before” (63%), “start with a small quantity” (47%), “ask the dealer” (32%). This would be putting youngsters at high risk of facing needless consequences. In reality, without a chemical test, there is no way of knowing the content of a drug sample and adequately warning individuals who take drugs. Therefore, it becomes challenging for harm minimisation workers to offer unbiased and factual data to their clients (Valente et al., 2019). Similarly, the study conducted by Saleemi et al. (2017) depicted how the results of MDMA-negative drug testing caused lesser rates of intention to use, implying that drug checking may be efficient in lowering the intake of unfamiliar substances and reducing related harms.

2.9.4 Drug checking services operating around the world

Drug testing was started in the early 1990s in the Netherlands (Winstock et al., 2001) where it is now part of official national policy. These initiatives have also been implemented in other European nations, including Austria, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland although mainly administered and funded privately (*European Drug Report 2015: Trends and Development*, 2015b; Kriener, 2001b).

Organisations like DanceSafe also function in the USA. They focus on harm reduction through peer-education regarding drugs (Kriener, 2001b; Dundes, 2003). Testing usually comprises of dance-party and music festival-goers, giving a sample of their drugs for testing by scientists, who give them information regarding the composition and purity (Butterfield et al., 2016b).

Usually, in Europe, drug testing services are carried out in mobile facilities situated inside or close to the venues to grant timely advice to drug takers (within approximately 30 minutes). Test results are later ‘posted’ incognito on event websites or information boards, and usually use red/yellow/green colour-coding), so that drug takers can re-evaluate feedback clearly and cautiously (Hungerbuehler et al., 2011b). Drug checking is supported well at the local level in Europe, with self-report data from drug-takers, reports from key stakeholders (including police) and broader public support meaning that it offers ‘safer’ drug settings by notifying drug users about toxic drugs and/or unexpected harmful substances mixed with their drugs (Brunt & Niesink, 2011b; Groves, 2018; Kriener, 2001b).

‘The Loop’ is a UK based on-site drug testing non-profit organisation that operates at seven music events with the permission granted by the legislation. Twenty-eight ‘Tolerance Zones’ of 100 yards around the testing services were employed to establish zones safe from arrest by

police for drug violations (The Loop, n.d.). Regulations surrounding the functions of the services comprised of an obligatory 15-minute consultation with a health care expert to obtain guidance concerning drug harm reduction. Approximately 20% of drugs examined were discarded by individuals who used the service, i.e., one-fifth of illegal substances were eradicated from the music festival. An academic study carried out at the ‘Secret Garden Party’, a four-day festival in Cambridgeshire, caused the commencement of testing in the UK in 2016. Two-thirds of the drug takers decided to hand over the substances to the police. This was a pilot that started during a period when the number of drug-linked deaths at festivals in the UK reached its peak (Morrison, 2019).

In the UK, drug amnesty bins are arranged for the deposit of illegal drugs at party settings and a private, not-for-profit laboratory carries out investigations for inclusion in the library of NPSs. At larger events, on-site analysers use infra-red mass spectrometry to compare the drugs collected with the database (Butterfield et al., 2016b).

Meanwhile, in the Netherlands, a system of 26 drug testing sites is integrated into the Ministry of Health in the context of a national surveillance system (Brunt & Niesink, 2011b). Data are scrutinised for trends in evolving drugs, and results are utilised to update public policy and practice. While the immediate prevention of deaths has not been recorded, dangerous drugs detected by checking systems in the Netherlands have swiftly receded from the Dutch markets due to the introduction of warning campaigns (about dangerous drugs) (Butterfield et al., 2016b; van Laar et al., 2010).

2.9.5 Drug checking service in Australia

According to Morrison (2019), in the past decade, Australia has experienced many deaths of young people from drug use at music festivals. Between September 2018 and March 2019, five people died under such drug conditions in Australia. The pill testing trial described by Morrison was undertaken at the Groovin in the Moo’ festival, Australia, in April 2018. It was suggested that it was a massive success after it discovered two possibly poisonous samples. Harm Reduction Australia carried out the trial together with a group of NGOs (the STA-Safe Consortium), with 42% of individuals who had their drugs tested stating that their behaviour around drug use would alter as a result of the testing. Nevertheless, this was a standout, liberal change. The New South Wales (NSW) Government has taken an opposing view on this subject, mentioning asceticism as the remedy, and opposing the move to introduce drug testing even with the alarming statistics concerning drug problems at music festivals over recent years. In

NSW alone, over the Australia Day long weekend festivals in 2019, 25 people were hospitalised due to drug issues. This indicates that young people are taking and will continue to take the risks of using illicit drugs. The NSW Government came up with a rigorous festival licensing policy in response to the latest wave of music festival deaths. In total, this resulted in at least 66 young people's hospitalisations from music festivals during the summer of 2019 in NSW. Another 20 individuals had to be resuscitated on-site by emergency care teams. The abstinence viewpoint thus proved to be impractical in Australia. The largest festivals in NSW have joined together to create a union, the Australian Festival Association, to encourage governments to build drug testing trials so that lives are not compromised (Morrison, 2019).

According to Groves (2018), in Australia, drug testing needs to be seen through a lens of logicity where, for specific users in specific settings, it is about offering the youth visiting festivals useful information about drugs and drug-taking so that they can make more informed choices to avoid the related harms, as well as creating significant practical changes to the situations in which drugs are used. Australian drug policy currently is in a particular discourse and is dominated by philosophies or beliefs, moral disagreements and criminal justice debate. Australian drug policy has a divided history (Garland, 1996, 2000; O'Malley, 1999), and has been controlled by the changing notions of different political, social and moral influences Ritter (2020).

Ritter (2020) studied the pill testing debate in Australia. She investigated theorists who view science and evidence as represented and undertaken in social, political, and moral issues. Stengers' theory was applied in the study so that, within the policy debates, the evidence could be put together with values (Ritter, 2020). Stengers (2018) has insisted that, as far as we perceive science in terms of 'proving things', and implying objective judgement and truth, we are trapped in a realm where debates are about 'matters of fact'. This stands in contradiction, according to Stengers, with alternate thoughts of 'matters of concern'. 'Matters of concern' accept that facts are strongly associated with ethical, social and political views (Stengers, 1997, 2018).

Stengers underlines a "civilised science" (Stengers, 2018, p. 147), making a 'civilised mode' for scientists that establishes all knowledge and helps everyone concerned to find solutions together. It depends on a stance which "welcome[s] new objections" (Stengers, 2018, p. 147) and is "indebted to the existence of others who ask different questions" (Stengers, 2018, p. 45). It suggests that "values that can emerge only because the participants have learned how to allow

the issue at the heart of their meeting the power to matter, the power to connect everyone present” (Stengers, 2018, p. 123). Stengers explained this in terms of slowing down the science: “slowing down the sciences means civilising scientists, civilisation being equated here with the ability of members of a particular collective to present themselves in a noninsulting way to members of other collectives, that is, in a way that enables a process of relation-making” (Stengers, 2018, pp. 100–101).

New Zealand is experiencing the same situation, and this will be discussed below.

2.9.6 The drug testing scene in New Zealand

New Zealand is heading towards drug law reform that is aiming at harm reduction. A possibility, therefore, arises to introduce, normalise and control the analyses of drugs consumed at music festivals. The Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 imposes restrictions on organisations like KnowYourStuffNZ (Bullock, 2017). Festival organisers and management are avoiding involving such services and practices to encourage harm reduction for fear of prosecution. Other general law jurisdictions, as mentioned earlier, have figured out a path to permit drug testing organisations to operate within the law. New Zealand, similar to Australia (Ritter, 2020), still has different values and beliefs regarding drug testing at festivals (Morrison, 2019).

Section 12 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 makes it illegal, with accountability to conviction and imprisonment, to intentionally allow any sites to be utilised for the commission of an offence against the Act. If music festival organisers allow these drug testing organisations to offer services on-site, one could argue that they are conceding that drugs are being taken. This brings about liability under section 12. Until now, there have been no prosecutions in New Zealand concerning drug testing and section 12, but a prosecution could lead to up to 10 years in prison for music festival organisers (Flahive, 2019a).

New Zealand’s Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 2015 seems to challenge the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975. Section 30 of the HSWA addresses the general duty of care and legal responsibility which exists for festival organisers to take every measure to keep people safe at music festivals through the managing the risks by eradication or harm minimisation (Cheng, 2019). Nevertheless, operating drug testing as a possible measure to lessen harm from drug consumption, so as to keep festival-goers safe, carries a liability under section 12 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 (Morrison, 2019).

KnowYourStuffNZ is the pill checking organisation which provides a free of charge drug testing service. They happen to exist within a legal grey area (McPhee, 2019b). Music festival organisers face risks of prosecution and imprisonment (as explained earlier) through permitting such services to function on their festival sites (Komesaroff, 2019). However, KnowYourStuffNZ operates within the law when testing drugs, by not possessing the drugs themselves. The drug-taking customers are always required to handle, prepare and take full responsibility by finishing the testing under the direction and control of the volunteers of the KnowYourStuffNZ organisation (Ministry of Health NZ, 2011). The organisation cannot use the drug samples, or drugs that are disposed of, for laboratory testing or other research since this can result in taking possession of the drugs (Morrison, 2019). During the summer of 2018/19, MDMA was the most commonly seized drug at music festivals in New Zealand, followed by cannabis. Other popular drugs comprised of LSD, cocaine, cathinones such as 3-MMC, MMMP, N-ethylpentylone and eutylone (Johnson et al., 2020).

A section of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 has lately been established to declare that consideration should be granted to “whether a health-centred or therapeutic approach would be more beneficial to the public interest” in comparison to action for ownership or use of an illegal drug. Harm minimisation programmes, like drug checking organisations, may be subject to this section on “health-centred” approaches (Ministry of Health NZ, 2019).

2.10 Conclusion

The aim of this study is to understand whether drug testing in New Zealand fits within the larger narrative presented in this chapter, and if it can provide the basis for more efficient drug policy by delivering a robust national framework that may apply to other international policy settings as well. Through this lens, the research examines the events (petitions, hospitalisations and drug seizures) that are taking place in New Zealand with the main focus being on the media coverage. Through this data, an analysis is made of current political, expert and social debates, including an evaluation of the fundamental values and beliefs of people regarding drug testing, and the current evidence from organisations such as KnowYourStuffNZ. Together with the discussion of this data, it will be possible to analyse and provide a roadmap for whether the implementation of drug testing is a more pragmatic strategy, or not, and further contribute to

the discussion of harm minimisation. The next chapter presents the research methods used for the data analysis.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the objectives of the study and how the interest in this research originated. The chapter also describes the interpretive research paradigm with its base in the relativist ontological position and the constructivist epistemological view that is used in the research. It also outlines the method used for the collection and analysis of the data. A simple content analysis was used to review and extract the data needed.

3.2 The objective of the study

This research was intended to examine the political and social debates on the issue of the implementation of drug testing services at music festivals in New Zealand. The ideas and opinions of the politicians from different political parties, experts from different fields, festival directors of different music festivals, festival-goers, and several Reddit users were analysed to examine how they influence the implementation of festival drug testing at music festivals. This research is an attempt to show how one single issue is viewed and represented differently by different people involved in this debate. The primary aim of the research is to examine the nature of the policy debate by answering the following research questions:

1. What are the political, legal, social and expert debates concerning the implementation of drug testing at music festivals in New Zealand?
2. What are the main objectives behind supporting and opposing the implementation of drug testing at music festivals in New Zealand?
3. How are values and beliefs affecting the opinions of different people involved in the debate and further affecting the implementation of drug testing at music festivals in New Zealand?

3.3 Research paradigm

This study is based on a relativist ontology, which means that the knowledge can be endorsed or disputed by finding new and different viewpoints to support or oppose what is already known

(Blaikie, 2007). The relativist ontology is suitable for this research since the focus is mainly on events and activities concerning drug testing at music festivals and portrayed in the media, and this data can be understood differently depending on the political, ethical, social, and scientific context (Morgan, 2014).

This research gained knowledge of reality by utilising a constructivist epistemology that implies that, through interaction with different information, meanings and data, different individuals could hold different meanings. In simple terms, a constructivist epistemology is about understanding the multiple views of people (Blaikie, 2007). This suggests that individuals can build varying implications for the same event, which facilitates the researcher in creating contextual understandings of a specified topic and gap (Merriam, 2009). The constructivist epistemological approach can be applied in this research because the objective is to discover the political, ethical, social and scientific views at play in the drug testing debate through various event and activities that are portrayed through media. The epistemological statements and beliefs are about how the knowledge of reality can be gathered and described (Blaikie, 2007).

Interpretivism is derived from the requirement for culturally and historically established understandings of the social life-world and usually aims at those elements that are unique, individual and qualitative (Gray, 2018). The interpretive paradigm underlines the concept that diverse backgrounds and experiences of individuals or groups can result in multiple perceptions of social research findings (Hennink et al., 2011).

An interpretive paradigm is the fundamental part of the research design and is valid in this research where meaning is created depending upon an individual's interaction between what they believe (ontology) and what knowledge they derive from the different events and activities (epistemology). That means that drug testing at festivals can be a positive or a negative issue but this is dependent on each individual's perception (Scotland, 2012).

3.4 Research method

This research is an exploratory study in which qualitative methods were used. The qualitative approach was used in this study because qualitative data aids in understanding social phenomena using text, words, and dialogues (Azungah, 2018). This research largely focuses on the political, socio-scientific, and social debate that mainly consists of dialogues. Thus, a

data collection instrument was required since the qualitative research method recognises the rhetoric of context (Merriam, 2009). The nature of qualitative research assists in this study by allowing the diverse assumptions, beliefs, and values of the different members in the research to be discovered (Merriam, 2009).

3.5 Actors in the debate

According to the aims of this research, the different members participating in the New Zealand drug testing policy debate are the research participants in the study. Firstly, politicians from different political parties were considered under the political and legal context in the study. Under the socio-scientific context, various drug experts, healthcare professionals, scientists, and academics were observed. Lastly, the views of music festival directors, music festival attendees, and several Reddit users were taken into consideration for this study.

3.6 Data analysis method

This research was conducted using content analysis. Content analysis is used for the collection and investigation of data from text, and it also helps in interpreting significance from content such as text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Neuman (2003) defined content analysis as a technique for gathering and analyzing the content of the text. The content refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated. It includes books, newspapers or magazine articles, advertisements, speeches, official documents, films or videotapes, musical lyrics, photographs, articles of clothing or works of art. (p. 310)

Furthermore, it gives researchers the freedom to compare and make parallels across different forms of text. As the discourse that was studied in this research is constructed from the drug testing policy debates between the politicians, experts, festival-goers and festival directors, content analysis was useful in answering the research questions in the study, and understanding how the debate affects the implementation of drug testing at festivals.

Qualitative content analysis is useful and applicable to this research because it allows researchers to select data that already exists in the public domain as the primary source. The data or text that has been used in this study consists of documents such as media statements, press releases, parliamentary debates, and interviews, for instance, newspaper articles and

parliamentary petitions obtained from different websites that can be found both online and in print form (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Like all qualitative researchers, in this research I strive to ensure that the study is credible and dependable.

To conduct the content qualitative analysis, the sequence set out in Figure 1, below, was followed.

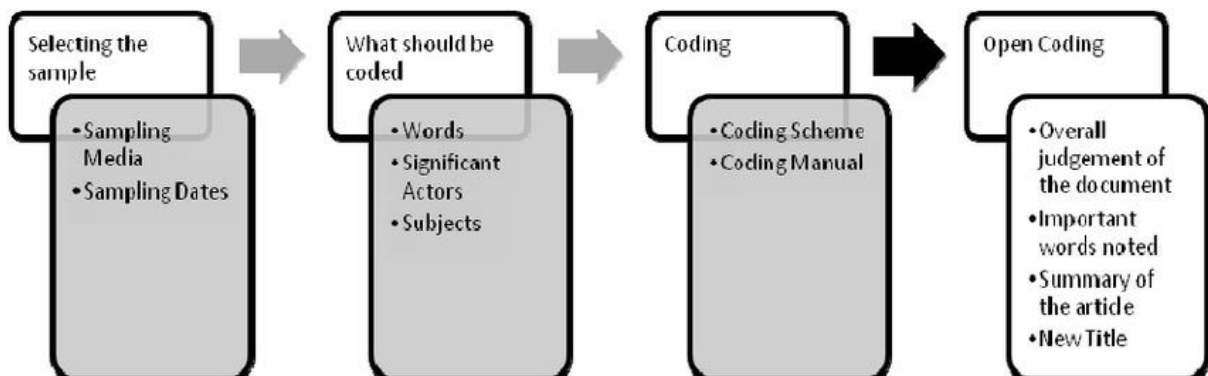


Figure 1. Content analysis process (Giannopoulou et al., 2010)

1. Firstly, a timeline with significant events/actions and milestones concerned with the drug testing debate in New Zealand was created. As such, a time frame between May 2014 and September 2020 was selected as a period of analysis. It formed a sufficiently large but manageable dataset in order to analyse the nature of the debate. Since this issue became noticeable only in the last two years, the data had to be collected from the year 2014 to understand the issue clearly and explain why this problem is relevant in the current study (see Appendix-A). There was minimal research on this contemporary topic. The sources of data utilised to fill the timeline comprised of advocacy activities (for example, petitions), media comments and documentation of the hospitalisations and drug seizures that occurred at music festivals in that period.
2. Further, several themes and reoccurring patterns were recognised in the language that research participants used during the policy debate. To obtain this data the following steps were taken.

The first step was to loosely transcribe the interviews, podcasts and other videos from different news websites and YouTube using the ‘live transcribe’ translator app. The data was collected from the following news and media websites:

- television talk shows like *The AM Show*, *Newshub*, *Newstalk ZB*;
- radio podcasts like *RNZ* podcasts;
- different New Zealand websites such as *Stuff*, *Scoop-New Zealand* news, *NZ Herald*, *The Spinoff*, *1 News*, *Newshub*, *RNZ News*; and
- Government websites like *Beehive.govt.nz*, and political party websites like *Greens.org.nz* (Green Party website).

In the next step, each article related to drug testing in New Zealand was read, coded, and important quotes were extracted. Once the different patterns were observed, the research participants' words were organised thematically by context, along with their identity. The open coding procedure was done manually, and the arguments (claims and counterclaims) were put into different themes under different contexts based on the data derived from the participants' discussion.

The discussion of the data in this research is based on a quantitative content analysis data which was used to obtain a broad picture of the content of the debate. I then used data from the qualitative analysis to highlight the differences in the positions taken in the debate. The data was assessed, and the arguments in favour and opposed to the implementation of festival drug testing were obtained in content analysis. Similar arguments were coded together, and themes for all the arguments, for and against, were created. The fundamental objective for each side (as it appeared from the content analysis) was analysed. I then applied the work of Stengers (2018). The theoretical orientation in this study is constructivist, in that data selected for examination are looked as assemblages that are socially, politically and morally established. This comprises knowledge or facts that are relational, conditional, multiple and positioned. This analysis involved "thinking with" Stengers and exploring her formulations of the relationship between science, society and policy decisions, and how the values play a part in this knowledge, and this approach will be utilised here to create new perceptions. This study was conducted by using the method of data analysis similar to that used by Ritter (2020), due to the limited research related to this topic that has taken place in New Zealand.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The crucial part of the study is analysed in this chapter. It consists of political, socio-scientific and social debates which are divided into claims and counterclaims and are discussed in regard to the previous literature. To understand the primary intentions of the supporting and opposing actors in the debate, more in-depth analysis from the policy debate was done to make the debate more clear-cut. The underlying goals of advocates and opponents from the findings are investigated and discussed in this chapter. The different value positions were discovered and analysed. Finally, to understand how the ‘matters of concern’ or the different values and beliefs would affect the implementation of festival drug testing, Stengers’ (2018) theory was applied and elucidated. The study also emphasises the significant New Zealand events and advocacy over the period of the analysis through a media table (see Appendix A). The policy advocacy on drug testing started a few years ago in New Zealand, as shown in the table (see Appendix A).

As the New Zealand Police make record numbers of drug arrests and dealers struggle to spend their cash, the partygoers recover in intensive care, prompting politicians to push for legal drug testing. Festival visitors’ changing drug scene at a recreational level is analysed in this chapter.

Every summer, thousands of people travel far and wide across New Zealand to visit the many festivals that occur. They go to festivals to have a good time and while most of the festivalgoers leave with good memories, for some of them the use of drugs may ruin their experience.

The festival season over the last couple of years has had a spotlight on drug safety and awareness, as drug testing at large events became an extensively discussed problem (Huffadaine, 2019).

As explained in the literature review, the hedonistic or risk-taking behaviour of young people is nothing new. Due to the factors of ‘liminality’ and the ‘situational disinhibition’ (MatickaTyndale et al., 2003; Milhausen et al., 2006; Turner, 1967), illicit drug consumption, binge drinking, hedonistic and self-indulgent behaviours are standard for youth, especially at music festivals. Monterrubio et al. (2015) looked at the push and pull motivations in connection with drug and alcohol consumption among students who chose “to go wild” and “party reputation” as travel motivations. These activities happen, especially when young people get

‘time out’ from their daily lives (Briggs, 2013; Briggs & Turner, 2012). They indulge in these types of risk behaviour, in this case, drug consumption, because of different factors such as an ‘opportunity to escape’ from the daily routine life. Escaping the routine life is the primary motivator to attend an event to achieve ‘intrinsic rewards’ as per Iso-Ahola’s (1982) motivation theory as well as ‘spiritual’ escape, psychological escape, physical escape and social escape (Li & Wood, 2016; Little et al., 2018b), and the feeling of ‘communitas’ (Stone, 2008; Turner, 1995) and self-expression (Muhs et al., 2020). The festival grounds were seen as enabling experiences distinct from the attendee’s daily life, and the psychoactive drugs like ecstasy and LSD are believed to provide an enhanced experience of all these factors (Muhs et al., 2020). The unique environment of nightclubs and festivals, like music, sound and lights, appears to encourage practices like drug-taking and improves the pleasure achieved through them (Bennett, 2002; Duff, 2007).

This results in festival-goers opportunity to ‘blow out’ or to ‘lose it’ at festivals (Briggs, 2013; Briggs & Turner, 2012). When a person is in the liminal stage, law, moralities, and social structure are less meaningful as people try to explore their new identity and start to create a new status; thus, risk behaviours are the result (Turner, 1967). Inebriated leisure experiences are depicted as increasing harmony amongst festival-goers (Bramham & Wagg, 2011). Ecstasy is usually stated as enabling self-actualisation and self-discovery (Lyng, 2005). Festivals were also regarded as delivering a liminal space at which people can manifest and configure their existential self through dance, self-expression, and exchange with other attendees (Muhs et al., 2020).

Recreational drugs can be stealthily cut with toxic or ‘filler’ substances. Uncertainty about strength and purity gives rise to accidental overdoses. Drug testing shows what a pill or powder really contains and how pure it is. The key objective is to facilitate recreational drug takers to make reasoned decisions about what substances they consume (Zhuang, 2019).

Drug testing, as mentioned in the literature review, is congruent with the Netherlands’ national drug policy, and it was introduced there in 1992. Government authorised drug testing services have been operating in Belgium since 1993, in Austria since 1997 and in Switzerland since 2001. Drug testing is also offered in Portugal, France and Spain. Non-profit organisations have been testing substances in the US and Canada since 1999 and in the UK since 2013 (*European Drug Report 2015: Trends and Development*, 2015b; Kriener, 2001b; Zhuang, 2019). Drug checking is supported well at the local level in Europe, with self-report data from drug takers,

reports from key stakeholders (including police) and broader public support for it as offering ‘safer’ drug settings by notifying drug users about toxic drugs and/or unexpected harmful substances mixed with them (Brunt & Niesink, 2011b; Groves, 2018; Kriener, 2001b).

In New Zealand, drug checking is operated at festivals by the volunteer group KnowYourStuffNZ, which is independent but supported by the New Zealand Drug Foundation. It has been testing drugs at many music and dance festivals and concerts for five years, and in that time has grown from working with just one event to a countrywide volunteer organisation that delivered harm reduction services free of charge at 13 events in the 2018-2019 summer festival season. It has collected data that shows that instead of accepting drug-taking as is generally feared, pill testing decreases drug consumption and its related harms (*KnowYourStuff NZ Home Page*, n.d.). ‘Do-it-yourself’ pill-testing kits that are commercially available in the marketplace have been utilised by some festival attendees for years. Each kit comprises a solution which is dropped onto a ground-up sample of a pill and will change colours to indicate if a substance like MDMA is present or not. However, these kits cannot substantiate dose levels of a specific drug and do not give information on other possibly dangerous cutting drugs (Zhuang, 2019). Thus, the highly sophisticated spectrometers and other equipment used by the drug checking organisation and the expert advice given by the volunteers of KnowYourStuff are necessities for a music festival.

However, as discussed earlier, the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 means that drug testing exists in a legal grey area. Under section 12 of the Act, individuals are legally responsible if their premises are intentionally used for an offence, involving possession or use of a “controlled drug”. This suggests that it is unlawful for festival organisers to permit recreational drugs on their premises intentionally; thus, the testing of recreational drugs is presently being conducted in a legal grey area (Bullock, 2017; Morrison, 2019). Volunteers offering the service are also uncertain and at risk, because even though they avoid handling substances, it is unclear whether testing small samples results in possession. Substituting this Act with a health-centred drug law could tackle these legal barriers. At the minimum, a small revision to the Act could safeguard harm minimisation services from prosecution (New Zealand Drug Foundation n.d.). Nobody has been charged for having on-site drug testing at festivals, but the risk appears large. It has been challenging to get past councils, insurers, police and stakeholders, even though the organisers themselves are keen to educate and save the young risk-takers’ lives (Franks, 2019).

As mentioned earlier, New Zealand's Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 2015 seems to challenge the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975. Section 30 of the HSWA addresses the general duty of care and legal responsibility which exists for festival organisers to take every measure to keep people safe at music festivals through the managing the risks by eradication or harm minimisation (Cheng, 2019).

From Appendix A, it can be seen that the KnowYourStuff volunteer organisation has been catching sight of pesticides and bath salts before the unsuspecting festival-goers consume or snort the drugs. They tested 805 samples across 13 events in 2019, more than twice the number of the previous year. They found out that the biggest concern is cathinones or bath salts that have been detected in MDMA pills. The users are mostly unaware of this and may experience anxiety attacks, heart arrhythmia and fits. Overdosing is highly possible because when the festival-goers do not get high, as they are expecting, they take more drugs. Deaths at overseas music festivals and hospitalisations arising from New Zealand's music festivals have involved cathinones. Another issue was that, five years ago, adulterated pills started appearing in Europe and the UK, and were linked to hospitalisations and death; two summers later they were in New Zealand. The summer report has raised the alert that the pills this season are expected to contain up to four times the average dose of MDMA (Franks, 2019).

As seen in Figure 2, below, New Zealand Customs has seen a significant rise in seizures at New Zealand's borders. In 2019, Customs officers confiscated 703.5 kilograms of ecstasy/MDMA as compared to just 4.1kg of seizures in 2015 (Flahive, 2019b). With the increase in drug consumption in the population, New Zealand is giving more importance to harm reduction strategies like festival drug testing.

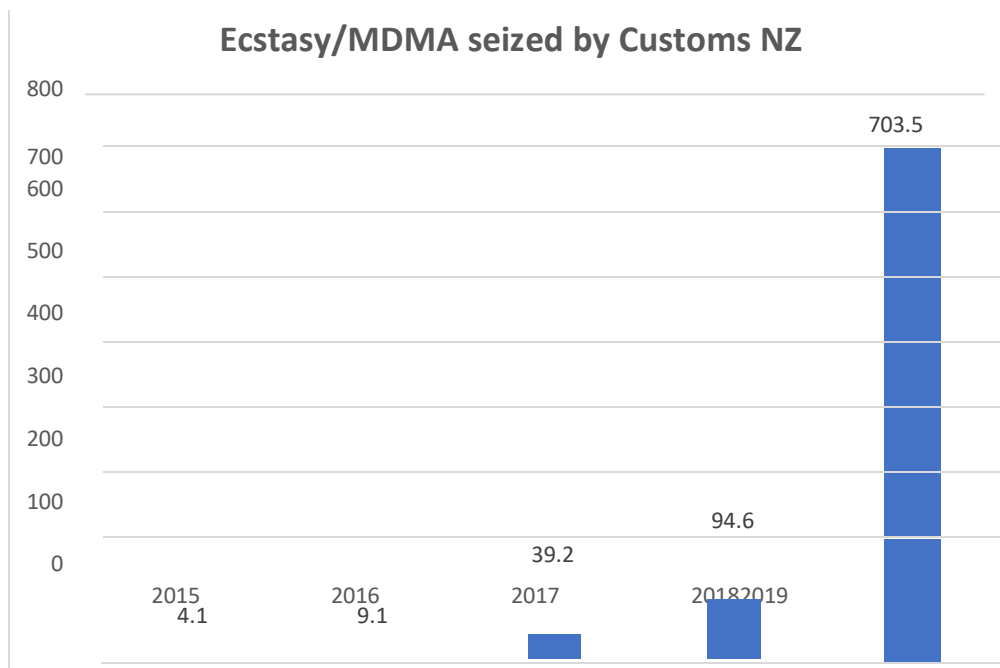


Figure 2. Ecstasy/MDMA seized by Customs NZ (Flahive, 2019b)

The Government (through the Ministry of Health) announced a \$59,000 study that took place in the summer of 2019/2020 to look at the efficacy of drug testing as a harm reduction tool. A Victoria University of Wellington criminology team attended festivals, conducted interviews and examined data provided by KnowYourStuff. The results they came back with will be employed to form any possible next steps by the Government (Te, 2019). At the moment, the National Party opposes drug testing ('Political Parties Divided over Testing Drugs at NZ Music Festivals and Events', 2019) whereas the Labour Party (Ensor, 2019a), Green Party (Cheng, 2018) and ACT Party (Ensor, 2019b) are supporting festival drug testing. NZ First only recently started to advocate festival drug testing after an intense debate with its youth wing at its annual conference (McCulloch, 2019). The Green Party's 6,000-strong petition supporting an amendment to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 to permit drug checking was brought to Parliament, and its Health Select Committee considered it (McCarthy, 2020).

In the context of Covid-19, the period of lockdown is said to have had an impact on people's tolerance for drugs. "It is still a 'question mark' if the music festivals would take place this time. But if they do 'they're in for a busy' season this time", according to Wendy Allison from KnowYourStuff (Franks, 2020).

4.3 The Drug testing policy debate

The motivation of the first research question was an attempt to identify the pathways along which the drug testing debate in New Zealand evolved, given considerable support and the events that happened in New Zealand's music festivals like drug seizures and dozens of hospitalisations at festivals, and the petition being considered at Parliament with support from most of the political parties, experts and community (see Appendix A). From the policy debate, it can be seen very clearly that political and social settings are seemingly (and notionally, as stated by policy and political science) favourable to the policy change, but at the time of writing it has not been fruitful.

4.3.1 *The terms of the political and legal debate*

The claims and counterclaims from the politicians in favour of drug checking and those against were categorised and extracted from the data. The claims and counterclaims were further divided into themes and fell into key arguments set out below. Many of these arguments overlap.

1. Drug testing saves lives vs. It will not save lives

As per literature, evidence of drug testing in many European countries has proved that pill testing at festivals has drastically reduced deaths and hospitalisations of young people. Drug testing services like The Loop in the UK and DIMS in the Netherlands are well supported by the Government and the community, and are now part of their national policy and have proven to reduce harm at festivals (Brunt & Niesink, 2011b; Groves, 2018; Hungerbuehler et al., 2011b; Kriener, 2001b).

The argument that drug testing 'saves lives' was a strong attribute of the debate, especially from the lawmakers. Advocates, including the Minister of Police, stated that even with decades of 'Just Say No' messaging, the fact is that people do use drugs, and this service will save lives (Bond, 2019).

"It saves lives, it saves hospitalisations." (Stuart Nash, Police Minister, 2/1/19, as cited in Collins, 2019)

"Let's not bury our head in the sand, we need to keep them safe." (Stuart Nash, Police Minister, 15/10/19, as cited in "1 NEWS Colmar Brunton Poll", 2019)

“In my experience, the state of the law is almost irrelevant as to whether people use drugs or not. My motivation is, how do we stop death, how do we support wellbeing?” (Helen Clark, Former PM of NZ, 22/03/18, as cited in Coughlan, 2019)

The Green Party released a petition in 2018 and mentioned ‘risk behaviour’. They made it evident in their petition that, “Drug checking saves lives and makes risky behaviour safer by allowing people to check what is in their drugs before they take them” (Swarbrick, 2018).

However, for some lawmakers, the main issue was how pill testing could permit a possibly dangerous substance to stay in the hands of a young individual, even after it has been tested.

“It’s not safe, don’t do it. If you want to live, then stick to things that are safe.” (Winston Peters, NZ First leader, 1/10/19, as cited in Bond, 2019) Winston Peters also said that it could assist in “murder”.

“[If] that student or that young person walks off and sells an already-notified dangerous product, how then is the state not guilty of helping or assisting or abetting ... murder?” (Winston Peters, NZ First leader, 24/10/19 as cited in Walton, 2019)

From his viewpoint, pill testing reaches the issue too late, so the Government need to focus on how young people obtain the dangerous substance.

“What happens when the pills are regarded as dangerous and unsafe? ... Somebody comes along, has 60 pills tested, 40 are regarded as safe the other 20 are not, what happens now? Anyone who allows that pill to go down the market line, so to speak, and be sold off is now seriously part of the problem.” (Winston Peters, NZ First leader, 15/10/19 as cited in ‘1 NEWS Colmar Brunton Poll’, 2019)

But in a post to a private Young NZ First Facebook group, chairperson William Woodward said he was “fully supportive” of testing stations. “The idea of pill testing stations is not based around assisting drug dealers, but rather saving the lives of Kiwis,” the post said (Coughlan, 2019).

A politician also said that he has no knowledge about the service, but his gut feeling was not to support it.

“It’s a ridiculous proposition, effectively setting up a regime to test what we as a country have said is completely illegal. They shouldn’t be in possession of those drugs.” (Mark Mitchell, National party MP, 14/10/18 as cited in Cheng, 2018)

2. It is an evidence-based approach vs. Relying on the research for the evidence

According to a study, at the ‘Secret Garden Party’, a four-day festival in Cambridgeshire, UK, approximately 20% of drugs examined were discarded by individuals who used the drug checking service. One-fifth of illegal substances were eradicated from the music festival. This academic study was carried out due to the commencement of testing in the UK in 2016. Two-thirds of the drug takers decided to hand over substances to the police. This was a pilot that started during a period when the number of drug-linked deaths at festivals in the UK reached its peak (Morrison, 2019). Another significant result came from the study conducted at Boom Festival, Portugal, where it was found that around 94% of the individuals who discovered that they did not have the anticipated substance stated they intended not to take the substance at all (Valente et al., 2019).

Similarly, KnowYourStuffNZ’s reports (see Appendix A) have proved that drug testing at festivals reduces harm.

“It is common sense, it is evidence-based, it will reduce harm and it will save lives. ... That’s what evidence all around the world has shown.” (Chlöe Swarbrick, Green Party MP, 14/10/2018, as cited in Cheng, 2018)

“We want to ensure that if the evidence shows that this is keeping people safe then they can do whatever they want to do, completely legally.” (Stuart Nash, Police Minister, 18/12/19, as cited in "Pill Testing at Festivals to Go Ahead over Summer Period", 2019)

The Ministry of Health has funded research by the Criminology Department of Victoria University of Wellington which will study the effect of drug testing at festivals as a potential harm minimising tool.

“As Minister of Health I’m interested in evidence-based Policy. This research will tell us whether drug checking programmes, such as the work of *Know Your Stuff*, are making a difference and helping keep people safer.” (Dr. David Clark, during his term as a Health Minister, 18/12/19 as cited in "Research into Drug Checking Impacts", 2019)

But the opponents claim that half of the youngsters will be taking pills ‘anyway’ and some are relying on the evidence in the government-funded research on drug testing (See Appendix A)). According to a Colmar Brunton Poll carried out in New Zealand, when festival-goers were asked if they will be able to have their illicit drugs legally tested, 75% of them said yes, and 19% said no, and the rest did not know (Benedict, 2019).

“Evidence shows that almost half of those who are told their pill has contaminants take it anyway.” (Darroch Ball, NZ First MP, 18/07/19, as cited in Ball, 2019)

“At the other end, this testing that they’re looking at doing and they’re going to get the scientists in to see whether it makes a difference, and I can understand them doing that, but I just want a really clear message that drugs are not safe and that there’s real concerns for us with young people.” (Paula Bennett, National Party MP, 19/12/19, cited in NZ First’s Youth Delegates Convince Party to Soften “hard Line” on Pill Testing at Festivals”, 2019)

3. Drug testing protects young people by giving them an informed choice for illegal drug consumption vs. Drugs are not meant to be taken in the first place

According to Groves (2018), Australian drug policy currently is in a discourse dominated by philosophies or beliefs, moral disagreements and criminal justice debates from many years ago; hence, Australian drug policy has a divided history (Garland, 1996, 2000; O’malley, 1999) controlled by the changing notions of different political, social and moral influences. Similarly, in New Zealand, two parties are opposed to the idea of legalising pill testing, and some people’s moral stance has influenced their opposition.

Dangerous drugs detected by checking systems in the Netherlands have swiftly receded from the Dutch markets due to the introduction of warning campaigns (about dangerous drugs). This has managed to protect many people from this risk of drug-taking (Butterfield et al., 2016; van Laar et al., 2010).

Notably, the argument for supporting drug testing was that it offered a choice to consider the reality of drug consumption by the young people.

“This is a protection of the public health. Now, people mightn’t like the fact that young people use drugs. That’s a different issue. But the reality is they do, and this is about one step that can be taken to ensuring some reassurance that what they’re doing is not unsafe.” (Peter Dunne, during his term as a Associate Health Minister, 02/07/2017, as cited in Dann, 2017)

“There’s a lot of parents out there in the middle who are saying, actually you know what I do have a kid that are going there and whatever I may think about the signal being sent around drugs, if it is my kid and that they’re there and I don’t know what they’re doing I would rather these testing services (stay in place).” (David Seymour, Act Party leader, 07/10/19 as cited in Ensor, 2019)

However, there were members of other parties who said that the drugs are illegal, and should not be consumed in the first place.

“We’re acting at the wrong end here. We’re being very reactionary if we think it’s okay to start saving lives or to start protecting people after the drug has been taken or after it’s been purchased. ... We must reject the message from promoters of the testing stations that “they will do it anyway, let’s make it as safe as possible. ... Would we create a separate ‘safe’ lane on the motorway for drunk drivers because ‘we know people will drink and drive anyway’?” (Darroch Ball, NZ First MP, 05/10/19, as cited in “Political Parties Divided over Testing Drugs at NZ Music Festivals and Events,” 2019)

Some think allowing drug testing at festivals would cause major issues for the authorities.

“But I suspect that the law makers and probably even the authorities would be very reluctant to formally become involved in this, because their involvement would become an admission used by both sides of the debate.” (Greg O’Connor, during his term as a Police Association president, 01/04/16, Edwards, 2016)

4. It is a safety net vs. There is no safe drug use

According to a study conducted at Portugal’s Boom Festival, the actuality was linked with the practices people use to evaluate the content of their drugs, especially MDMA, when a drug testing service is not available can comprise of activities such as: “ask someone who has tried it before” (63%), “start with a small quantity” (47%), and “ask the dealer” (32%). This would be putting youngsters at high risk of facing needless consequences. In reality, without a chemical test, there is no way of knowing the content of a drug sample and adequately warning individuals who take drugs (Saleemi et al., 2017; Valente et al., 2019).

The advocates broadly argued that drug checking was a ‘safety net’ and people deserve to have safety measures.

“There will be pressures on her (daughter) to partake in drugs and drink and that they will be her choices, but I would like the assurity that if she did make that ill-informed Choice there is another safety net for her and that is pill testing.” (Jenny Marcroft, NZ First MP, 20/10/19, as cited in “NZ First to Reconsider Stance on Pill Testing at Festivals”, 2019)

“I don’t endorse car crashes but if people are going to crash I want them wearing a seatbelt, I take the same approach to festival drug testing.” (Chlöe Swarbrick, Green Party MP, 05/10/19, as cited in “Political Parties Divided over Testing Drugs at NZ Music Festivals and Events,” 2019)

“Do you want that person to take that substance, go into that music festival with absolutely no safeguards, no one to talk to, no one to turn to, or put them-self in the position where they end up in the gutter dead? If I make that choice, do I not deserve a second chance?” (Rob Gore, Young NZ First member, 21/10/19, as cited in Coughlan, 2019)

However, some opponents argued that drug testing would not protect drug takers because drugs are not safe overall.

“I just want a really clear message that drugs are not safe and that there’s real concerns for us with young people.” (Paula Bennett, National Party MP, 19/12/19, as cited in "NZ First’s Youth Delegates Convince Party to Soften “hard line” on Pill Testing at Festivals", 2019)

“Drug overdoses are a huge concern, and testing won’t protect users because there is no such thing as a safe drug.” (Bob McCoskrie, Family First NZ Director, 17/02/2020, as cited in Press Release: Family First New Zealand, 2020)

Police in Canterbury issued a blunt warning ahead of the Electric Avenue festival that was held in 2020 telling festival attendees that killer drugs were circulating in the scene. The police believed that these illicit substances were being distributed for profit with little consideration for the wellbeing of the individual taking them (see Appendix A).

“Our advice is that it is safest not to take any substance that you do not know the origins of.” (Paul Robertson, Senior Sergeant, 22/02/20, as cited in “High-Dose MDMA: Police Issue Drugs Warning Ahead of Festival," 2019)

5. It is not normalising drugs vs. It sends the wrong message by normalising drug use

The normalisation theory of Parker et al. (1999) explains that the drug-taking culture has moved from a minor subculture to popular culture and drugs are being broadly experimented with in the post-modern culture to get the ‘time out’ experience in these festival settings. According to the normalisation model, when positive attitudes to the taking of recreational drugs tally with growth in availability, there are increased probabilities of the degrees of experimentation and regular usage increasing to the level that illicit drug use can be interpreted as normalised (Parker et al., 1999). This model, hence, proves that drug consumption has already been normalised by the young generation in New Zealand. Over the past few years, sensible and recreational drug-taking achieved rising acceptance in the culture, and individuals getting high on alcohol or drugs at clubs or music festivals is classified as more ‘normal’ (Wilson et al., 2010). Even though there are hostile relations and risks, the consumption of illegal drugs is regular amongst

festival attendees. Modern-day societies have experienced broad scope of ‘social transformation’ and current drug use generates another instance of how post-modern trends are influencing young people’s lives, resulting in the situation where youths from all social and educational backgrounds become drug users (Parker et al., 1999).

Advocates in this debate were careful in pointing out that drug testing does not normalise or encourage drug use or assist drug dealers, but rather saves people’s lives.

“I accept that the views that a number of us reflected need to be refined so when we go to the pop concerts, etcetera, we don’t feed and normalise drugs but keep people alive. So we’ve got to get the right balance.” (Shane Jones, NZ First MP, 19/12/2019 as cited in "NZ First’s Youth Delegates Convince Party to Soften “hard Line” on Pill Testing at Festivals", 2019)

“The idea of pill testing stations is not based around assisting drug dealers, but rather saving the lives of Kiwis.” (William Woodward, Young NZ First member, 17/10/19, as cited in McCulloch, 2019)

Opponents argued that it can provide a false sense of security or sends the wrong message to people and creates an ‘open market’ for drug peddlers and encourages drug use.

“Legalising the pill testing sends the wrong message to young people – is National divided over this? No.” (Simon Bridges, National Party leader, 05/10/19, as cited in “Political Parties Divided over Testing Drugs at NZ Music Festivals and Events,” 2019)

“It seems incredible that we are not only allowing illegal drug use at festivals, and now on university campuses, but we are actively normalising it and creating an open market for the drug dealers, as testing stations are not held responsible in the eyes of the law.” (Darroch Ball, NZ First MP, 18/07/19, as cited in Ball, 2019)

“It is being promoted by drug friendly groups – which says it all.” (Bob McCoskrie, Family First NZ Director, 17/02/2020, as cited in Press Release: Family First New Zealand, 2020)

“There is a danger with such approaches that they encourage or are seen to encourage drug use. And the law as it stands must be respected.” (David Clark, during his term as a Health Minister, 13/12/2017, as cited in "Deadly Drug Reaches NZ, Spurs Calls for Legal Recreational Testing", 2017)

6. It provides control to contact a 'hidden' youth population and provides education vs. It is a slippery slope

Drug testing is focused on recreational drug users who are mostly a hidden youth population. Drug-taking is predominant in the young generation despite them coming from different social and educational backgrounds, and are harder to control, and drug testing services can have a direct conversation with young people and educate them about drugs. Moreover, from the literature, it is understood that drug testing services emphasise that drug use is harmful and cannot be perceived as free of harm, nor is drug testing a 'silver bullet' (Butterfield et al., 2016b; Winstock et al., 2001).

Advocates also argued that drug testing could control the hidden population and provide better education and information.

“It (drugs) is going to be there anyway. So let us try and control the things we can control. And that is for the Government to allow the volunteer organisation to at least let people know what they are taking so they can make better decisions.” (David Seymour, Act Party leader, 07/10/19 as cited in Ensor, 2019)

Another argument stated was the slippery slope, gateway argument that drug testing would enable drug use which results in harmful consumption.

“We’re going down a very, very slippery slope when we’ve got illegal drugs being tested in green safe-zones. ... This is a party drug, this is for recreational fun times and young people are making that conscious decision to take those illegal, dangerous drugs. What these pill-testing stations do is totally absolves all of those young people from taking personal responsibility for their decisions.” (Darroch Ball, NZ First MP, 30/09/2019, as cited in Jancic, 2019)

7. Harm reduction approach vs. Zero-tolerance approach

Duff (2005) stated that individuals who maintain that the use of illicit substances has already become normalised further claim that drug policy must change to accommodate the 'safer use' of such illicit substances, rather than concentrating exclusively on strategies aimed for preventing or punishing the consumption of recreational drug use (Duff, 2004; Wodak & Moore, 2002).

The 2003 RAVE (Reducing Americans' Vulnerability to Ecstasy) Act in the US is believed to be a poorly conceived law that has not only failed in the prevention of drug-related harm at

raves but has unintentionally triggered its increase. By discouraging Electronic Dance Music business organisers from offering health services to sick or dehydrated partygoers, for fear of indicating to authorities that they know about the drug use at their events, the RAVE Act, an artefact of the last century's 'war on drugs', does more harm than good. The reason for this is that it discourages promoters and production companies from taking the drug-related precautions essential to safeguarding their visitors (Anderson, 2014).

In Australia, the drug testing debate is still going on. There were five deaths of young people in Australian music festivals in one year (2018-19). Even after the drug testing trial at festivals was a success there, the NSW Government opposed taking the harm reduction step, which resulted in more and more hospitalisations in the festivals in the summer of 2019-20. This indicates that young people continue to take risks at festivals (Morrison, 2019).

Lastly, the most potent argument is that a harm reduction approach is more efficient than taking the old hard-line approach against drugs. Instead of criminalising drug takers, drug dealers will be prosecuted.

“Despite decades of a hardline approach, including harsh penalties, Governments worldwide have failed to stop recreational drugs being taken at festivals.” (Chlöe Swarbrick, Green Party MP as cited in 14/10/2018 as cited in Swarbrick, 2018)

After his 2017 comment opposing drug testing, Dr David Clark, Labour MP, changed his perception regarding festival drug testing.

“We know recreational drug use is common at music festivals, despite it being illegal. ... There's no way to make illegal drug use completely safe – all drugs come with risk. But we can and must reduce harm wherever possible.” Dr David Clark, during his term as a Health Minister, 18/12/19, as cited in Te, 2019)

“There was quite a strong push from rangatahi, from our youth delegates, at our annual general conference and some of the older, you could say Neanderthal thinkers like my good self, said, ‘Okay, maybe the hard line I've taken against drugs needs to be moderated.’ (Shane Jones, NZ First MP, 19/12/2019 as cited in 1 NEWS | TVNZ, 2019)

“The war on drugs hasn't worked in the past 20 years, so it's time to change to a more compassionate and restorative approach.” (Stuart Nash, Police Minister, 1/2/19 as cited in Flahive, 2019)

“If someone is dealing they will be taken through the justice system. But if it was someone who has one or two pills, you don't want them to get a criminal record for a bad decision.” (Stuart Nash, Police Minister, 5/1/19 as cited in Zaczek, 2019)

Although some arguments state that drug checking is not a health-based approach because pill testing tests only drugs and has nothing to do with drug takers, and it does not guarantee whether it causes harm to the individual.

“Contrary to some arguments, this is not a ‘health-based approach’, as the people who are taking the drug are not the ones being treated. It is the drug itself that is being tested for purity and additives, which does nothing to deter the users from taking it. ... Pill testing also does not – and cannot – guarantee that the drug being taken will not cause any physical or mental harm or death to the individual consumer. It also cannot account for the individual’s physiological response to each drug.” (Bob McCoskrie, Family First NZ Director, 17/02/2020, as cited in Press Release: Family First New Zealand, 2020)

“What happens to that drug? They can choose to on-sell it or take it. We have debated this in caucus because we believe [the current policy is] a practical, pragmatic approach.” (Clayton Mitchell, NZ First MP, 20/10/19, as cited in O’Brien, 2019)

4.3.2 The terms of the socio-scientific and community-based debate in New Zealand

The key claims and counterclaims discussed below were made by various doctors, scientists, professors, members of the drug checking organisation KnowYourStuffNZ, members of NZ Drug Foundation, journalists, and festival organisers, in addition to a few festival attendees and Reddit users.

1. Prohibition is not working; hence, harm reduction is a step in the right direction vs. Strict drug prohibitive approach

The harm reduction approach has an impact on drug consumption behaviour where, in comparison to extensive anti-drug campaigns (depending upon their strength), drug testing onsite can change behaviour in the period of consumption (Gamma et al., 2005; Murphy et al., 2006).

In the 1980s, New Zealand’s decision to implement the heroin needle exchange programme as a harm reduction approach was proved to be a success. The objective was to lessen the harm from blood-borne infections when dirty needles were shared. This agenda is similar to the prospective implementation of drug testing as a harm reduction scheme with positive effects (*New Zealand Needle Exchange Programme Christchurch*, n.d.).

According to Erickson et al.'s (1996) study, minor trauma and drug consumption were widespread in audiences attending first aid stations at concert events. The hospitalisations in Christchurch (mentioned in Appendix A) may have been prevented if those individuals had had access to drug testing.

Experts say that the Government should establish an early warning system for drugs since the prohibition approach is not working and the demand for and supply of drugs continue to increase (Stephenson, 2019):

“The reality is that drug-taking is happening, at festivals and elsewhere, every day and with an alarming rate of ‘new’ chemical compounds or mixes available today, neither prohibition nor the head in the sand approach seems to be working. ... As a health professional having conversations about harm every day, I support any measure that reduces risk and enables young people to make fully informed decisions.” (Dr. Cathy Stephenson, 08/01/19, as cited in Stephenson, 2019)

Another claim is that the Christchurch hospitalisations (see Appendix A) could have been avoided if the festival had the drug checking service (“Festival drug testing finds more new psychoactive substances than ever,” 2018):

“These results strengthen the case for essential drug checking services to be provided at more festivals, events and clubs, and highlight the urgent need for the government to establish its Early Warning System for drugs and to incorporate drug checking services into that system. ... We need to get real and understand that efforts to control supply or reduce demand don’t always work, and some people will still choose to use drugs.” (Ross Bell, NZ Drug Foundation Executive Director, 26/07/2018, as cited in (“Festival drug testing finds more new psychoactive substances than ever,” 2018)

The festival director of Splore Music Festival strongly believes that taking a pragmatic approach to the drug issue is better than taking a hard-line approach. Someone dying of an overdose in the festival is his biggest fear. He also claims that he is now open about pill testing because he believes attitudes are changing.

“A promoter or festival owners worst nightmare is to have someone medi-vacced out or dying of an overdose – whether its alcohol or drugs. ... We felt emboldened by that attitude that they’re taking a pragmatic approach to the issue rather than a legal heavy handed approach.” (John Minty, Festival Director, 22/02/2020 as cited in "Splore Music Festival Open about Drug Testing Due to Changing Attitudes", 2020)

Similarly, a Reddit user believed that taking safety measures is better than the hard-line approach since festival-goers are going to take pills and other drugs irrespective of the law.

“Dealing with the safety around drug use is far more important than cracking down on anyone they catch holding them. Good move.” (A Reddit user as cited in R/Drugs - Comment by u/DoctorLovejuice on “New Zealand Unveils Plans to Have Pill Testing at ALL Music Festivals - as Australia Refuses to Discuss the Idea despite Five Overdose Deaths since September”, 2019)

Another Reddit user supported the fact that a harm reduction approach is being focused on instead of prohibition.

“...this news makes me so happy that we are finally focusing on harm reduction rather than prohibition.” (A Reddit user as cited in R/Drugs - Comment by u/Know_1_special on “New Zealand Unveils Plans to Have Pill Testing at ALL Music Festivals - as Australia Refuses to Discuss the Idea despite Five Overdose Deaths since September”, 2019)

A doctor argued that people are always going to be taking drugs, and the decriminalisation of drug testing could both reduce hospital transfers and provide more factual information for police about what risky drugs were being sold on the streets.

“You have to quite frankly be an idiot if you think that people aren’t going to take drugs at these festivals. ... Instead of prohibition at least acknowledge it’s happening and let’s make it safer.” (Dr Paul Quigley, Health Specialist, 1/5/16 as cited in Edwards, 2016)

The counterclaim, according to a New Zealand-based journalist, is that the Government has a soft and flawed approach to drugs.

“Here is the problem for your Government image-wise in that you are pro drugs, you’re loose on drugs, you’re soft on drugs, you want to vote on drugs. ... You want to drug test at festivals and you want us to legalise cannabis. ... You’re not cracking down on it hard enough.” (Mike Hosking, Journalist, 08/10/19, as cited in "Jacinda Ardern Chides Mike Hosking on Soft on Drugs Claim", 2019)

2. Drug testing does not encourage people to take drugs vs. Drug testing normalises drug use

Shildrick (2002) stated that the normalisation theory differentiates between recreational drug use and problematic drug use, and the majority of the ‘ordinary’ youths were only recreational drug users while a minimal number of youths were addicted to hard drugs such as heroin. Taking recreational drugs has become a ‘normal’ part of the festival experience and has developed to be a first-world hegemony (Briggs & Turner, 2012). Modern-day societies have experienced a broad scope of ‘social transformation’ and the current drug use generates another

instance of how post-modern trends are influencing young people's lives, resulting in a situation where youths from all social and educational backgrounds become drug users (Parker et al., 1999).

From a broader perspective, normalisation describes not only the growing tendency of young people to use illegal drugs but also the fact that youth are more 'drug wise'. Therefore, drugs cannot be considered to form a part of an unknown, unusual and unconventional world (Shildrick, 2002). As seen in Figure 2, there is a sharp increase in the amount of MDMA/ecstasy coming into New Zealand; this is also the primary party drug consumed at New Zealand's music festivals. This suggests that young people's drug consumption is increasing in New Zealand.

When one of the student representatives suggested that Otago University should be introducing drug checking, the Student Association executive's first reaction was an obvious and a strict 'no'. After some informal research of her own, the association's chief executive realised that it was not just a good thing but a requirement.

"Just like having condoms freely available (something we already do) doesn't make more people have sex, drug checking wasn't going to make more people take drugs, they were already doing that." (Debbie Downs, OUSA chief executive, July 2019, as cited in Downs, 2019)

From the literature, it is noted that drug users at festivals describe having an opportunity to shift intoxicated experiences into their everyday life, transferring realisations made by their 'drug self' to their 'everyday self' (Hunt et al., 2010). Therefore, some people think that by legalising drug testing at festivals, it normalises drug-taking and can make drug users addicts in the future.

"You give kids the green light from the state that drugs are accepted and supported and they'll go nuts with them. And enough of them have already gone nuts. ... The woke argument is 'they're going to take them anyway, so they may as well know what they're taking'. That is the mentality of complete surrender." (Mike Hosking, Journalist, 7/10/19, as cited in Hosking, 2019)

"But what I'm saying is you're creating an environment in this country where drugtaking is normalised." (Mike Hosking, Journalist, 7/10/19, as cited in Hosking, 2019)

The director of one of the country's biggest music festivals, the Rhythm and Vines festival, which takes place in Gisborne, does not support drug testing at his event and claims that preventive measures are better than a harm reduction approach to illegal substance use. He also

thinks that festival drug testing is normalising drug-taking and believes in continuing maintaining the conventional drug-free stance at festivals. He also claims that the festival maintains a drug-free stance and has its rules; individuals need to stick to them and if they do not follow them, it will be at their own risk (Towle, 2017b).

“Unfortunately, drug use is going to happen and it can be prevalent and as organisers, it’s our role to do our utmost to prevent that. ... But I think testing is condoning drug use in some respects. We’re not the fun police and while we absolutely don’t condone drugs ... people don’t want to feel like they’re being scrutinised or tested. ... We work really closely with the authorities to maintain our drug-free stance. There are bag searches and we have emergency services on hand if there’s any trouble.” (Hamish Pinkham, Rhythm and Vines founder and director, 4/7/17, as cited in Towle, 2017)

3. Drug testing is a safety net vs. There is no safe drug use

Researchers have reported that national prohibitionary classifications and the obstinate dismissal of harm reduction strategies are unreasonably compromising public health and increasing risks for the uninformed young people (John, 2004). Reynolds (1999) suggested that the living dream of taking drugs may have turned nightmare with partying transforming from a ‘paradise regained’ (the positive experience of a festival attendee) to a ‘psychic malaise’ (the harmful effect of drugs). The near-death experiences of attendees are described below; for instance, an individual had a terrible experience when he had a deadly substance called bath salts instead of MDMA. Another attendee urged the festival organisers to introduce drug testing after having a bad experience with drugs; they described it as a ‘bad dream’ that did not end for a couple of days, the feeling of ‘extreme anxiety’, and the lack of sleep was also mentioned. This forced him to write to the Electric Avenue organisers, asking them to consider introducing drug testing.

“I would describe it as a feeling of extreme anxiety and a lot of nervousness and suspicion. It felt like a bad dream that didn’t end for a couple of days. My heart was racing and I wasn’t able to sleep for two nights straight.” (Festival attendee, 22/02/2019 as cited in Cook, 2019)

“Just recovered from a terrible experience at northern bass this NYE. Pill I took sold as MDMA turned out to be bath salts.” (A Reddit user as cited in R/Drugs - Comment by u/Know_1_special on “New Zealand Unveils Plans to Have Pill Testing at ALL Music Festivals - as Australia Refuses to Discuss the Idea despite Five Overdose Deaths since September”, 2019)

A Reddit user who works at these events in New Zealand thinks drug testing plays a beneficial role for the safety for all the people.

“So far the people who I have spoken to that have direct contact with partygoers at these events is pro-testing. I find it quite ironic that the ones against it don’t really understand how beneficial of a role it plays for the safety of everyone attending.” (A reddit user as cited in R/Newzealand - Dangerous Drugs, Made of Pesticides and Paints, Seized at Rhythm and Vines, 2019)

Another Reddit user responded saying drug-taking will never stop, thus supporting keeping people safe at festivals.

“We’ll never stop it so we take a safe approach to make sure they’re ok. Especially after the fiasco with the pink Porsche’s last year. Managing the queues, 80% of the people buying drinks were on MDMA. I fully support testing on site to make things safe.” (A reddit user as cited in R/Newzealand - Dangerous Drugs, Made of Pesticides and Paints, Seized at Rhythm and Vines, 2019)

The festival attendees who were interviewed by *I News* said that people would continue to take drugs, so they should be able to do it in a safe environment (Bremner, 2020):

“People are going to be doing drugs anyway.” (Festival attendee 1, Splore, 22/2/20 as cited in Bremner, 2020)

“If people are going to take drugs, they need to be able to do it in a safe environment.” (Festival attendee 2, Splore, 22/2/2020 as cited in Bremner, 2020)

Opposing claims came from a festival attendee who generally takes drugs at festivals and said that there is always a risk involved while taking drugs but she is not sure how effective drug testing would work. She also claims that she would not want authorities to act as a ‘dampener’, meaning a ‘killjoy’ (Towle, 2017):

“But I’m really not sure how it (drug testing) would effectively work as there are thousands of people at festivals. I also wouldn’t want a group or the authorities actively going after people and putting a dampener on things. ... I guess you just risk it and hope you’re not going to get shafted. But with drugs, no matter where you get them, there’s always a risk.” (Festival attendee, 3/7/17 as cited in Towle, 2017)

4. There is enough evidence to proceed with festival drug testing vs. It has its own limitations and gives a false sense of hope vs It is not a solution nor a problem

According to the research published by Professor Fiona Measham of Durham University, and based on the work of The Loop, a UK drug harm reduction organisation, there was a massive

drop in drug-associated hospitalisations at festivals where drug testing took place (Measham, 2019b). According to KnowYourStuffNZ, the UK study matches their experience in that festival-goers are very keen not to consume drugs when those drugs are not what they think they are. The evidence is currently strong, with two decades of work in Europe, the UK academic research matching five years of findings from New Zealand, and a global review of 29 current drug testing organisations by Australia's National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (Barratt et al., 2017).

“We’ve got very good evidence over actually we’ve been doing this for five years on you know, quietly ... we’ve got great evidence to show that we are changing how people behave with respect to drugs, that we are giving them good advice on how to stay safe and they are following that advice and being more respectful around drugs.” (Jez Watson, Deputy Manager of KnowYourStuff, 7/10/19 as cited in "Pill Testing

“green Lights” Deadly Ecstasy Says Aussie Campaigner as Kiwi Defends Tests", 2019)

However, a doctor claims that while drug testing can be a useful balanced approach to decreasing risks linked with drug consumption like overdose or use of harmful drugs at music festivals, it is not perfect and comes with its limitations including false senses of safety. He also stated that service access and utilisation also depend on who manages the services; for instance, police-operated services can be seen as a hindrance. He stated the following limitations:

“Test results may not be fully accurate and/or cover only select spectrae of possible drug components or contaminants (depending on technology used); many potential users will not utilise these services (e.g. too onerous or time-consuming), especially in circumstances of ‘partying’ and ongoing drug use; and/or they will consume drugs despite indications of possible risks. ... Drug testing services can be a useful complementary measure to reduce risks associated with drug use related harms such as overdose or use of contaminated/excessively harmful drugs - including at music festival or other larger social fun gatherings. ... These interventions, however, in no way, are a ‘perfect’ or solely sufficient intervention for these purposes, and come with a variety of limitations, including possible false senses of safety.” (Dr Benedikt Fischer, Professor in UoA, 25/1/19, as cited in Science Media Centre, 2019)

It is not a solution nor a problem. The service does not suggest that recreational drug use is entirely safe. Before the testing, all customers are told that

“Drug checking does not provide a guarantee of safety. All drug use is risky and the only way to be completely safe is to not use drugs. Individuals respond differently to drugs, and drug checking does not provide information about how I personally will respond. ... For those who do choose to take them, our recommendation is to only take a third of a pill at most, and wait at least an hour before considering taking any more.”

(Wendy Allison, Managing Director, KnowYourStuff NZ, 22/02/2020 as cited in "High-Dose MDMA", 2020)

All the themes below support festival drug testing.

5. Drug testing saves lives

Festival organisers say that they want to have the full backing of the police, and local Government and national Government before they take these preventive measures

“There’s a lot of bad chemicals in different drugs that are out there and people are taking them so if there’s a potential to save lives through that then yeah it’s a good move.” (Toby Burrows, Bay Dreams festival director, 5/10/19 as cited in "Political Parties Divided over Testing Drugs at NZ Music Festivals and Events", 2019)

Five student associations supported the prospect of drug testing at imminent orientation weeks, but only one of them, the Otago University Students Association, was able to do so (Walton, 2020).

“I should do this because it is needed, I can probably get away with providing drug checking, and make others see that drug checking is an important harm prevention service that can save lives.” (Debbie Downs, OUSA chief executive, July 2019, as cited in Downs, 2019).

6. It provides choice for drug consumption through advising and educating the young people

Those purchasing drugs in the illicit drug market, including individuals who are very well-informed of the dangers and are knowledgeable about strategies to reduce them, will be dealing with some challenges that determine their ability to implement learned behaviours. Because of their unfettered position in the market, illicit psychoactive drugs are likely to have unpredictable levels of adulteration and may be recurrently mixed with other harmful substances (Brunt, 2017; Coomber, 1997; Giné et al., 2014; Martins et al., 2015). The lack of awareness regarding the content of drugs is linked with numerous cases of severe intoxication and deaths (Ventura et al., 2013).

Fishbein and Ajzen’s (2011) studies on the behaviour of consuming drugs depend on the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behaviour, i.e., they predicted the drug testing service has the capability to change a drug user’s decision to take drugs (Saleemi, 2017).

Therefore, a drug checking service would help young people to make informed decisions and this supports the claims which says it provides ‘choice’ and ‘protection’ or a ‘safety net’, and provides ‘education’, especially for the first-time users. According to a study conducted by Gamma et al. (2005), individuals who take MDMA, for instance, indicated that they were characteristically cognisant that their drug consumption involves risks and actively search for harm reduction information.

According to a survey conducted by KnowYourStuffNZ, in the summer of 2018-2019, 87% of clients surveyed by them said their behaviour had changed as a result of using the drug testing service. Sixty-two per cent of clients whose drugs were not what they thought said they would not take them and most of them dropped their drugs in the destruction jar provided by the service. KnowYourStuff does more than test individuals’ drugs and sends them on their way. They do not give any substances back after they test the drugs; in fact, they are destroyed in the process. The first point they tell their clients is that the consumption of any drugs is unsafe. The next point is what the certain dangers are, and what clients can do to lessen them; they are also informed about dosages, symptoms, what could go wrong and what not to mix (KnowYourStuff NZ, 2020a).

“When you give people accurate information about drugs, they make better choices. ... We’ve never had Somebody come to us and go ‘Yay! N-Ethylpentylone!’ They always buy it thinking it’s MDMA and then when they get it tested they decide not to take it. It is just crap that nobody wants.” (Wendy Allison, KnowYourStuff NZ Managing Director, 10/01/19, as cited in Borrowdale, 2019)

From Appendix A, it can be seen that the detection of synthetic cathinones in pills has been highly concerning. N-ethylpentylone has been linked with many deaths overseas internationally and has put dozens of New Zealanders in hospital, and is often mis-sold as MDMA. Furthermore, the high dose MDMA pills have also been detected in the last couple of years.

“This is why we would advocate that drug-checking is a really important service, because if people find out it’s synthetic cathinone and not MDMA, they might decide to discard it.” (Anna Tonks, NZ Drug Foundation senior health promotion adviser, 29/6/2020 as cited in Morton, 2020)

“As a parent, I’m going to keep on having these discussions and hope that when the time comes, my kids will have all the information they need to make the right choice for them.” (Dr. Cathy Stephenson, Health Specialist, 08/01/19, as cited in Stephenson, 2019)

7. Drug testing provides education to young people

The lack of awareness regarding the content of drugs is linked with numerous cases of severe intoxication and death globally (Valente et al., 2019; Ventura et al., 2013b). The drug testing approach impacts drug consumption behaviour where, in comparison to extensive anti-drug campaigns (depending on their strength), drug testing on-site can change behaviour in the period of consumption, and this is chiefly influenced by peers and social networks (*Young Australians*, n.d.), including health staff (Gamma et al., 2005; Murphy et al., 2006). The research on the efficacy of drug testing is varied, but it is evident that drug testing has helped to reduce the frequency of drug overdose and deaths, it also improved healthcare services, and increased knowledge of harm reduction values (Brunt & Niesink, 2011b; Chinet et al., 2007; Kriener, 2001b).

Many experts from the drug testing services and educational backgrounds have argued that drug testing provides education and factual information to the drug takers.

“We just needed to educate them and do what we can to keep them safe.” (Debbie Downs, OUSA chief executive, July 2019, as cited in Downs, 2019)

“For a lot of people, drug checking is the first time they have had access to comprehensive and factual information.” (Wendy Allison, KnowYourStuff NZ MD, 26/07/18, as cited in "Festival drug testing finds more new psychoactive substances than ever". Newshub. 2018)

Wendy Allison also spoke about the risk-taking behaviour of young people.

“But the risk-taking behaviour among the students and young generation kiwis to consume drugs is the main issue. Drugs in New Zealand have usually been of low and unpredictable quality. Without any means of discovering what is in them, people have been trained to take things without knowing what they are. ... There’s a resigned attitude that in order to have a good time, you’ve got to go through this risk of having a not-so-good time – and as long as you don’t die, that’s fine.” (Wendy Allison, KnowYourStuff NZ MD, 31/12/19, as cited in Franks, 2019)

Therefore, the claims stated in favour of and against drug testing are familiar in the drug policy realm. These claims and counterclaims have been ineffective in changing views of lawmakers. Similar to Australia, the issues arising in New Zealand have also assisted in extending the discussion beyond the philosophies of individual criminality and morality to comprehend social, economic and welfare debates, which challenges conservative thinking about perceptions such as harm, risk and social concerns by reflecting social frameworks of drug consumption to recognise the connection that individuals and surroundings have on

drug-associated problems (Rhodes, 2002). It is essential to emphasise that drug consumption is harmful and cannot be perceived as free of harm, nor is drug testing a ‘silver bullet’ (Butterfield et al., 2016b; Winstock et al., 2001).

4.4 Goals of advocates and opponents of festival drug testing

Even with dissimilar arguments as summarised in the last two subsections, the advocates and opponents of festival drug testing share a similar goal, i.e., they want the young people to be safe. Both the parties equally want to save lives, protect people and reduce harm. For instance:

Advocate: “Let’s not bury our head in the sand, we need to keep them safe.” (Stuart Nash, Police Minister, 15/10/19, as cited in "1 NEWS Colmar Brunton Poll", 2019)

Opponent: “It’s not safe, don’t do it. If you want to live, then stick to things that are safe.” (Winston Peters, NZ First leader, 1/10/19, as cited in Bond, 2019)

Putting away the argument that the objective of ‘saving lives’ or ‘keeping people safe’ may have been a rhetorical device for several supporters and opponents, the existence of a common goal may indicate a way to see the debate differently. At the very least, identification of this common goal may modify the starting point for dialogue. For instance, similar to the ideas put forward by Ritter (2020), when there is a consensus on a common goal, the question then turns out to be ‘What is the best way of keeping people safe?’ This alters the debate in the direction of empirical questions. The types of empirical questions that may support in answering ‘What is the best way of keeping people safe?’ may include evidence about efficiency of drug testing at festivals in decreasing risky drug-taking, and how that compares with evidence about other means of lessening drug-taking and/or drug-associated harm. Aside from the fact that the evidence base is lacking for these comprehensive overview questions, it does not get to the point of finding the approach which brings about a goal of ‘keeping people safe’. For advocates of drug testing, keeping people safe is attained by taking drugs more safely; for opponents, keeping people safe is attained through the absence of drug use. At this point, it becomes evident that even with a common goal, the perception of how that can be accomplished (through safer drug consumption; or through no drug consumption) is not merely an empirical question. It exhibits a value position about drug-taking. Setting out those value positions may clarify the debate (Ritter, 2020).

4.5 Value positions

The data analysis in the present findings chapter discovered several value positions among the actors across the political, legal, socio-scientific and community-based debate. Firstly, what the actors think about drugs and, secondly, what actors think about how young people would identify with a drug testing service.

1. Values and beliefs on drugs

In relation to drug-taking, the opponents of drug testing at festivals perceived drugs as fundamentally wrong, saying, for example, “They shouldn’t be in possession of those drugs” (Mark Mitchell, National Party MP, 14/10/18 as cited in Cheng, 2018). This deontological position then outlines how to keep people safe, and the empirical evidence for that may be put forward. Meanwhile, in the case of those supporting drug testing, the value position is one where drug consumption at festivals is a reality, young people can be kept safe by executing those approaches which have been proven to reduce harm. This is a consequentialist argument: the best practice is one which decreases harm and increases advantages. It depends on empirical evidence, as shown in, for instance, “We want to ensure that if the evidence shows that this is keeping people safe then they can do whatever they want to do, completely legally” (Stuart Nash, Police Minister, 18/12/19 as cited in "Pill Testing at Festivals to Go Ahead over Summer Period," 2019).

2. Values and beliefs about how young people would identify with drug testing service

Similarly, there were differences in beliefs and values about how young people would identify with drug testing services. As per the findings, some of the opponents claimed that legalising drug testing would send young people a wrong message, give them ‘green light’, as stated in, for instance, “You give kids the green light from the state that drugs are accepted and supported and they’ll go nuts with them. And enough of them have already gone nuts. ... The woke argument is ‘they’re going to take them anyway, so they may as well know what they’re taking’. That is the mentality of complete surrender” (Mike Hosking, Journalist, 7/10/19, as cited in Hosking, 2019). Another similar strong claim was that it would liberate young people to make bad decisions: “What these pill-testing stations do is totally absolves all of those young people

from taking personal responsibility for their decisions” (Darroch Ball, NZ First MP, 18/07/19, as cited in Ball, 2019).

The advocates, however, believe that drug testing would provide the opportunity to help young people by allowing them to make a better decision, educating them, providing a safety net and, most importantly, saving their lives. Some examples are as follows:

“They’re smart, but they’re young you know what I mean. We do things don’t we.” (Duncan Garner, 07/10/19 as cited in Ensor, 2019)

“The comment that you (said) right ago, saying all young people are hopeless ... and sometimes I think, we need to give a bit more credit to younger people in New Zealand.” (David Seymour, ACT Leader, 07/10/19 cited in Ensor, 2019)

“I’ve seen my friends destroy their lives over it, I actually want to help them and think pill testing is a good thing.” (Robert Griffith, NZ First youth wing member, 20/10/19 as cited in O’Brien, 2019)

“Here you are judging young people for taking MDMA, but we are generation who watched our parents and our parents and our grandparents drink themselves into an early grave and yet we haven’t taken the steps we needed to take to reduce alcohol abuse in our society 30 years ago.” (Rob Gore, NZ First Youth wing member, 20/10/19 as cited in O’Brien, 2019)

“A position of that of a mother of an 18-year-old girl, her next year will be at university and my fear that even though I equip her very well to make best choices for her, there will be pressures on her to partake in drugs and drink and that they will be her choices, but I would like the assurity that if she did make that ill-informed choice there is another safety net for her and that is pill testing.” (Jenny Marcroft, NZ First MP, 20/10/19, as cited in "NZ First to Reconsider Stance on Pill Testing at Festivals," 2019)

“[I] hope that when the time comes, my kids will have all the information they need to make the right choice for them.” (Dr Cathy Stephenson, Health Specialist, 08/01/19, as cited in Stephenson, 2019)

4.6 Drug testing is a ‘Matter of concern’

To further understand how people’s values and beliefs affect policy change, Stengers’ (2018) science and technology theory was used. This was intended to answer the third research question.

Looking into the ideas of theorists who view science and evidence as represented in social, political, and moral issues may offer a different context to putting evidence together with values

within policy debates (Ritter, 2020). Stengers (2018) has insisted that as far as we perceive science in terms of ‘proving things’, and implying objective judgement and truth, we are trapped in a realm where debates are about ‘matters of fact’. This stands in contradiction, according to Stengers, with the alternate perspective of ‘matters of concern’. ‘Matters of concern’ accept that facts are strongly associated with ethical, social and political views (Stengers, 2018). In this study, there is a change in depicting the drug-testing policy debate as one of ‘matters of fact’ to depicting it as a debate about ‘matters of concern’, the latter identifying the strong personal connection to values and beliefs. From the practice signified by Stengers, abiding within a debate regarding evidence or facts casts a shadow over how all knowledge (and facts) are singularly positioned within an ethical, social and political group. The transfer to ‘matters of concern’ creates an ‘ethos of care’ (Ritter, 2020).

4.6.1 Applying Stenger’s theory in the debate

How can one think about ‘ethos of care’ concerning the drug-testing debate? Stengers (2018) claimed that scientists need “active, concrete awareness of the extraordinary and demanding character of their knowledge” (Stengers, 2018, p. 150). With regards to drug testing, this would affect all the actors in the policy debate, who should (according to Stengers) understand the interchange of their values with their knowledge, the multiplicity of knowledge, and the certain constraints on every type of knowledge. On this subject, Stengers underlined a ‘civilised science’ (Stengers, 2018, p. 147), making a ‘civilised mode’ for scientists that establishes all knowledge and helps to find solutions together. It depends on a stance which ‘welcome[s] new objections’ (Stengers, 2018, p. 147) and being “indebted to the existence of others who ask different questions” (Stengers, 2018, p. 45). This is very different from how we generally carry out drug policy debates, in which theories from opposing groups are rejected as being ‘illadvised’, ‘inaccurate’ or merely ‘stupid’(Ritter, 2020).

Similar policy debates, when knowledge is wholly understood for its limits and is handled with humility and openness, imply that values come to the forefront. “[V]alues that can emerge only because the participants have learned how to allow the issue at the heart of their meeting the power to matter, the power to connect everyone present” (Stengers, 2018, p. 123). This process of ‘thinking together’, when there is the presence of the ‘meaning of what matters’ (Stengers, 2018, p. 150) uniting participants in the drug testing debate, could instil ‘hesitation’ (Stengers, 2018, p. 151), and decelerate thinking. Significantly, the oppositions and disagreements, i.e.,

the “encounter with dissenting voices” (Stengers, 2018, p. 150) gives the reason for this slowing down. As Stengers argued,

slowing down the sciences means civilising scientists, civilisation being equated here with the ability of members of a particular collective to present themselves in a noninsulting way to members of other collectives, that is, in a way that enables a process of relation-making. (Stengers, 2018, pp. 100–101)

Hence, this generates a drug testing debate focused on making connections between advocates and opponents. The mutual matters of concern are dangerous drug-using methods, arguably vulnerable youth, and the objective of keeping people safe.

1. Hesitation and/or humility

There were indications of a similar shift toward a ‘civilised mode’ in this study that may give some chance of determining how the terms of the debate may be capable of shifting from the familiar speeches. Hesitation and/or humility is justified in the examples below, from a young festival attendee and from an MP.

“I guess it makes sense and could work, especially as I’m not against drugs and people should be able to make their own decisions. ... But I’m really not sure how it (drug testing) would effectively work as there are thousands of people at festivals.” A festival attendee, 3/7/17, as cited in Towle, 2017b)

“I accept that the views that a number of us reflected need to be refined so when we go to the pop concerts, etcetera, we don’t feed and normalise drugs but keep people alive. So we’ve got to get the right balance.” (Shane Jones, NZ First MP, 19/12/2019 as cited in "NZ First’s Youth Delegates Convince Party to Soften “hard Line” on Pill Testing at Festivals", 2019)

At this point, there is an acknowledgement that festival drug testing is not an open and shut issue, and there are multiple claims in favour of and against festival drug testing. These quotes reflect hesitation. Determining the grey areas, and the obligations to argue ‘on balance’, is not something that politicians or their supporters are used to doing. However, some cognisance of the hesitations and grey areas may be necessary to move the debate forwards.

2. Moral stance

In the example below, a drug testing expert argues that evidence does not persuade individuals who take a moral stance (Ashton, 2019).

“Evidence often doesn’t sway people who are taking a moral stance, and the moral stance here is that drug use is wrong and people who do wrong things should be punished. From our perspective, we don’t think death is an appropriate punishment for some kid experimenting at a party.” (Wendy Allison, MD of KnowYourStuff, 2019, as cited in Ashton, 2019)

In the above quote, a drug testing expert contends that leaders have a fundamental trust issue about addressing drugs openly, and their consequences and their problems endure as an obstacle when beliefs result from a ‘moral stance’ or when a ‘zero tolerance’ policy has been established. In this example, the significance of established, specific knowledge (there is evidence that drug checking does not increase drug use) needs to be believed in light of a plurality of knowledge.

For example, the below statement shows the opponents’ stance on the consumption of drugs

“We’re acting at the wrong end here. We’re being very reactionary if we think it’s okay to start saving lives or to start protecting people after the drug has been taken or after it’s been purchased. ... We must reject the message from promoters of the testing stations that they will do it anyway, let’s make it as safe as possible. ... Would we create a separate ‘safe’ lane on the motorway for drunk drivers because ‘we know people will drink and drive anyway’?” (Darroch Ball, NZ First MP, 05/10/19, as cited in “Political Parties Divided over Testing Drugs at NZ Music Festivals and Events,” 2019)

“Unfortunately, drug use is going to happen and it can be prevalent and as organisers, it’s our role to do our utmost to prevent that. ... But I think testing is condoning drug use in some respects. We’re not the fun police and while we absolutely don’t condone drugs.” (Hamish Pinkham, founder and director of Gisborne festival Rhythm and Vines)

3. Different harm reduction approach to recreational drug use

In the example below, there is a shift from the drug testing approach and a different view on the harm reduction approach; this example opens up a different perspective on reducing harm at festivals and addresses the ‘matters of concern’ concept of Stengers’ theory:

“I wouldn’t say legalise anything over a certain addiction threshold but even still you can buy OxyContin from the pharmacy if you have a script. I would keep things responsible and safe and make money off of substances that people are going to do

anyway. Turning the money active in the dark economy to the real economy creating massive economic stimulus.” Saves lives in end user, saves lives in transport and definitely saves lives in production. Destabilise the control organised crime has over the drug trade. Get drug tourism like Amsterdam etc.” A Reddit user as cited in ("R/Australia - New Zealand Embraces Pill Testing as Australian Politicians Resist," 2019)

A Wellington doctor has a different view on the recreational drug-associated issue (see Appendix A). He believes that controlling a substance like MDMA, which has already been clinically tested in the 1970s for psychiatric purposes, could dissuade young people from using less-safe alternatives: “We could assess whether it’s safe, we could regulate it, we could earn income off it, we could restrict it ... But at least it could be controlled” (Dr Paul Quigley).

These are the three key terms of scripts that unbalance the major narratives and seem to refer to the kinds of arguments that Stengers is referring to as matters of concern, emphasising hesitancy, humility and the role of morals in determining one’s stance.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter of findings and discussion, all the three research questions were answered through content analysis. The significant events concerning drugs and drug testing at festivals in New Zealand from May 2014 to September 2020 were discussed in detail to understand the current drug-related scene in New Zealand. The hospitalisations caused by drugs at music festivals, the drug policy change, drug seizures, and the emergence of illicit drugs with deadly adulterants were presented in the form of a table and further explained using the previous literature. The first research gap was addressed by explaining the nature of the policy debate, which was further divided into, firstly, a political and legal debate, and, secondly, a socioscientific and community-based debate. Each debate was divided into several themes with different claims and counterclaims, so as to understand the arguments thoroughly. The second research gap was addressed by analysing the political and social debate from both the sides of the argument. The participants had one underlying goal, i.e., to “keep people safe.” However, the advocates and supporters had different perceptions of drugs and young people which could play a significant role in the policy change. Therefore, two value positions were formed and discussed, which made it evident that the speakers’ values and beliefs affect the implementation of festival drug testing, therefore addressing the third research gap. Furthermore, to understand the importance of their values and beliefs in detail, Stenger’s (2018) theory was applied to

reveal that the policy debate mainly focuses on ‘matters of fact’, but it should instead emphasise matters of concern’. Three important points that unbalance the major narratives and seem to refer to the kinds of arguments that Stengers is referring to as matters of concern are explained. This explanation emphasised humility, the role of one’s moral stance, and different perspectives on how to reduce the harm in determining one’s opinion.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The dilemma of drugs that are both illegal and illegally consumed is a highlight of modern-day social life, for which different approaches are considered necessary to decrease the harms for young drug takers and the wider community. Drug-related harms continue to be of concern at New Zealand music festivals. The existing body of knowledge worldwide shows that a drug testing service can minimise the harm arising from the inadvertent direct consumption of poisonous substances. In this study, one party supports the harm minimisation approach and the other party supports the zero-tolerance approach.

In the analysis of critical data and the broader literature, it has been seen that drug checking services have been implemented internationally as a method of harm reduction. This has the potential ability to minimise the harm arising from the direct unintended ingestion of toxic substances. It is clear that problematic party-drug consumption is focused among a small group of young music festival-goers, challenging the constraints of current New Zealand drug policy and practice. In the literature, it is made clear that problematic drug users are different from recreational drug users. The recreational drug users consume drugs occasionally, for instance, in this case, at music festivals. Young people swarm together during summer to indulge in hedonistic or risk behaviour due to the ‘escape factor’ from their daily mundane life that they feel when they visit these festivals. These pleasure-seekers intend to move into a state of excitement and some degree of self-destruction.

Visiting these festivals gives an experience of *communitas* and self-expression, and people are usually non-judgemental in these settings; therefore, taking drugs has become a ‘normal’ part of the culture. The literature also suggests that these settings, the music, lights and the likemindedness of other people present in the festivals, are some of the reasons why these individuals indulge in this type of behaviour. Furthermore, the element of fun, curiosity, the desire to ‘lose it’ and to improve the socialisation factor, which is a primary motivator to attend a festival, is also a reason for drug consumption practices. Many young individuals experiment with drugs at festivals, and some of them could be first-time users. Therefore, a drug testing service is believed to change their drug-taking behaviour by giving them the right advice and informing them about the quality and content of drugs. Drug checking organisations, such as DanceSafe (USA), Checkit! (Austria) and KnowYourStuff (NZ) have suggested that half of the clients decide to discard the drugs when they find out about the impurities present in their drugs.

Contrasting the US RAVE Act, which is believed to be a failed ‘war on drugs’, the harm minimisation approach has proved to be a preventive measure that can keep people safe.

At New Zealand’s music festivals, party drugs like cannabis, MDMA, LSD, ketamine, and methamphetamines are easily accessible and broadly utilised, with the latest reports showing increased importation (see Figure 2) and increased consumption of MDMA by young people. Similar to global studies, KnowYourStuffNZ also shows that drug testing monitors the quality and content of drugs used. They have also discovered the rapid increase of NPS (such as bath salts or synthetic cathinones, n-ethylpentylone, and opioid fentanyl) used as adulterants for MDMA/ecstasy pills which pose substantial dangers to users and those who share the social spaces in these music festivals. A drug testing service is not a new harm reduction approach; in fact, its aims are consistent with New Zealand’s National Drug Policy on harm reduction. New Zealand’s harm minimisation approach, like the needle exchange programme implemented in the 1980s, was a success story.

Despite strong rational rhetoric of harm reduction, in practice, government policy remains fundamentalist in its approach, with the opponents in the political and social debate on drug testing prioritising law and prosecution policies and a zero-tolerance approach to drugs. This is despite evidence of their limited efficacy (such as in the increase in drug-related hospitalisations from festivals), along with increasing advocacy from experts, academics and the wider society emphasising the necessity for an alternative approach such as drug testing. Moreover, reports from international drug checking organisations such as DanceSafe (US) and Checkit! (Austria) have indicated that even though drug use is illicit, there is prevalent advocacy that harm minimisation and public health-centred strategies are, at least, likewise useful.

The first research gap was addressed by studying the different claims and counterclaims posed by speakers from different political, socio-scientific and community backgrounds and by comparing them to the previous academic literature. By analysing the nature of the debate, the underlying goal of both the sides of the argument was found, i.e., their primary goal was ‘to keep the young people safe’, thus addressing the second research gap. Therefore, the study involved looking beyond the evidence-based debate and more into the deep-rooted philosophical and moral arguments of the supporters and the opponents by identifying the different value positions of the speakers which made this a value-led debate. It is evident from

the study they are more concerned with making moral arguments, thus addressing the third research gap.

The supporters of drug testing believe that there is enough evidence to legalise drug testing and that it also provides education to young recreational drug takers, which avoids hospitalisations and deaths in the future. They also believe that it enables drug testing organisations to target and control that particular small portion of festival drug takers. These are matters of ‘fact’. Their value and beliefs, which are their matters of concern, suggest that young people take drugs anyway (we cannot stop them), they are young and they do ‘silly’ or ‘stupid things’, they should be given a ‘second chance’, they make the wrong choice sometimes even while knowing the harmful effects of that choice. As said earlier, some people are first-time users and do not know about the harm these illegal drugs could cause. Some politicians, speaking from the parental point of view, think that, even after equipping young people well and educating them about these things, they still can make these ill-informed choices. Thus, by legalising the drug testing service, it can save their lives or keep them safe.

By contrast, the opponents’ matters of concern, or values and beliefs, are different. They are more inclined towards their moral stance on drugs and young people. They say that drug-taking is illegal; therefore, people should not be doing it in the first place. They also feel that drug testing normalises drug use and encourages young people to do more drugs. They think that the government is supporting this illegal drug consumption by being ‘soft’ on drugs which will cause a shift to recreational drug use to problematic drug use in the future; hence, it can be a slippery slope. They are thus supporting the zero-tolerance or the hard-on-drugs approach. According to KnowYourStuff, the majority of the drug users choose to discard the drugs after they receive the drug testing service. However, the opponents are more concerned about the rest of the individuals who choose not to discard them and consume or ingest them ‘anyway’ or, worse, resell them to other people at these events who are unaware of the effects, therefore, supporting ‘murders’. The matter of evidence, in this case, is that an expert like Dr. Benedikt Fischer, has said that drug testing reduces risks, but tests are not accurate and can also help the drug dealers to check their products, which is a bad sign. Therefore, similar to the advocates, their goal is also to keep people safe.

Therefore, regardless of the existence of a clear common goal of ‘keeping people safe’, this study indicates the likelihood of a change towards a values-led debate even with enough evidence to legalise festival drug testing. However, the argument about the best way to ‘keep

people safe' continues in the debate to be more about 'matters of fact', as discussed earlier, which is also unlikely to be beneficial. Moving towards a policy debate dedicated to 'matters of concern' more than 'matters of fact' is capable of establishing the plurality of knowledge that can influence the debate and get values, which are essential to different opinions, to the forefront. The existence of contrast between evidence and values is questioned by the theoretical orientation that claims that all evidence, facts and knowledge are ethically, socially and politically positioned. In this regard, evidence and values are connected, and debate that overlooks or dismisses one or the other is inherently exclusive.

As stated by Stengers (2018) and discussed in this study, some people have shown a sense of humility and hesitation and have also involved a moral stance in balancing their views on this policy change. They also give other options to reduce harm. The concept developed here is one of platonic, ecumenical dialogue, in a civilised mode. This can involve an understanding of situated pieces of knowledge, plurality, hesitation, humility and connect with values as fundamental to all knowledge. From this study, one can see it as possibly unlikely that a 'civilised' debate can solve the complex arguments in this drug testing debate. Many actors in the study may be reluctant to come to the table in such an unpretentious way, with values made clear. Furthermore, what would make it possible for such changes to be made?

Therefore, considering the findings that have been presented and discussed, this research highlights obtaining a better outcome in keeping young music festival visitors safe at New Zealand's summer festivals. Thus, this study is relevant because there is no prior research on this topic in New Zealand. The subject of this study should be further investigated by collecting primary data regarding the effectiveness of festival drug testing, explicitly focusing on the values and beliefs of young individuals who attend New Zealand's summer music festivals in order to get in-depth knowledge of their opinions, as they are central to music festivals and are the people who predominantly engage in drug-taking behaviour. In order to 'keep young people safe', which is the underlying goal of the speakers featured in this study, it would be pragmatic to include young people's opinions in any such contemporary policy debate, thus adding more value to the debate on drug policy change since they relate to the issue the most.

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APPENDIX A - Timeline of major incidents in the drug testing debate in New Zealand (May 2014- November 2020)

Date	Type of Event/Action	Event/Action
07/05/2014	Policy change (Psychoactive Substances Amendment Act)	Health Minister Tony Ryall has received Parliament's support for the Psychoactive Substances Amendment Act, passed today under urgency. The Act, expected to receive Royal consent on this day and become law on Thursday, May 8 2014. All psychoactive products will become unapproved from Thursday, and it will be an offence to possess, supply or sell them. Those in possession of products are advised to return them to the retailer they purchased them from (Ryall, 2014).
14/11/2014	Increase in ecstasy imports	Pure ecstasy is making a return after years of knockoffs, fakes and synthetic versions filling up the black market (Stewart, 2014).
17/04/2015	Arrests (drug seizure)	Three men and a woman, between 24 and 26 years of age, are charged with importing large amounts of a drug known as 'bath salts' from China and thought to have circulated around Wellington (Shadwell, 2015).
18/06/2015	Requisition on legalising MDMA	Wellington Hospital emergency doctor Paul Quigley says pure MDMA should be legalised and regulated (Stewart, 2015b).
18/06/2015	PM unconvinced	John Key disagreed with the emergency doctor's request to legitimise MDMA (Stewart, 2015a).
27/08/2015	2015-2020 National Drug Policy on Harm reduction	The 2015-2020 National Drug Policy has been launched at Parliament by Associate Health Minister Peter Dunne. The Policy determines the Government's approach to decreasing harm from alcohol and other drugs (AOD) for the next five years (Dunne, 2015).
29/09/2015	Media (emergence of contaminated ecstasy pills)	The adulteration of illegal ecstasy pills with deadly, psychoactive chemicals has prompted calls for the legalisation of drug testing services. The deadly chemical PMA labelled "Dr Death", has been discovered in Green Apple Ecstasy pills sold in Wellington in August and September (Wilkinson & Trask, 2015).
22/12/2015	Arrest (drug seizure)	Michael Mark Clapham, a 25-year-old, of Tawa had been caught during a joint police and customs raid after importing 7.3 kgs of Alpha-PVP, known as 'bath salts' or 'niff' (Stuff, 2015).

14/12/2015	NZ Drug Foundation's response to introducing drug testing stations in NZ	After two young people died at Australian Stereosonic music festival from drug overdoses, and many people were hospitalised. Mr Ross Bell, the executive director of NZ Drug Foundation, says maintained drug testing stations at music festivals are the best way to prevent deaths like these happening in New Zealand ("We've Dodged a Bullet", 2015).
24/02/2016	One death	A Kapiti man who died from an alleged overdose of the drug called bath salts is considered to be the fourth person from the area taken to hospital after misusing the hallucinatory drug (Maxwell & Livingston, 2016).
25/02/2016	Police warning	Police describe toxic drug bath salts a "rapidly accelerating threat" (Livingston, 2016).
26/02/2016	The political response to drug checking	Peter Dunne, the associate health minister responsible for drugs, said he supports to permit the drug kits, despite being politically controversial (Weekes, 2016).
01/04/2016	Undercover drug testing	A covert drug checking operation has let more than 60 festival-goers test their recreational drugs at a music festival, despite it being illegal for festival organisers to permit drugs on-site intentionally. 57% of the drugs were not what festival-goers expected (Edwards, 2016).
03/09/2016	Media (health experts' request)	As the festival season starts, experts (Festival organisers and advocates for drug testing) have asked the authorities to approve drug checking initiatives. Including David Caldicott, an emergency consultant at Canberra's Calvary Hospital, who commended New Zealand allows testing to prevent a drug market that is "out of control" (Weekes & Manch, 2016).
01/01/2017	Arrests	Eight people in their 20s were arrested at Gisborne's Rhythm and Vines festival after police investigated a dozen tents and found ecstasy, party pills, cannabis, hash, methamphetamine pipes, drug utensils and thousands in cash ("Eight Arrests at Gisborne Festival," 2017).
02/07/2017	Undercover drug checking at eight NZ music festivals	The undercover drug testing was conducted at eight New Zealand music festivals previous summer by KnowYourStuffNZ together with the support of Drug Foundation executive director Ross Bell. They discovered that a third of drug-taking festival attendees are taking illegal drugs (Bond, 2017).
02/07/2017	Media (festival organisers' response)	Drug testing results induce demands for law change. Festival organisers would like more drug testing but were worried about the risk of violation of the law ("Festival Drug Testing Results Prompt Calls for Law Change," 2017).
28/12/2017	Secret drug testing	Undercover drug testing is again being conducted at New Zealand's music festivals this summer ("Covert Drug Testing Will Again Be Carried out at Festivals This Summer", 2017).

04/01/2018	Alert (high dose drugs)	Potential high dose MDMA pills circulating. The pills look like the Rolex crown (bright yellow), rectangular Gucci logo (bright green) and Porsche logo (bright pink) and have been expected to possibly have a high dose of MDMA ("Possible High Dose MDMA Pills around – Be Careful out There NZ," 2018).
09/01/2018	Detection of fake drugs	Nearly one in five drugs examined at festivals this summer was not what the user thought it was. KnowYourStuffNZ director Wendy Allison said they had seen an exceptionally high number of cathinones, also known as bath salts, this summer (Collins, 2018).
09/03/2018	Arrests	Police have detained five people from Wellington and confiscated hundreds of thousands of dollars in assets after an investigation into the importation and sale of Class C drug called n-ethylpentylone, which began to appear in New Zealand previous year that is typically sold as MDMA (Stewart, 2018).
14/03/2018	Hospitalisations	Thirteen people, including a 15-year-old, were hospitalised after taking drugs at a music festival in Christchurch. This drug was an effective new drug called brown sugar, connected to deaths in other countries. They thought they had an MDMA-containing substance, but police said that the medical examiners found out the substance consumed by the patients was N-Ethylpentylone (Sherwood, 2018).
20/03/2018	Warning (dangerous ecstasy pills)	Homegrown, Wellington's biggest music festival, is being advised by experts to have drug checking service accessible next month to check for a toxic drug being sold as ecstasy (Dreaver, 2018a).
21/03/2018	Fentanyl detection	A large amount of toxic opioid fentanyl is being imported into New Zealand and has now shown up at a music festival. KnowYourStuffNZ said it detected the Class B drug masquerading as heroin at the latest festival (Towle, 2018).
22/03/2018	Former PM's support	Helen Clark, the former Prime Minister of New Zealand, is supporting injecting rooms and drug testing at festivals to prevent drug deaths (L. Bennett, 2018).
07/04/2018	Warning (drug testing kits)	Festival attendees in Wellington's Homegrown music festival are being warned that non-prescribed drug testing kits can give people a false sense of security (Dreaver, 2018b).
13/10/2018	Government's support	The Government is taking into consideration legalising festival drug testing at music festivals (Bramwell, 2018).
14/10/2018	Political party support	The Green Party is determined that festival drug testing should be legalised before the summer (Cheng, 2018).
31/12/2018	Drugs seized at festivals	At Gisborne's Rhythm and Vines festival, drugs made of pesticides and paints were seized (McConnell, 2018).

02/01/2019	Police Minister's support	The seizure of dangerous drugs made up of pesticide at the Rhythm and Vines festival in Gisborne before New Year's Eve has persuaded the Police Minister to think about new measures like festival drug testing (Flahive, 2019a).
22/02/2019	Festival organisers' opposition	Festival organisers are hesitant to permit drug testing at their events in case they are charged for supporting drug use (Cook, 2019).
07/06/2019	Research	A survey of music festival revellers indicates first-time ecstasy users would be the most careful about taking the drugs if drug testing was conducted at the festivals ("Study Suggests First Timers Most Cautious after Pill Tests at Music Festival," 2019).
02/09/2019	Drugs at the border	Among the 2405 cargoes seized by Project Loco (Customs) 1700 were cannabis, with more than 300 packages of MDMA, more than 50 of LSD, and more than 40 of cocaine (Manch, 2019).
29/09/2019	NZ First's opposition	Police Minister's intention to legalise festival drug testing at summer festivals stopped as NZ First argues it encourages drug consumption ("Police Minister's Plan to Legalise Pill Testing at Summer Festivals Derailed as NZ First Says It Encourages Drug Use," 2019).
05/10/2019	Two political parties oppose drug testing	National and New Zealand First stand firm against letting festival drug testing to occur ("Political Parties Divided Over Testing Drugs at NZ, Music at NZ Music Festivals and Events," 2019).
05/10/2019	Hospitalisations	Three people were admitted to hospital in a critical condition, with a fourth individual in a serious condition, following consuming substance (MDMA) at Listen In festival held at Mt Smart Stadium in Auckland (K. Fitzgerald & Wilkins, 2019).
06/10/2019	Arrests	Four people were arrested for climbing up to the roof of the marquee, in the Listen In concert. Worries were also increased about the "safety shortcomings" of the marquee constructed for the festival (Martin, 2019).
07/10/2019	ACT leader's support	ACT Party leader David Seymour says the Government needs to allow drug testing at music festivals (Ensor, 2019b).
08/10/2019	PM's support	The Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, wants to legalise festival drug testing and says New Zealand First's support for legislative changes has not yet been ruled out (Ensor, 2019a).
16/10/2019	Green Party's petition	The Green Party are requesting for common-sense legalisation of festival drug testing before the start of summer festival season (Swarbrick, 2018).
16/10/2019	Colmar Brunton Poll	According to 1 News, when festival-goers were asked if they will be able to have their illicit drugs legally tested 75% of them said yes, and 19% said no, and the rest did not know (Benedict, 2019).

17/10/2019	NZ First youth wing's support	In a post to a private Young NZ First Facebook group, chairperson William Woodward said he was "fully supportive" of testing stations and encouraged members to push the party to change its decision (McCulloch, 2019).
20/10/2019	NZ First's reconsideration to drug testing	NZ First could be ready to change its policy on festival drug testing after an intense argument at its conference bought by the party's youth wing (Coughlan, 2019).
03/11/2019	Warning	An Australian mother whose daughter died after taking MDMA at a music festival told 1 NEWS pill testing could prevent more deaths ("Mum of Teen Who Died at Music Festival Appeals for Legalised Testing as NZ First Mulls U-Turn," 2019).
18/12/2019	Government's support for a new research	The Ministry of Health has given \$59,000 to a study on the effect of drug testing at festivals. A criminology team from Victoria University of Wellington would be looking to see if drug checking programmes at music festivals kept people safe and reduced harm (Te, 2019).
24/12/2019	MDMA seized	In 11 months of this year, customs seized 703.5kg of the drug – more than seven times the 94.6kg seized last year. The recorded quantity of MDMA – the active ingredient in recreational drugs such as ecstasy – was also 170 times the 4.1kg authorities found in 2015 (Flahive, 2019b).
30/12/2019	Warning	A standard dose of MDMA was around 80 to 120 milligrams, but the new batch was a lot higher, KnowYourStuff warned. One, called the Blue New Yorker for its New York Yankees logo, contained 250 to 300mg, while the rectangular CNN had about 300mg. Pills dubbed Pink Mitsubishi contained 250 to 350mg and about the equivalent caffeine as two strong cups of coffee (T. Hunt & Daly, 2019).
26/02/2019	O-Week drug tests	Ketamine and MDMA were tested at OUSA's (Otago University) drug testing trial – and only 60 tests were conducted` on drugs brought in by students (McPhee, 2019a).
01/01/2020	Arrests	There were five arrests for assault or drug-related incidents during the Rhythm and Vines festival in Gisborne. Cannabis, MDMA and utensils have been seized at Rhythm and Vines (Palmer, 2020).
02/01/2020	Summer report	There is a decline in MDMA adulterants or substitutes this year and a rise in high dose MDMA pills and a minor increase in cocaine as compared to the last couple of years (podcast, Wendy Allison) ("MDMA Pills at Festivals This Year Stronger Than Ever," 2020)
18/02/2020	Hospitalisation	A 29-year-old Auckland woman took what she thought was MDMA (ecstasy) at Six60's concert at Mystery Creek, in Waikato, on February 8. The "little pink pill" that was supposed to provide a few hours of fun but for one festival-goer, instead, it almost killed her (Biddle, 2020).

22/02/2020	Police warning	Police in Canterbury has released a blunt warning ahead of this weekend's Electric Avenue festival, telling festival-goers that deadly drugs are circulating in the area ("High-Dose MDMA", 2020).
22/02/2020	Music festival open about drug testing	Drug testing is publicly available at Splore, and while it is technically illegal, the organiser says it indicates shifting opinions on drug consumption ("Spleore Music Festival Open about Drug Testing Due to Changing Attitudes", 2020).
29/06/2020	Published survey	Scientists have proposed a fresh description of what drugs Kiwis are doing at summer festivals – with MDMA or ecstasy, at times at tripledose levels, making up two-thirds of those seized (Morton, 2020).
27/07/2020	Petition brought to Parliament	Parliament's Health Select Committee considered a 6,000-strong petition supporting an amendment to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 to permit drug checking. The petition was brought to Parliament by Green MP Chlöe Swarbrick (A. McCarthy, 2020).
03/09/2020	2019/20 results KnowYourStuff NZ	High-dose MDMA and bath salts were still found at the music festival in summer. They also discovered that 5% of MDMA in one high dose pill, i.e., triple the dose of a regular pill. Cathinone C86, which is identified as eutylone, was mixed with few MDMA pills, which is considered as 'poisonous' by KnowYourStuff (KnowYourStuffNZ 2019; Franks, 2020).
03/09/2020	Government's reassurance to the festival organisers	The previous summer's Government-funded research on festival drug testing has given assurances to the festival organisers that they would not be charged for having the drug testing service on-site (Franks, 2020).
03/09/2020	COVID-19	Lockdown can affect people's tolerance for drugs. "It is still a 'question mark' if the music festivals would take place this time. But if they do 'they're in for a busy' season this time", says Wendy Allison from KnowYourStuff. (Franks, 2020)