Customer Satisfaction with the Game Day Experience: an Exploratory Study of the Impact Tailgating has on Fan Satisfaction

by

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Abstract

This research reports on the little-known effects of fans' satisfaction with

tailgating on their overall satisfaction with the college football game day experience and

the future behavioral intentions associated within. The underdeveloped nature of

literature in this area illustrates the need for research and exploration, as sports are a

major economic driver in both the US and internationally. Service quality and fan

satisfaction are important determinants of their future behavioral intentions relating to

attendance and support of an activity that brings significant financial contribution to host

cities (Cronin & Taylor, 1992, 1994; Hu, Kandampully & Juwaheer, 2009; Kouthouris &

Alexandris, 2005; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1994).

The objective aims to fill a void in the literature concerning participation in game

day activities and how fans behave post-consumption of offered services. Specifically,

tailgating will be used as the activity of focus and will be operationalized by measuring

satisfaction with it and other tangential amenities. A wholly new satisfaction scale will

be employed through use of an online questionnaire that will ask questions regarding

demographics, satisfaction, and future behavioral intentions. A factor analysis will then

be conducted on the satisfaction variables, which will reveal the most contributing

variables to satisfaction with the tailgating experience. The results from this study will

subsequently provide large sporting event managers with a guide to the importance of

ancillary services in activities relating to the core event itself.

A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted on the final 15 items with orthogonal rotation (VARIMAX). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .92 ('superb' according to Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity X^2 (105) = 6051.53, p <.001, indicated that correlation between items were sufficiently large for PCA. Four components (Access, Security, Service Personnel, and Comfort) had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained 61.76% of the variance, while its reliability remained high at α =.87. Inter-item correlations conducted to test the research questions are of moderate strength and are statistically significant at r >.4 and p < .01.

These results are consistent with the belief that Tailgating has a statistically significant effect on fans' overall satisfaction and future behavioral intentions. Because so little work has been done specifically in this area, further research is needed for scale validation, improvement, and increased acceptance of this study.

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The nature of this effort to make a mark in academia has attracted support from more than can be mentioned here. I would like first to give glory to God, the reason for which I am here. My major professor Dr. David Martin, whose expertise in this area provided immeasurable contribution. Dr. Martin O'Neill, the committee member responsible for sparking my interest for this research, and Dr. Betsy Ross for her statistical acumen I gratefully respect. In addition to my formal committee members, Dr. Douglas Murray has provided abundant help and encouragement that I could not have gone without. My mother, Susan, father, Paul, and sister, Ashley have shown unequivocal moral support in all my endeavors and have each set excellent examples of work, hard work. Finally, I would like to thank my soon-to-be wife, Katherine for the unending love, support, and encouragement she has shown since the day we met.

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List of Abbreviations

TG   Tailgating

OS   Overall Satisfaction

OE   Overall Game Day Experience

FBI   Future Behavioral Intentions

TGSAT   New Tailgate Satisfaction Scale: Cognitive Evaluations of Tailgating

Chapter I

Introduction

Aims and Objectives

This research reports on the little-known effects of fans' satisfaction with

tailgating on their overall satisfaction with the college football game day experience and

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literature in this area illustrates the need for research and exploration, as sports are a

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The interest in improving perceived service quality, value, and image is gospel for service companies today. These firms know that customers are more likely to tolerate price increases and less apt to patronize alternative suppliers when they experience highly reliable service (Hu et al., 2009). The intangibility, inseparability of production and consumption, heterogeneity, and perishability of a service is mentioned from Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry (1990).

Significance

This study of TG is novel, relevant, and timely when considering the current rate of growth in popularity college football holds. The novelty of this project stems from the fact that very little research has been done in this area. The literature in this field has been devoted exclusively to customer satisfaction, service quality, and sport tourism with some linkage to future behavioral intentions. The TG experience itself has been little studied. What exploration there is has been limited to motivation, social aspects, and the dangers associated with heavy drinking by college students while tailgating.

The ever-changing rules and regulations governing tailgating on college campuses make this study is important right now. Schools across the United States have started to turn a time-honored tradition such as tailgating into a way to boost revenue. When in the past tailgating has always been included in regular game day festivities, it has now become a source of profit for many Division I-A universities. High-profile plots of land are being sold at a premium every season to those willing and able to pay for the

convenience of prime territory, while those wishing to continue tailgating for no extra cost are being pushed to the outskirts of campus. Not only is space becoming expensive, but rules regarding the time fans are allowed to approach campus are becoming more stringent. Tailgaters are often being asked to refrain from claiming a tailgating location until the day-of the event. Finally, parking is yet another subject of controversy for many tailgaters. On-campus parking is becoming increasingly scarce, forcing a park-and ride situation that is not at all conducive to tailgating.

The relevance of the current research is explained in part by the financial contribution of tailgating. The sports industry in the U.S. alone boasts $441 Billion in revenue every year (Plunkett, 2008), with travel to these events totaling $182 billion each year (McCartney, 2009). This means that approximately $623 billion is spent each year before lodging accommodations and dining are considered. Speaking to collegiate sports specifically, profitable university football programs are often able to fund the majority of additional sports that may not have means to sustain themselves financially otherwise (Plunkett, 2009). Although the tailgating scene at universities nationwide largely revolves around football games and not baseball or basketball, the level to which this ritual occurs each fall suggests a significant financial contribution to local business. The *American Tailgater Association* claims that in 2005, 20-23 million fans participated in tailgating. Christopher Megerian (2007) writes in a Business Week article *The Prize in the Parking Lot*, that according to the 2006 National eating trends survey the number of tailgaters has doubled in the past eight years. In the same year, 50 million tailgaters spent from $7 billion to $15 billion on food and equipment (Megerian, 2007). In a Baylor University news article, Cartwright (2005) estimates that about $500 is spent on food and

drink alone per tailgater every season, and Delaney (2008) tells us that 47% of tailgaters do this six to 10 times every season. The current sample suggested a more modest average of approximately $300 per person, per event. These statistics represent the affluent nature of tailgaters and their impact on the host community. When examining the current sample, 78.8% have a bachelor's degree or higher with 61.7% of the total respondents earning more than $80,000 annually. This data represents the significant effect major sporting events have on the economic development and tourist traffic in a city or region (Hritz & Ross, 2010).

Research Questions

This research seeks primarily to gather data pertaining to the effect tailgating has on fans' overall game day satisfaction at a variety of United States Universities. Other topics being examined include the value associated with tailgating, future behavioral intentions, and service quality within the tailgating experience.

After a thorough literature review of related topics, the following four research questions seek to define the most significant determinants of fan satisfaction through tailgating: (1) To what extent does tailgating affect a fan's overall game day satisfaction and future behavioral intentions; (2) What is the relative value and importance of tailgating in the eyes of the fans; (3) How does tailgating at Auburn University compare to other schools; and (4) How do tailgaters evaluate the quality of their tailgating experience?

Definitions

Following are terms and/or phrases used frequently throughout this paper. They are defined to smooth any cultural or general knowledge gaps that may exist between the reader and this research dealing with collegiate football in the United States

1. Overall Game Day Experience (OE): The large Division-I schools' home football games examined in this research tend to attract crowds of people large enough to warrant the term "mega event" to be used when describing a typical game day. This large number of people and the feeling created at such an event lends itself to a unique experience created by collegiate football and its fans that will be referred to as the game day experience. Sometimes referred to as the overall experience (OE).

2. Tailgating (TG): An activity occurring before, during, and after sports events of all kinds. For the purposes of this research, collegiate football tailgating will be the main focus. "To participate in in a picnic that is served from the tailgate of a vehicle, as before a sports event (American Century Dictionary, 1995)."

3. Sports Tourism: "Leisure-based travel that takes individuals temporarily outside of their home communities to participate in physical activities, to watch physical activities, or to venerate attractions associated with physical activities" (Gibson et. al, 2002).

4. Overall Satisfaction (OSAT): In the terms of the current research, Overall Satisfaction will be referencing the variable computed by totaling the scores from two questions on the measurement instrument: (1) Satisfaction with Tailgating, and (2) Satisfaction with the Overall Game Day Experience.

Limitations

While considerable efforts have been made to minimize bias and error, there is no guaranteed method of complete elimination of these things in human behavioral research. Limitations will be discussed in-depth during the discussion chapter of this paper. Following are the general limitations to this study identified by the researcher and guiding committee.

It can be argued that the current sample represents a niche in the entire population. Being that this research is focused on college football and its unique environment, surveying was completed amongst football fans and enthusiasts. A critic might say this is not a good representation of the population due to the sample's focused interests on the subject being studied. An argument to this might be that although most participants are avid consumers of the collegiate football experience, surveying those uninterested in this subject would lessen the significance of the research. The current sample strongly represents the population that is under examination, which is avid college football fans.

A related limitation is the media routes taken to collect data. Yahoo! Rivals, the main site surveyed in this research, applies to a very exclusive group of football fans. A

monthly premium is paid for use of the site, allowing access to insider news on recruiting, stats, and practice films at any major football team in the United States. Because of the exclusive nature of this membership program, an argument could be made that this avenue would exclude a large majority of the population.

Summary

This chapter has given the reader a broad overview of the upcoming chapters that will more specifically describe everything mentioned here and much more. The purpose of this study, research questions, scales employed, and analyses completed have all been stated thus far. It has been made clear the subject matter is significant, while hoping to confirm its importance to large sports event planners and service providers. Due to the nature of football fans and the rituals that exist in the culture of collegiate football and tailgating, terms that will be used have been covered to prepare the reader for any verbiage they may not be familiar with. The immediate following chapter is a broad review of the literature closely associated with the current research.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Introduction

The following ten sections will thoroughly describe the main ideas surrounding this research. The goal for this chapter is to effectively review the literature by describing the satisfaction construct, applying it to fans who attend sporting events, and to follow through by communicating the importance of this construct within the tailgating realm. Having said this, the objective of the first section is to define satisfaction. The importance of satisfaction is then visited using indicators such as loyalty and trust to reinforce it. The Service Profit Chain is explained, along with the consequences of dissatisfaction. Because it can be such an intangible, abstract idea, understanding satisfaction is included, explaining such ideas as expectancy (dis)confirmation. Satisfaction having been exhausted, methods of measurement such as SERVQUAL and SERVPERF are mentioned. Services are defined and suggested as the determinants for satisfaction, namely quality of service and the service environment. Next, the sports industry is brought into the picture and is linked to the services through sporting events and fandom. Its significance in sports and methods to measure satisfaction in sporting environments is described. Finally, tailgating is introduced as the main focus of attention for this research. It is defined, illustrated, and its significance is made clear.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction has been a vastly growing body of knowledge since the early 1970s and is regarded as a primary source of positive customer feedback, the intent to return and repurchase, and a greater chance of customers spreading positive word-of-mouth. Because it lacks tangible properties for explanation, measurement, and analysis, we must rely on past exploratory research and results stemming from it. This has led to the ever-growing body of knowledge surrounding the idea of satisfaction, how consumers come to this feeling, and how resulting factors affect the service industry. Throughout the years satisfaction research has brought to us definitions, illustrations, methods, and results that aid current and future researchers in developing valid techniques of their own to measure satisfaction in new ways. Its importance stems from the idea that satisfied customers lead to higher profits and more successful business operations. Following is a thorough examination of work done to-date on satisfaction and its umbrella of topics that make it fascinating.

Satisfaction Defined

A functional definition for satisfaction can be found by dating a literature focus to the 1970s, '80s, and '90s (Pfaff, 1972; Anderson, 1973; Oliver, 1980, 1993; Day, 1984; Oliver & Swan, 1989; Oliver & Westbrook, 1991; and Mano & Oliver, 1993). Satisfaction as an area of study has gained immense popularity since the early 1970s and is known as an intervening variable that facilitates the relationship between service quality, perceptions, and purchase intentions (Taylor & Baker, 1994). Pfaff's (1972) U.S. Department of Agriculture Index of Consumer Satisfaction was the first study to report direct information on consumer satisfaction to policy makers (Churchill & Surprenant,

1982). This was the beginning of an enormous literature base focused on satisfaction, its symptoms, causes, and outcomes. The term is most simply defined by Bloemer & Poiesz (1989, p. 43) as "… the evaluation by the consumer of his or her interaction with the brand in the buying and consumption situation." For the current research, it is a cognitive or affective reaction that emerges in response to a single or prolonged set of service encounters (Hu et al., 2009). Churchill & Surprenant (1982, p. 49) describe it as "… a major outcome of marketing activity and serves to link processes culminating in purchase and consumption with post-purchase phenomena such as attitude change, repeat purchase, and brand loyalty." Westbrook & Oliver (1991, p. 84) add that it is "… believed to mediate consumer learning from prior experience and to explain key post-purchase activities, such as complaining, word of mouth, and product usage," and that satisfaction itself can include affects such as joy, excitement, pride, anger, sadness and guilt. More simply put, Howard & Sheth (1969) state that satisfaction occurs at the point where expectation and reality overlap. In contrast, Anderson (1973) defines dissatisfaction as, "the degree of disparity between expectations and perceived product performance". The majority of the research done thus far indicates that a satisfied customer leads to repatronage, positive word-of-mouth, and therefore an increase in business success. These suggested effects of satisfaction will be further discussed in later sections. To summarize the abundant information defining satisfaction and dissatisfaction, we know that it is a (1) a feeling or emotion, (2) in response to a particular experience or transaction, and is (3) based on expectations had by the consumer preceding the experience.

Importance of Satisfaction

Satisfaction is of utmost importance in the service industry; the intense competition faced in traditional service establishments such as hotels and restaurants illustrates the unique aspect the hospitality sector faces with respect to consumer behavioral intentions following a service encounter. Following are several indicators of satisfaction that often predict the behavioral choices consumers will make.

Loyalty

Repurchase decisions have shown to indicate satisfaction, and loyalty describes a consumer's likelihood of exhibiting this. Dick & Basu (1994) explore customer loyalty, a highly researched area in the service industry; their conceptual view of this topic includes a thorough examination of the cognitive, affective, and conative antecedents of customer loyalty and its consequences for this industry. They define customer loyalty as, "the relationship between relative attitude and repeat patronage" (p. 102). While the current research does not aim to include emotion or attitude, Dick & Basu highlight the levels of loyalty a consumer may have towards a service, comparing repeat patronage and relative attitude. No loyalty, spurious loyalty, latent loyalty, and loyalty all exhibit different blends of attitude and repeat patronage. One might guess that "loyalty" is the most desirable level and can potentially be achieved at any attitude level as long as consumers view the product as better than that of a competing service. On satisfaction, Dick & Basu remind us of the disconfirmation theory, suggesting that postpurchase response is in direct correlation with the matching of expectations and perceived performance. Although disconfirmation models suggest satisfaction is achieved after expectations have been met, these authors remind us that a consumer's loyalty remains

unaffected by service satisfaction or dissatisfaction. For example, a sporting event consumer could have a negative experience with the concession services offered inside a venue, but this experience may or may not affect that consumer's intent to repurchase. In an attempt to measure underlying loyalty development processes, Chen (2006) employed the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET) which is specifically designed for sport and tourism research. It is known to show consumers' spoken thoughts and feelings that most methods do not, and is said to increase study reliability. His research found that consumer satisfaction leads to commitment, which in turn leads to loyal behavior. To be even more deliberate in the attempt to uncover sources of loyalty, Bowen & Chen (2001) provide an excellent method for focusing in on the most important sample: loyal customers. Internal Benchmarking (Bowen & Chen, 2001) is an excellent way for management to find out what exactly about their service product makes for loyal behavior of their clients. By gathering data from one's most loyal customers, an organization can focus on those things that affected a loyal group the most and improve upon them.

Heskett et al. (1994) note that customer loyalty is a more important determinant of profit than the elusive top rank among similar firms in the service industry. They point out that only a 5% increase in loyalty can result in profit increases from 25% to 85%. Lau (2000) corroborates by concluding that satisfied customers are six times more likely to be loyal than those dissatisfied, and that loyal customers account for an unusually high proportion of the sales and profit growth of a company. Although loyalty is highly sought after by hospitality firms, it is not the only important behavior exhibited by customers. A client's trust in a company often results in repurchase as well.

Trust

Trust has been studied and hypothesized as a factor directly relating to consumer satisfaction in service settings. Although Soderlund & Julander (2003) did not prove this theory, it is a subject worth addressing in the literature as it undoubtedly occurs in service settings. Variability, or heterogeneity, is described as a variation in the consistency of a service provider's performance and is often experienced in these encounters (Soderlund & Julander, 2003). This variability potentially stems from two main sources, one being the immediate incongruence of two service experiences due to varying levels of service at any one location. However, customer-related factors such as two patrons viewing similar experiences differently may also contribute to this afore-mentioned service variability. Either situation being, consumer trust plays a role in whether this service is deemed acceptable (a satisfied customer) or unacceptable (a dissatisfied customer). Trust is defined as the perceived credibility and benevolence of a service provider (Soderlund et al., 2003), accompanied by conditions such as risk, uncertainty, interdependence, and other factors experienced in the service industry. The main function of trust is an effort by the consumer to reduce uncertainty of service, which makes choices simpler (Morrison & Firmstone, 2000). Contrary to their initial assumption, Soderlund et al. (2003) did not find trust as an offset to negative service encounters. It can now be said that an effort to build trustworthy customer relationships is one of many influential additives to the customer satisfaction construct. To this end, service managers must keep consumer expectations at bay, so to not allow these to grow beyond what is achievable.

Satisfaction alone not enough

As Hu et al. (2010) remind us, simply satisfying customers is not enough in today's competitive world of service providers. We must also focus on improving the customer perceptions of overall service quality and increasing consumer perceived value. A quote by Cronin, Brady, & Hult (2000, p. 210-211) reveals additional benefits of service quality: "It is clear that the role of quality is far more complex than previously reported. Not only does quality affect perceptions of value and satisfaction, it also influences behavioral intentions directly".

Consumer behavioral intentions are those feelings experienced post-consumption with relation to the experienced service and resulting satisfaction. Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman (1996) outline for us important actions service providers must have their customers willing to perform:

> (1) Say positive things about them
>
> (2) Recommend them to other consumers
>
> (3) Remain loyal to them
>
> (4) Spend more with the company, and
>
> (5) Pay price premiums

Positive future behavioral intentions lead to increased trust, loyalty, and the intent to repurchase rather than to patronize an alternative brand. The service-profit chain, developed by Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, & Schlesigner (1994), is a great tool for connecting satisfaction, quality, and profitability.

Service-Profit Chain

The Service-Profit Chain (SPC) (Heskett et al., 1994) is a practical model for any service industry that breaks down the relationships evoked within it. It, "…establishes relationships between profitability, customer loyalty, and employee satisfaction, loyalty, and productivity" (Heskett et al., 1994, p. 164). Encouraging investment in people, technology, improved recruiting tactics, and performance-based compensation programs, it covers bases that management fads such as Total Quality Management (TQM) and Management by Objectives (MBO) fail to cover. Following are the relationships (or propositions) of the SPC as stated by Heskett et al. (1994, p. 170):

- Profit and growth are stimulated primarily by customer loyalty

- Loyalty is a direct result of customer satisfaction

- Satisfaction is largely influenced by the value of services provided to customers

- Value is created by satisfied, loyal, and productive employees

- Employee satisfaction results primarily from high-quality support services and policies that enable employees to deliver results to customers.

- See chart, "The Links in the Service-Profit Chain"

Heskett et al.'s (1994) development of this framework led to conclusions highlighting the importance of the treatment of customers and employees that leads to long-term profitability. Heskett is not alone in this belief; Lau (2000) points out the connection between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction is strong due to the active nature of interactions between the two groups. When focusing on employees, competent and helpful employees are the key to success in service industries (Lau, 2000).

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Southwest Airlines (SWA) is a great example of an organization giving employees the ability to succeed and be satisfied in their positions: employees are trained to have the ability to perform several jobs, giving them a feeling of empowerment and capability which leads to better service and a satisfied customer. This has helped SWA continue to post unmatched profits, successful airline stocks, and be the only airline to win the industry's "triple crown" for satisfaction (Halowell, 1996).   Research has shown that low employee turnover is linked closely to high customer satisfaction, making the quality of work life of utmost importance (Heskett et al., 1994; Lau, 2000). *Apostles* and *terrorists* are terms used by the designers of the SPC to describe customers that will spread positive and negative word-of-mouth, respectively, to convert those they come into contact with. Similarly, Blodgett, Wakefield, & James (1995) agree than it is important to be approachable and attentive to customer complaints, making them less likely to spread negative word of mouth and more likely to re-patronize your service.   Ultimately, it is the manager that must develop the corporate culture of his or her firm to embody service to customers and fellow employees, as well as spend ample time selecting, tracking, and recognizing them (Heskett et al., 1994).

Consequences of (dis)satisfaction

There are a number of reactions a customer can have in response to a good (or bad) service experience; while satisfaction could result in positive word-of-mouth or the mere intent to return, dissatisfaction could grant customers the right to complain to the provider or even spread dissonant views to fellow consumers. Either way, a customer's feelings about their service encounter effects further decisions they make regarding repurchase intentions. Complaining often happens when a customer is highly

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dissatisfied; as Day (1984) states, this response is an indicator of the degree or intensity of felt dissatisfaction. This leaves us assuming the more intense the feeling of dissatisfaction, the more likely the consumer is to complain. In contrast, what would it take for affirmation of satisfaction to occur? How likely is a satisfied consumer to openly praise the service provider for quality service? Oliver (1980) assures us that a satisfied customer is more likely to simply return and repurchase rather than make their appreciation known verbally. As this may sound somewhat obvious, another study found that extremely dissatisfied customers engage in greater word of mouth than highly satisfied customers (Anderson, 1998). Although this sounds somewhat unfair to service providers, it paints a clear picture of the importance for creating satisfied customers and avoiding dissatisfied ones. The idea that negative communications are more likely to be forcefully communicated than positive ones should suggest that customer satisfaction is not simply a plus, but a crucial aspect of success in the service industry.

Physical or vocal reactions are one form of response for consumers experiencing positive (or negative) confirmation of their expectations, while their mind exhibits a wholly new set of potential reactions to a service encounter. Anderson (1973) points out that when predicting effects on product or service evaluation, there are four main psychological theories to be considered: (1) cognitive dissonance (assimilation), (2) contrast, (3) generalized negativity, and (4) assimilation-contrast. The first, cognitive dissonance speculates that the consumer will actively change their beliefs or expectations about a product or service based on what they see, hear, or experience themselves. This approach allows for less mental discomfort or "dissonance" to occur, leaving the consumer less sensitive to negative experiences. The "contrast" theory uses the element

of surprise to benefit a company employing this method. It posits that if an advertisement for a product or service is slightly understated or underestimated in the consumer's eyes, the surprise of a better, more refined actual product could positively affect the evaluation composed by the user, in turn leading to higher customer satisfaction. The third theory mentioned by Anderson (1973) termed "generalized negativity", is a bit more involved. Much like the contrast theory previously mentioned its main driver is the expectation of the consumer. Disconfirmation is described in this theory where the consumer expecting a "bitter" product consumes a "sweet" product and evaluates it differently than had he or she not been made to expect either. This theory illustrates the importance of organizations creating expectations consistent with that of actual product or service performance. Lastly, the "assimilation-contrast" theory combines the first and second theories into the effects differing degrees or intensities have on consumers' evaluations. More simply put, the closer an experience is to one's expectations, the easier it is for that consumer to ignore the small discrepancy and experience satisfaction, while a larger variance between expectations and performance results in overstated evaluations (Anderson, 1973).

Satisfaction Response

It has been suggested in the literature and well-established thus far that expectancy disconfirmation has the most direct influence on satisfaction (Oliver, 1993). We also know that the response to services versus products are very different (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982), making the differentiation between measuring customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (CS/D) between them very hard. Having said this, Oliver (1993) reminds us that no matter the experience, expectation levels prior to consumption

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create the baseline around which satisfaction judgments are made. In his study, Oliver (1993) takes a close look at the satisfaction response and the variables that play a role in the overall CS/D response. Using disconfirmation, emotion, and attribute response, he finds that disconfirmation provides the most useful feedback and predicts the evaluative response more fluidly than the other two factors. This is an important study for both product and service consumption research as it takes previous work and expands it to test other experience variables.

Understanding the satisfaction construct

Expectancy Disconfirmation and Equity

Defined earlier, satisfaction is described among many things as a reaction to an evaluation of service experienced based on prior expectations of that service. Satisfaction cannot be given due diligence without mentioning disconfirmation and its role in consumer evaluation of a service or product. Disconfirmation is defined as "the difference between user expectations of the service to be received and their perceptions of the service actually received" (O'Neill et al., 2003, p. 281). This serves as a way to model the comparison of product performance versus pre-experience standards (Bloemer & Poiesz, 1989). Disconfirmation models have been exhausted in the literature, allowing industry professionals to better evaluate the service quality they provide versus what consumers expect. There are various types of disconfirmation discussed in the literature, two of which are subtractive (LaTour & Peat, 1979; Sirgy, 1984; and Bloemer & Poiesz, 1989) and subjective (Oliver, 1980; Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). Viewed as an intervening variable to the satisfaction outcome, subjective disconfirmation arises from discrepancies between what is expected in a product or service and what is finally

experienced (Gilbert, Churchill, & Surprenant, 1982). The subtractive disconfirmation theory uses an algebraic difference to retrieve disconnect between product performance and a comparison standard (Bloemer & Poiesz, 1989). O'Neill, Palmer, & Wright (2003) delve into both inferred and direct disconfirmation models in a study on e-commerce service quality, suggesting a more direct method (SERVPERF) to measure overall service quality rather than SERVQUAL, which includes expectations.

In related work, Oliver & Swan (1989) examine exchange equity and disconfirmation not only as determinants of, but complementary influences on consumer satisfaction. While disconfirmation is widely used, the traditional equity theory is explained as a process occurring in any transaction that the consumer expects to get some sort of return outcome. Examples of this include employees and their thoughts about salary, equity in taxation, citizens using public transit, and car rental companies (Oliver et al., 1989). Consumers will often use money, time, or effort as input and expect such output as product performance, services stemming from the sale, or the status that comes from purchasing a certain brand. It is further explained that the equity process carries on to the perception consumers have about their outcome. Pricing and fairness in a transaction are presented as the most important factors when considering consumers and exchange equity, fairness being highly related to satisfaction. Finally, Oliver & Swan's (1989) results indicate both disconfirmation and equity processes are parallel as strong predictors of satisfaction.

It is understood that the level to which disconfirmation occurs determines the level of satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) a consumer experiences. As a pioneer in expectancy disconfirmation, Oliver (1977) suggests its importance in measuring

satisfaction and feels that in order to measure accurately, attitudes and satisfaction levels must be collected pre-exposure, during-, and post-exposure to the product or service, and even after attitudes have been developed by the consumer.

To describe CS/D as a function of expectation and expectancy disconfirmation, a pre-, immediate post-, and revised postpurchase attitude model has been developed, researched, and tested (Howard & Sheth, 1969, p. 147):

$A_{t+2} = f(S_{t+1} - A_t) + A_t$

Where: A_t = prepurchase attitude,

S_{t+1} = immediate postpurchase satisfaction, and

A_{t+2} = revised postpurchase attitude

Oliver (1980) looks closely to this model as a route to explain both attitude formation and repurchase decisions. His most significant findings indicate satisfaction exists primarily to mediate any changes that occur in attitude before and after exposure.

To some, customer satisfaction is an "illusion" (Bloemer & Poiesz, 1989, p. 47). Although uncommon, Nillson et al. (2001) found a negative correlation between customer satisfaction and business results, meaning the effect of customer satisfaction was negatively related to success in business. In contrast, Oliver (1980) suggests that consumer satisfaction most certainly results in positive postexposure components, such as repurchase. He also states that, in the performance-specific expectation versus expectancy disconfirmation, satisfaction increases as the performance/expectation ratio increases.

Measuring satisfaction

According to Bloemer & Poiesz (1989), consumer satisfaction can be viewed in a direct and indirect way; depending on what type of business one is conducting, sales may be used as a form of indirect measurement. A more deliberate method to measure satisfaction is to ask consumers for their evaluation of service and to rate their level of satisfaction directly. Czepiel & Rosenburg (1977) insist on examining several facets that contribute to satisfaction as a whole: purchase process, decision, functional attributes, aesthetic attributes, psychosocial attributes, service attributes and environmental attributes. It is by way of these indicators that consumers cease their search of purchasing a service, or exhibit repetitive behavior in a choice situation. Measuring satisfaction will be later paired with service quality and will be discussed in future sections.

Quality is an underlying precursor and only one of many factors that play into a customer's overall satisfaction (Taylor & Baker, 1994). The term "quality" has been defined as following requirements (Crosby, 1979), being fit for use (Juran, 1988), or simply a level of service that satisfies the customer (Eiglier & Langeard, 1987). A quote from Jun & Cai (2010) explains the often-confused differences between service quality and satisfaction: "Customer satisfaction is directly influenced by the intervening variables of disconfirmation, while service quality is not; satisfaction is based on predictive expectation while service quality is based on an ideal standard expectation" (p. 209).

An excess of research has been done in measuring service quality in various environments ranging from foodservice and hotels to sporting events, tourism, and festivals (Bitner, 1992; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; O'Neill, Getz, & Carlsen, 1999; Getz,

O'Neill, & Carlsen, 2001; Theodorakis, Kambitsis, Laios, & Koustelios, 2001; Grace &

O'Cass, 2004; Jain & Gupta, 2004; Kouthouris & Alexandris, 2005; Brady, Voorhees,

Cronin, & Bourdeau, 2006; Tsuji, Bennett, & Zhang, 2007; Lambrecht, Kaefer, &

Ramenofsky, 2009). Measurement tools have undoubtedly stemmed from this research,

allowing for more standardized methods in measuring this intangible element of an event

experience. Not only has research provided quality measurement an arsenal of

equipment to use, but also has given scholars reason to argue one another's scale

accuracy and appropriateness (Cronin & Taylor, 1994; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry

[PZB], 1994). Jain & Gupta (2004) make a valid point on measuring quality:

> An ideal service quality scale is one that is not only psychometrically sound but is
>
> also diagnostically robust enough to provide insights to the managers for
>
> corrective actions in the event of quality shortfalls. (p. 25)

For the sake of a nonbiased explanation of these measurement tools, a thorough

examination of relevant framework is necessary.

SERVQUAL

PZB (1985) were among the first scholars to demand an explanation of service

quality (Jain and Gupta, 2004). By linking outcome and process of service, they

developed what is known as the GAP theory, which proposes that the difference between

consumers' expectations about performance of a service and their assessment of the

actual performance drives the perception of service quality. Four "gaps" represent four

ways service delivery can be impeded (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1988, p. 35-36):

Gap 1: Difference between consumer expectations and management perceptions of consumer expectations.

Gap 2: Difference between management perceptions of consumer expectations and service quality specifications.

Gap 3: Difference between service quality specifications and the service actually delivered.

Gap 4: Difference between service delivery and what is communicated about the service to consumers.

More simply put, 'what they want' versus 'what they get' (Jain & Gupta, 2004, p. 26). In SERVQUAL, customer service expectations are compared with actual performance (Hu et al., 2010). Also known as disconfirmation, comparing expectations to actual performance has been exhausted in the service literature (Jain & Gupta, 2004; PZB, 1994; O'Neill et al., 1999; Kouthouris & Alexandris, 2005) Essentially, from this disconfirmation process of evaluating a service spawned SERVQUAL (PZB, 1985), originally a 22- item scale on 10 dimensions (PZB, 1985) that was later whittled down to 5 (PZB, 1988). The final dimensions included tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The authors describe their revised instrument saying its design makes it applicable in numerous environments. Also, its expectations/perceptions format embraces each of the five service quality dimensions, making it malleable to the specific needs of a particular research topic or project.

SERVQUAL continues to be the "basic skeleton" (Carman, 1990, p. 50) tool for research measuring customer satisfaction, service quality perception, and future

behavioral intentions, despite Cronin & Taylor's (1994) evidence of its ineffectiveness. Jain & Gupta (2004) find that, due to its diagnostic power being stronger than that of SERVPERF, SERVQUAL is best suited for those looking to pinpoint areas for managerial intervention. A limitation of SERVQUAL noted by Carman (1990) is its disregard for measuring expectations and differentiating those from service perceptions.

SERVPERF

Cronin & Taylor (1992) represent a strictly performance-based assessment dubbed SERVPERF after concluding that, "disconfirmation appears only to mediate, not define, consumers' perceptions of service quality". In an effort to "debunk" the well-known and seemingly universal SERVQUAL, Cronin & Taylor (1992) bring attention to the way service quality (SQ) is conceptualized and measured, the causal order of the relationship between service quality and satisfaction, and the impacts SQ and satisfaction have on purchase intentions. They found through a literature review of empirical evidence that SQ should be measured as an attitude, that perceived service quality leads to satisfaction, and that although satisfaction has a significant effect on purchase intentions, SQ does not. Amongst the scale superiority arguments, Jain and Gupta (2004) conclude that, due to its simplified explanation of the service construct, SERVPERF is best for situations in which one is looking to assess the overall service quality of a firm, despite falling short of diagnostic power. Similarly, O'Neill et al. (2003) also prefer this as a more direct form of measurement that does not attempt to correlate pre- and post- consumption evaluations. Although SERVPERF may very well be preferred by many, SERVQUAL still wins for usage frequency in measuring consumer perceptions of service quality.

Determinants of Satisfaction

Services Defined

Services are essentially products with a uniqueness that represents a major difference from goods. The ubiquitous phrase "goods and services" is no longer appropriate when discussing products, as services have developed much higher value since when they were first studied in the early 1960s. Rathmell (1966), a pioneer in research clearly separating goods and services, gives us examples of services from that time, including airline flights and religious or welfare activities. He also sets goods apart from services by explaining that when a good is purchased, the consumer acquires an asset, while purchasing a service simply incurs expense. It is important to understand the idea that although services such as plane flights, taxi rides, and haircuts represent services, there are very few products that are solely a good or service; most goods require a supporting service to be useful, and vice versa. For example, in the case of the taxi ride, a vehicle (the good) is required for a driver to perform the service. To this end, a plumber must have the necessary tools, or goods, to fix a pipe. Rathmell (1966, p. 33-34) provides a list of services characteristics to help distinguish them from goods:

1. Services are typically expressed in terms of rates, fees, admissions, charges, tuition, contributions, interest, etc., while goods use price as a standard for sale.

2. The buyer of a service is often a *client*, while one who purchases a good is a customer.

3. Services cannot be inventoried as goods can, for they are produced and consumed simultaneously.

4. Services cannot be mass-produced, therefore standards cannot be precise.

5. The greatest marketer of services in the United States is the government (e.g. Medicare, urban renewal, public parks and recreation, public higher education, and publicly-owned utilities).

Lovelock (1984) provides us an excellent example of services and their characteristics:

…the deeds, actions and efforts performed by either a person or a machine, but which exists at one point in time and cannot be stored for later use… services are usually complex in that they are composed of different parts, some of which may or may not be employed for reasons which cannot be decided in advance, with the consequence that measuring services in their entirety can only be achieved with great difficulty.

Similarly, Dotchin & Oakland (1994, p. 14) highlight types of and aspects of services that set them apart from goods:

1. Explicit Service: sensual benefits

2. Implicit Service: psychological benefits

3. Intangibility: cannot touch a service, therefore it cannot be assessed in the same way. Assessment must rely on the experience itself.

4. Perishability: it is impossible to produce a service element in advance of consumption. Service production and consumption must occur simultaneously.

5. Heterogeneity: inherent variability of services creates a barrier when attempting to standardize elements of a service encounter.

These unique characteristics of services require management and service providers to consider strategies to accommodate its unpredictable nature. Providers can "chase demand" by increasing and decreasing resources, influence demand by adjusting factors such as price, or retain excess capacity to prepare for fluctuating demand (Dotchin & Oakland, 1994).

Three primary dimensions of service quality are functional quality (how the service is delivered), technical quality (what is delivered), and service environment quality (where the service is delivered) (Brady, Voorhees, Cronin, & Bordeau, 2006). These three dimensions represent best what consumers view as important enough to affect their future behavioral intentions. Also known as Valence, these factors drive the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of consumers in the post-consumption phase. In services, it is important that we harness the ability to assess customers' satisfaction. Services are part of almost all organizations and because they have been shown to have a direct effect on customer satisfaction (Kouthouris, 2005), should be routinely measured for quality to ensure the highest level of consumer satisfaction.

Importance of Service Quality

Nillson et al. (2001) state the understood importance of quality in service organizations and of separating goods from services. As Hu, Kandampully, & Juwaheer (2009) acknowledge, a customer-centered focus has dominated discussions in board rooms of service providers who know that service quality is known to contribute to market share and customer satisfaction. This is certainly even truer now that increases in income over the last decade are spent on travel, recreation, education and health (Dotchin

& Oakland, 1994). The interest in improving perceived service quality, value, and image is gospel for service companies today. These firms know that customers are more likely to tolerate price increases and less apt to patronize alternative suppliers when they experience highly reliable service (Hu et al., 2009). The intangibility, inseparability of production and consumption, heterogeneity, and perishability of a service is mentioned from Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry (1990). It is important to note their findings that suggest the importance of involving and engaging an entire organization in an attempt at improving quality. For example, if only upper level management is trained in quality, the chances of that knowledge being represented by employees who deal with customers daily greatly decreases. Further, they found a direct correlation in the service industry with employee management and its effect on business performance. "Satisfying and creating committed employees is important for all companies, but more so for services where frontline service providers are a service company's primary asset" (Nillson et al., 2001). Jun & Cai (2010, p. 206) refer to this principle as "Internal Service Quality" and relate its outcome to personal service and technical competence of a firm's employees. They agree that happy employees result in happier customers. Discussed earlier, this approach has proven successful for SWA, who make sure their employees are trained and treated in a way that will result in employee satisfaction. It is suggested in the literature that high service quality will ultimately lead to higher perceived value and, in turn, higher profitability and success (Hu et al., 2009).

Figure 1: Conceptual Model for Perceived Value (Hu et. al, 2009, p. 113)
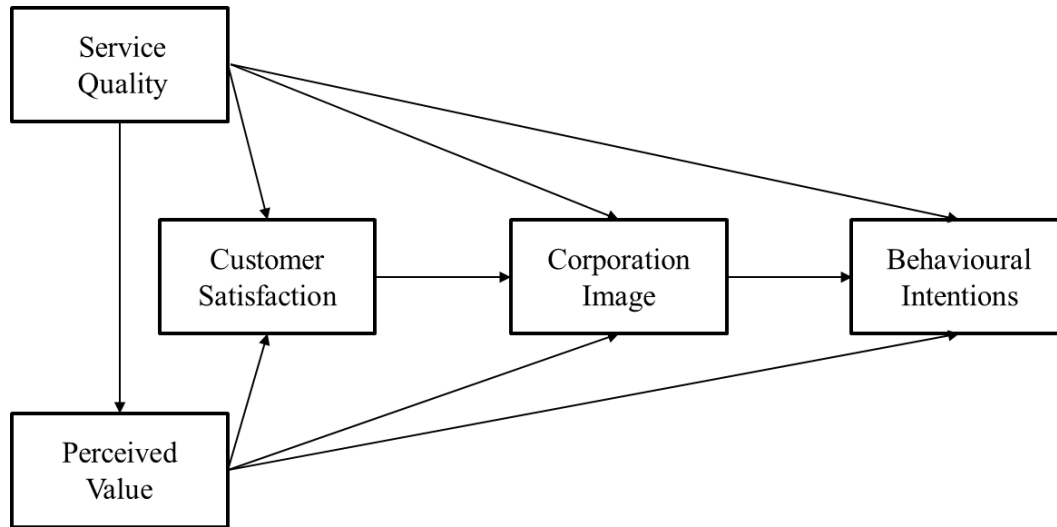
While service quality and its measurement is of utmost importance to the

hospitality industry, Zeithaml (2000) points out that even after tools such as the Profit

Impact of Marketing Strategies (PIMS) and the American Customer Satisfaction Index

(ACSI) were developed, service quality benefits are still a latent and rarely show in the

short term. (INSERT CHART FROM ZEITHAML 2000) The preceding chart denotes a

model representing the variables involved in the relationship between service quality and

profitability (Zeithaml, 2000). The linkages shown between customer retention and

profits through factors such as cost, increased purchases, and word-of-mouth represent

positive correlations important to service providers. These reinforce the ideas that

customers who are pleased with the provider are more likely to both repurchase the

service and spread positive word-of mouth, reducing that company's need for excess

marketing expenditures (Zeithaml, 2000). *Offensive effects* (Fornell & Wernerfelt, 1987,

1988), as seen in the figure, are defined as the effect service has on obtaining new

customers. This term often ties service quality and profitability in service quality

research.

Figure 2: Behavioral and Financial Consequences of Service Quality (Zeithaml et. al, 1996, p. 33)
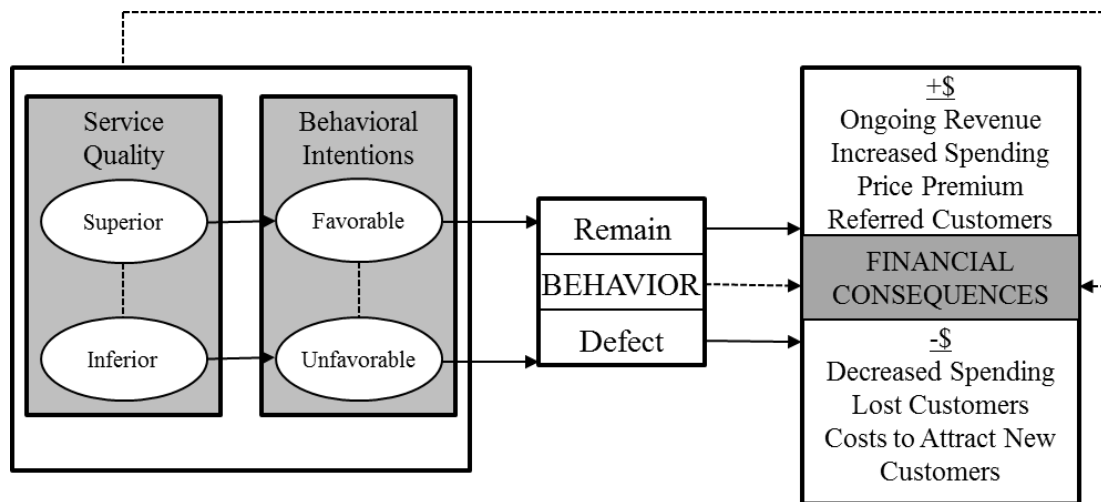
The connection between service quality and customer satisfaction is well-represented in the literature (Hu et al., 2009; Kouthouris & Alexandris, 2005; Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000), and the evaluation of service quality should be a high priority for service providers. As stated by O'Neill et al. (2000, p. 131), "…the strength of any company's underlying service culture is only as strong as its management commitment to that culture. Management must therefore be seen to be living and breathing the company approach to service."

Service Environment

Research suggests that the physical setting may also influence not only the customer's ultimate satisfaction with the service, but also employee satisfaction, productivity, and motivation (Bitner, 1992). As mentioned previously, one dimension of service quality speaks to the surroundings or "environment" the service takes place in. Known in the literature as the servicescape (Uhrich & Benkenstein, 2010; Lambrecht,

Kaefer, & Ramenofsky, 2009; Grace & O'Cass, 2004; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996, 1994; Bitner, 1992), it is defined as the built environment, man-made physical surroundings as opposed to the natural or social environment, and can include (1) the spatial layout and functionality, and (2) elements related to aesthetic appeal (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). Examples of the spatial layout of the servicescape include items such as seats, aisles, hallways, walkways, foodservice lines, restrooms, and entrances or exits. Aesthetic appeal relates more to the architectural design, facility upkeep or cleanliness, and signage. Any negative experience with these factors could affect the perceived satisfaction of a consumer. Overcrowded walkways or seats, littered areas, poor signage, and long service lines could contribute to a negative servicescape, affecting future behavioral intentions and consumer satisfaction. Bitner (1992, p. 58) shares with us the three types of service environment encountered regularly:

- "Self-service" environment: few if any employees are present and the level of customer activity is high;

- Remote service: little or no customer involvement in servicescape and sometimes even little employee involvement;

- Interpersonal services: positioned between two extremes

These varying levels of service represent an important determinant in how a service environment is or should be designed, as an improperly matched design and service level could lead to service issues.

Wakefield & Blodgett (1994) believe the servicescape plays an important role in the effect on customers' satisfaction with the service experience, and will in turn play an important role in repatronization by those customers. Research in the area of the

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servicescape and its effect on satisfaction has shown that perceptions of higher quality environments in service settings led to the desire to stay longer and return in the future (Lambrecht et al., 2009). Not only can it be used to create imagery regarding the brand, but also invoke feelings in its patrons (Grace & O'Cass, 2004). The importance of this aspect of service quality should be viewed as equally important to managers as functional and technical quality when designing a future service experience.

Soderlund & Rosengren (2010) reveal that factors as minute as the attitude or appearance (Soderlund & Julander, 2009) of a service worker have the potential to positively (or negatively) affect a customer's service encounter. They found that the positive attitude of a service worker, given good technical service quality, is likely to produce a higher level of customer satisfaction. However, poor service quality paired with any type of attitude did not prove to affect satisfaction levels. In a similar study, Soderlund & Julander (2009) assume that a customer's exposure to a service provider immediately results in an evaluation of that person's physical attractiveness. This research has suggested that a service worker's level of physical attractiveness had a significant impact on consumer satisfaction. Both the attitude and appearance of a service worker should, therefore, be strongly considered by service employers everywhere.

Introduction to Sports and Sports Tourism

Consumer Behavior and its Impact on Services

Humans and their interests have driven the trends within goods and services for thousands of years. From celebrities to cars and food trends, it takes a significant interest

by consumers to make something a widely accepted behavior. Sporting events are no exception as shown by evidence that in 2002, 72 million adults attended at least one sporting event (2009). According to Smith and Stewart (2007), sports fans and consumers are the fulcrum on which sport leverages its popularity. People have been attending major sporting events across the globe since the Egyptian and Minoan ancient civilizations (Quinn, 2009). The Olympic Games were among the first well-known and regularly-occurring spectacles, now occurring every four years. Sites for these events are chosen 10-12 years before the actual event and will begin preparing the facilities then as well. Sport consumers travel from all corners of the world to experience these games and are willing to spend thousands of dollars to do it.

"Fans" as we know them, are considered the most devoted sport consumers. Some may be fans of the general sport or of a specific team or competitor, but their motivations for devotion come from the previously mentioned cultural needs (Smith & Stewart, 2007). Fan Equity is a term coined by Smith et al. (2007) to describe the emotional bond with one's team or sport through any hardship it may face. Whether it is to escape a high-stress work life, a taxing family, or strictly to enjoy the marvel of competition, consumers will spend time, money, and emotion on sports and attending sporting events. Smith & Stewart (2007) point out some key characteristics of these events that attract the masses: the uncertainty of outcomes, the role of athletic display, the kinesthetic nature of sport activities, and the intuitive nature of many sporting engagements. Kurtzman & Zauhar (2005) describe a "magic environment" full of feelings, sensitivities, past aspirations, and competitive absorption that further drives people to actively consume these events. Kurtzman & Zauhar (2005) continue by

introducing four motivators describing alternative reasons people invest in sporting

events: physical motivators, cultural motivators, interpersonal motivators, and status /

prestige. Those experiencing physical motivation may have a need or drive to consume a

sport such as fitness or previous experiences with sports. From a cultural standpoint,

consumers value tradition in historic sites such as sports museums or halls of fame for

specific sports. If a consumer were to have an interpersonal motivation to consume a

sport, one would focus on the potential for socialization to be had in places such as sports

resorts, cruises, or world games such as the Olympics. Finally, demonstrated by people

enticed by high profile destinations, athletic celebrities and distinctive sports events,

status and prestige may be a factor influencing many to attend sporting events.

Aside from the obvious interest in sports and the different emotions driving

consumers to be involved, the transfer of money is a reliable way to track consumer

interest and trends. In the U.S., the spectator sports industry is worth $28 billion and it is

estimated that consumers spend almost $17.1 billion every year on tickets to sporting

events (Kim & Trail, 2010). Spectator sports are a big business and sometimes an

addiction for Americans. According to Quinn (2009), $25 billion was spent on spectator

sports in 2007, and specifically, Division I National Collegiate Athletic Association

(NCAA, to be explained later) sports generate $2.4 billion annually. Strictly for purposes

of scale and comparison, a professional basketball team such as the Los Angeles Lakers

generated $47.9 million in profits in 2008 and the Dallas Cowboys football team posted

an astounding $1.6 billion net worth (Plunkett 2009). To put this in terms of collegiate

versus professional, The Ohio State University (OSU) posted profits of $104.7 million in

2006 (Plunkett, 2009). Having said this, OSU was the highest-earning collegiate football team in 2006.

While it is clear that consumers spend more money on sports than most other leisure activities, the focus of this research is to find and examine the true impact certain aspects of the game day experience have on fans' satisfaction. To gain a better understanding of collegiate football in the United States, a thorough examination of its hierarchy follows.

Sports defined

As mentioned previously, sports have existed for thousands of years. Although changes have been made since the very first Olympics in 776 BC, several truths remain for general sporting events. Sport has been defined by Quinn (2009) as a physical competition that must involve an unknown outcome that is objectively measured. For example, a soccer game meets the criteria by having points scored by goals that are unknown as to when and exactly how they will be earned. The rules guide fair play and officials are in place to enforce unbiased decisions on any aspect of the game. NASCAR for example would be in question as a sport to Quinn (2009) based on the fact that the main competitor (the driver) for a team does not exert themselves physically, but rather uses a mechanical device (a vehicle) to execute a competition. With regards to football, it is much like the soccer example used previously. The outcome is unknown and players enter a state of physical exertion in order to score a greater number of objectively earned points than the opposing team. At the end of a set amount of time dictated by regulations and enforced by officials on (and off) the field, a winner is declared. With this term

"sport" comes hundreds of explanations. In truth, whether or not a fan's focus is on an activity deemed a "sport" should matter very little; once again, it is the consumer market that drives the popularity and demand for each and every publicized activity.

Collegiate sports in the U.S. represent a very small sample of all existing sports, and the NCAA decides which of these are included. Because the NCAA's hierarchical structure is somewhat involved and actively affects the current research, it will be explained in the methods section of this paper.

Sports Tourism

Although the exact origin of the term is unknown, the phrase sport tourism became popular in the 1980s when the International Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation sponsored the first congress that specifically spoke to sport tourism. It is used to describe the actions of one or more consumers traveling specifically to watch or participate in a sporting event. Varying definitions of the term have risen since research began on the topic. Gibson et al. (2002) define it as a "Leisure-based travel that takes individuals temporarily outside of their home communities to participate in physical activities, to watch physical activities, or to venerate attractions associated with physical activities". Another explanation by Standeven & De Knop (1999) states that sport tourism includes all forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, whether participated in casually or in an organized way for non-commercial business or commercial reasons that requires travel away from one's home and work locale. For lack of a simple, undisputed definition, "one traveling for reason of a sporting event" will suffice.

Sport tourists can be broken down into one of three categories or motives groups. According to (Shonk, 2006), there are tourists who visit places in order to attend sport events, those who are visitors of famous sport related attractions, and finally active tourists who travel with the objective to do active holidays and participate in sport and recreation related activities such as golf or tennis. More specifically, Gammon & Robinson (2003) further define the varying levels of sport tourists including the terms "sport tourist," and "tourist sport." They use both hard and soft definitions to set apart the differences among tourists as also described in a corresponding model. A "hard" sport tourist is one that travels primarily for the active or passive participation in competitive sport, while a "soft" participant travels to actively participate in a sporting or leisure interest that is not necessarily competitive (Gammon & Robinson, 2003). "Hard" sports tourism events include the Olympic Games, the World Cup, or the Tour de France. Examples of "soft" sport tourism encompass activities such as "fun runs," skiing, and cycling tours. These activities exhibit participation but are not specifically competitive. In contrast, a "Tourist sport" is one that travels with a competitive sporting event as a secondary motive (Gammon & Robinson, 2003). Examples of this may include miniature golf, swimming, rowing, sports cruises, or other activities tourists may participate in as an afterthought to their traveling experience.

The earliest example of sport tourism was the Pan-Hellenic games at Greece in 776 B.C. (Shonk, 2006). Although sports at that time were much different from the current display, similar motives then encouraged participation and a growing interest in sport. An article by the Philippines Department of Tourism (2010) states that not only is sports tourism a growing market, but is recognized globally by the World Trade

Organization and the International Olympic Committee as an emerging market, both of whom are global strongholds representing global economics and global sport, respectively. Not only is it emerging, but tourism today is the world's number one industry. By 2011, travel and tourism is expected to be more than 10% of the global domestic product. Of this 10%, sports tourism can account for as much as 25% of all tourism revenue (2010). Gibson et al. (2002) found that in America, event sport tourism generates an estimated $27 billion a year and more than 75 million American adults reported attending a sports event as either a spectator or as a participant while traveling in the past five years.

An excess of issues are introduced when a sport tourist addresses the gamut of choices that must be made before, during and after traveling to a sporting event. Sport tourism is a service industry that requires planning; just as hotels and restaurants serve their guests, event planners and employees must address how to best meet the needs of sporting event participants. At a football game this can include all services provided inside and outside of the stadium. Kouthouris & Alexandris (2005) focus on the future behavioral intentions of spectators when they conclude that a sport tourists' expectations must be matched by the services provided at such events. Evidence of proper service quality will result in repeat customers and a stronger relationship between the service provider and the customer. A detailed list of provided services will be further discussed later on.

Gibson et al. (2002) researched a similar environment at the University of Florida, focusing on fans attending football games and the money spent while on-site. By eliminating in-state guests, surveys measured the activity of those fans attending from

across the Florida border. Their research found that most participants arrive on Fridays before the games on Saturday, and leave town on Sunday. Often times these participants own homes in Gainesville or travel in Recreational Vehicles (RVs) to avoid hotel overbooking and other common problems associated with traveling to highly occupied areas. Gibson et al. (2002) found that although a large influx of game-day attendees brings obvious revenue to the community, there is a point at which the host city reaches capacity and service levels decline, resulting in a negative tourist experience. This in turn decreases the intent of visitors to return in following seasons and makes known the need for communities to consider the size of events being hosted in relation to capacity restrictions. From a communal relations perspective, Hritz et al. (2010) further notes that smaller scale events contribute to a social benefit, as residents are more likely to volunteer time to the operation.

In an effort to speak to the perceived impacts of sport tourism to an urban host community, Hritz et al. (2010) look at the social, environmental, economic, and general negative impacts of sport tourism on a given area. The area in question in this study happens to be Indianapolis, Indiana. Residents were mailed a questionnaire in an attempt to gauge the perception of this specific group of people on the impact sport tourism has on their city. In this study, social and economic benefits were viewed by residents as the most important benefits reaped from sport tourism. The Social Exchange Theory, made popular by Malinowski in 1922, is a perspective that describes social change as a process of negotiated exchanges between individuals or groups. Hritz et al. use this theory to investigate both positive and negative attitudes of residents to tourism in a destination.

The conclusion postulates that hosts and visitors exchange resources that are valued by both parties.

As Gammon & Robinson (2003) state, "Sport and Tourism is not just about the management and operations of mega events; it also concerns offering the consumer specific Sport and Tourism related services and experiences." In another statement regarding the importance and growth of this area of study, Sean Gammon, the editor of the Journal of Sport Tourism adds "It is not so much about the ingredients used, but rather the blend of ingredients which gives sport tourism its uniqueness and identity" (Gammon 2003). Sports and tourism, though very different when looked at apart, are a powerful subject when used together to describe the motives and intentions of those involved. These two terms also encompass the phenomenon known as tailgating. As the focus of this research it is important to consider what little literature does exist on the topic in order to gain an understanding of what we do know about this ritual.

Satisfaction and its role in sports

Fandom requires a certain level of satisfaction to continue the commitment of time, money, and effort to an organization. The patterns of emotional response to product experiences are evaluated in Westbrook & Oliver's (1991) study of consumption emotion. It is stated that satisfaction is understood to facilitate consumer learning from previous experience and explains important post-purchase notions such as complaining, word of mouth, product usage, and repurchase decisions. This is important in the sporting event context as there is a higher level of effort necessary to consume an event as opposed to simply purchasing a product. Joy, excitement, pride, anger, sadness, and

guilt are also all found to be widely-felt emotions in response to product consumption. Satisfaction is defined here as "… a postchoice evaluative judgment concerning a specific purchase selection" (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991, p. 84), and is found to vary along what they call a "hedonic continuum," or levels ranging from "unfavorable" to "favorable." With this in mind, the authors found evidence linking the happiness/contentment and delight emotional patterns to be highly associated with absolute levels of satisfaction. In an assessment of Westbrook et al. (1991) work, Mano & Oliver (1993) confirm that not only does satisfaction positively correlate with pleasure, but is also enhanced by the positive arousal states, meaning those experiencing pleasure will also experience satisfaction. This chain-like reaction has been examined and developed into a framework that effectively illustrates the effects of placing the needs of employees and customers first. It is then safe to assume a satisfied customer results in positive repurchase intentions, loyalty, trust, and continued fandom.

Background Information

Before sport is thoroughly examined, it is necessary for readers unfamiliar with United States collegiate sports to understand the structural components associated with them. As the nature of this service environment is quite different from that of others, the explanation of the NCAA organizational structure is necessary. Since the majority of data used for the current research originated from fans of universities in the SEC, it too will be explained in detail. Understanding these governing bodies is essential to realizing the significance of the schools involved in this research, as well as the role football plays

in their culture. Following is a brief description of organizations who house athletics at universities participating in this research.

NCAA Football

The NCAA is an organization consisting of more than 1000 member colleges and universities spanning the United States (Plunkett, 2009). The NCAA's main function is to act through its member schools to facilitate in producing quality college and university sports by maintaining core values and objectives for collegiate sports (NCAA, 2010). Created in 1906, the NCAA was designed to protect student athletes from the harsh practices of collegiate sports of that time (NCAA, 2010). The organization has been built around an all-encompassing list of core values to include a collegiate model of athletics, high levels of integrity and sportsmanship, the pursuit of excellence in both academics and athletics, and the role of enhancing sense of community created by intercollegiate athletics (NCAA, 2010). Also included in the core values are guidelines on the athletic culture, respect for differences among peers, and leadership within intercollegiate athletics. One might view the NCAA as the governing authority for all things in collegiate sporting events. According to extensive research by Plunkett (2009) in the sports almanac, the breakdown and explanation of NCAA status is worth mentioning: there are three divisions, known as Divisions I, II, and III that separate the member schools. The group to which a school belongs is dictated largely by how many male and female sports are being practiced. For instance, an NCAA Division-I school must have at least seven sports for both men and women or six for men and eight for women. As for divisions II and III, the requirements are less demanding, and in most cases the total enrollment for those schools is much smaller (Plunkett 2009). Ohio State University, the

top grossing school in NCAA football, is a Division-I school who has 18 men's sports and 19 women's (The Ohio State University, 2010). An NCAA Division-III school such as Sewanee, The University of the South, fields 11 men's and 13 women's sports. Although this far exceeds the requirements for even a D-I member school, Sewanee's enrollment is but a fraction of those attending OSU (Sewanee 2010). Enrollment is one of many other stipulations the NCAA places on categories or divisions of their members. The teams examined in this research will be strictly NCAA Division-I schools, all having top-tier football programs.

SEC Football

Division-I schools in the NCAA each fit into one of twelve conferences, including the Southeastern (SEC), Atlantic Coast (ACC), Pacific (Pac 10), Big 10, and others. These conferences represent various regions in the U.S. and have different schemes for organizing their member schools. Conferences are not inter-related within the NCAA, but exist to give schools competing against each other governance and prestige to their members, further than that of which the NCAA gives. The majority of the sample used in this research comes from schools belonging to the SEC. The SEC is a group of twelve NCAA Division-I athletically-comparable schools, all located in states considered to be in the southeastern United States. The SEC's specific purpose is explained in its mission statement: "The purpose of the Southeastern Conference is to assist its member institutions in the maintenance of programs of intercollegiate athletics which are compatible with the highest standards of education and competitive sports" (SEC, 2010). Following are the twelve members: The Universities of Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Arkansas, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Auburn, Vanderbilt,

Mississippi State, and Louisiana State Universities (SEC, 2010). These twelve schools are divided into the eastern and western regions with each having six teams, used for scheduled competitions and conference championship seeding.

Measurement of satisfaction in sports

Measuring satisfaction in sports requires a much different approach than would a method employed in another service setting such as a hotel, restaurant, or other hospitality establishment. Due to its unique consumption aspects and primarily outdoor environments, it is much harder to assess consumer perceptions pre- and post-consumption. Previously mentioned, the servicescape (Uhrich & Benkenstein, 2010; Lambrecht, Kaefer, & Ramenofsky, 2009; Grace & O'Cass, 2004; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996, 1994; Bitner, 1992) at a sporting event lends itself to a far more varietal service experience than other settings. Following are a number of methods of satisfaction measurement used specifically at sporting events. While some of these methods have worked in previous research, it is important to mention that none of the existing methods employed in past studies have taken hold and become universal satisfaction measurement tools. This alone represents the need for a malleable sporting event satisfaction scale that can be used in a number of environments.

SPORTSERV

SPORTSERV "…is an instrument designed to measure spectators' perceptions of service quality in professional sports" (Theodorakis, Kambitsis, Laios, & Koustelios, 2001, p. 433). SPORTSERV utilizes five dimensions over a 22-item scale made up of perception-performance statements. They attribute the performance-based statements to

Cronin & Taylor's (1992) claim that such measurements are more proper for overall service quality than disconfirmation-based measurements (Theodorakis et al., 2001). The five dimensions used are:

1. Access: four items, e.g. parking availability outside stadium

2. Reliability: four items, e.g. team delivering services as promised

3. Responsiveness: six items, e.g. team's personnel providing prompt service

4. Tangibles: six items: e.g. visual appeal of stadium

5. Security: two items: e.g. feeling safe inside stadium

Theodorakis et al. (2001) remind us that a sporting event is unique in that it consists of the core product and the extensions to that core product. Since the core product cannot be manipulated to affect the outcome, the ancillary services are what is changed and improved to yield a better product. Sport marketers can positively influence the satisfaction of customers by manipulating those aspects of service that are identified as product extensions under their total control. For this reason, a sport-specific scale is necessary for measuring service quality in such environments."

The assurance and empathy dimensions found in SERVQUAL (mentioned previously) have been replaced by Access and Security in the SPORTSERV model to allow for a more sport-specific scale with three of the same dimensions remaining. Although the authors claim it is for use in a "professional" sport setting, many sporting events today mimic the format of similar professional competitions, making this tool useful in general sporting events.

SERVICE MAPPING

O'Neill, Getz, & Carlsen (1999, 2001) experimented with a less popular form of service quality measurement known as service mapping. Used to evaluate and improve service quality at special events, it is a way to visually represent a service by showing both the process of the service, the roles customers and employees play, and the observable elements of the service (Bitner, 1993). This process is often praised for its ability to take an intangible service and turn it into a tangible model. Often combined with "blueprinting" (Shostack, 1981), service mapping can be completed through asking consumers for feedback, training observers to note what is experienced throughout the event, or log-books completed by a research team or other customers (O'Neill et al., 1999). In their study, O'Neill et al. (1999) first identified the following:

- The process and actions required by visitors to enter, to experience, and to depart the event;

- The nature and effectiveness of encounters with staff and volunteers;

- All tangible evidence of services provided;

- Observations of other visitors and crowd behavior that can influence the event experience; and

- Knowledge of management systems and operations

Finally, several aspects of the event were analyzed to identify shortfalls and successes: visitor flow and actions, physical evidence, visible staff contacts, invisible management processes, survey results, and direct observations. The ability of event managers and other employees to see "moments of truth" and potential shortfalls on a service map make it perfect for annual or other regularly-scheduled events.

TEAMQUAL

Finally, TEAMQUAL (McDonald, Sutton, & Milne, 1995) was developed as a way to measure service quality while honing in on the specific characteristics of a professional sporting event. It is essentially a modified version of SERVQUAL made to fit into a sport-leisure setting (Tsuji, Bennett, & Zhang 2007). TEAMQUAL is used sparingly and has not made it into mainstream service quality measurement practice.

EVENTSERV

Perhaps the most relevant to the current study, EVENTSERV is a scale developed by Martin & O'Neill (2010) to provide the existing body of research in this area with a scale that could be used more universally in an outdoor sporting event setting. 30 items were organized across 8 factors, including Food and Beverage, Restrooms, Access and Flow, Employees, Service Quality, Signage, Behavior of other fans, and Parking. Following this study it was realized that in order to reduce survey fatigue, a shorter more focused scale was needed. From this stemmed the EVENTSERV-Short scale, which accomplished the same task as the previous scale in a much more abbreviated fashion.

Orientation toward a Sporting Event (OSE) Scale

Pons, Mourali, & Nyeck (2006) also chose to examine the underlying motivations a sport consumer may have to attend a sporting event. A three-dimensional model derived from sensation, cognition, and socialization motives was developed to describe participants' orientation toward sporting events. This study suggests three main categories describe the majority of variance in reasons why consumers continue to attend sporting events.

There are several aspects that draw the masses to sporting events. According to Smith and Stewart (2007), sport consumers experience a number of important psychological, social and cultural needs such as escapism, stimulation, entertainment, national pride, cultural celebration, and personal identity. Within this study, research by Wann (1995) was cited as the Sport Fan Motivation Scale and was developed to measure eight motivations of sport tourists: eustress, arousal, escapism, entertainment, aesthetic pleasure, group affiliation, family needs, potential economic gain, and self-esteem. In a similar study by Trail & James (2001), the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC) was developed to find vicarious achievement, knowledge acquisition, drama, aesthetics, appreciation of athlete skills, physical attraction to athletes, escape, and family and social interaction as specific motivators. Aside from this research focused on finding the precise reasons consumers attend sporting events, there remains the picturesque "fan" that has a simple affection for sports.

Limitations

Although these scales are all useful in sport-specific service settings, it remains that no one scale has been chosen as the universal measurement tool for service satisfaction at sporting events. Not only have none been universally accepted, but the concept of TG has largely been left out. While this highlights the need for such a scale, the absence of a universal sporting event scale has made choosing such for the current research difficult. The analysis used will be discussed further in the methods section of this paper.

Tailgating: why we care/why is it important

Tailgating Defined

In the realm of collegiate football season, there exists an encompassed feeling, an experience wholly different from the excitement of the competition itself. For many, the hours spent traveling to- and approaching the main event brings about an opportunity to share with fellow fans, friends, and family the unique celebration of victory associated simply with membership to the exclusive group of students, alumni, and fans of colleges and universities nationwide. Within what often becomes an outdoor living room, an array of social interaction between adults and children alike occurs in a revered practice known as Tailgating. Adorned with school colors, fans and their self-created venues make up a tradition dating back to the late 1800s (Cartwright, 2005).

For students on campus, classes are often shortened as even school faculty and staff prepare in advance for a weekend of much-anticipated social episodes. Alumni from miles away flock with their families and fellow graduates to become students again for two days, basking in the days of reflected youth and swagger they once had each Fall. Finally, natives of these college towns either partake in the festivities or flee the city each weekend, depending on their association with the school. For small college towns it can be a revenue booster, while larger, more diverse cities could complain of inconveniences from stolen parking spots to increased traffic on roads and in retail. Tailgating represents the close-knit community formed at hundreds of colleges and universities every autumn. The feelings associated with this experience are great in number and have been found worthy of examination in an attempt to find statistically significant results as to what and how important this famed practice really is.

The first known participation in TG occurred at the football game between Rutgers and Princeton in 1869. Records hold that as spectators of the game arrived by horse and buggy, hunger and thirst led to the unpacking and consumption of food and drink before the game commenced (Cartwright, 2005). As the name suggests, tailgating is often thought of as sports fans gathering behind a pickup truck or other large utility vehicle and socializing throughout the time spent before, during and after a sporting event. Eating, drinking, and other social activities take place in such an environment and it is often viewed as tradition at some events. A definition within the *American Century Dictionary* (1995) states: "To participate in in a picnic that is served from the tailgate of a vehicle, as before a sports event." Exactly how tailgating is practiced varies from site to site and is especially different between collegiate and professional sports settings. For the purposes of this research, tailgating will be referred to as an activity fans participate in before, during, and after NCAA football games to increase the social experience at the event.

Although there are a number of recently-developed, informal websites devoted to tailgating (www.tailgating.com, www.thetailgater.com), there is a severe lack of academic research and therefore a hole in the tourism literature that speaks specifically to the practice of tailgating. The significance of this topic is often overlooked or grouped with the sporting event itself, leaving a nearly nonexistent literature base from academic research. The following research will address consumer satisfaction with Tailgating (TG) and collegiate football, as well as future behavioral intentions regarding returning to- and recommending the experience to others.

Tailgating Significance

The question of significance may arise from this absence of literature, but statistics reinforce that this is a significant and vastly expanding niche in the tourism industry. The *American Tailgater Association* claims that in 2005, 20-23 million fans participated in TG. Christopher Megerian (2007) writes in a Business Week article *The Prize in the Parking Lot*, that according to the 2006 National eating trends survey the number of tailgaters has doubled in the past eight years. In the same year, 50 million tailgaters spent from $7 billion to $15 billion on food and equipment (Megerian, 2007). In a Baylor University news article, Cartwright (2005) estimates that about $500 is spent on food and drink alone per tailgater every season, and Delaney (2008) tells us that 47% of tailgaters do this six to 10 times every season. These statistics represent the affluent nature of tailgaters and their impact on the host community. Megerian (2007) also tells us that 57% of tailgaters make $75,000-plus annually, while some 82% are homeowners. This data represents the significant affect major sporting events have on the economic development and tourist traffic in a city or region (Hritz & Ross 2010).

Existing Research

Within the scarce literature focused on tailgating, James, Breezeel, & Ross (2001) examine four aspects of tailgaters, including (1) the type of people who participate, (2) the reasons people begin tailgating, (3) how often people tailgate every year, and (4) whether or not people continue to tailgate over an extended period of time. While all relevant questions, this does not satisfy the roots of fans' FBI. In order to accurately profile the devout tailgater, one must survey not only the value placed in TG, but also the level to which they are satisfied and how their satisfaction relates to their FBI. In this

same study, James et al. (2001) revealed that for most fans, TG and the game itself were thought of as two activities, and that attendance at one implied attendance at another. In contrast, Megerian (2007) states that 35% of tailgaters never step foot inside the stadium, but instead view tailgating as the main event and the game itself as a secondary focus, or even an excuse to tailgate. It is important to recognize that the six year time lapse between these two sets of results could very well be the representation of the change in importance of this activity over time. This would highlight not only the growing nature of TG but also the importance of research within the ritual.

A small but important body of research has been devoted to risk management and specifically alcohol consumption at sporting events and TG (Gillentine, Miller, & Crow, 2010; Read, J. P., Merrill, J. E., & Bytschkow, K., 2010; Miller & Gillentine, 2006; Wieberg, S., 2005; Wechsler, H., Seibring, M., Liu, I, & Ahl, M., 2004; Lowe, P., 2000; Wechsler, H., Kelley, K., Weitzman, E. R., San Giovanni, J. P., & Seibring, M., 2000). The topic of alcohol consumption is addressed in the current research more as a means of representation than specific research on that aspect alone. Parking operations and opposing fan behavior will also be included, seeking satisfaction decisions with each rather than risks associated with these variables.

A more recent study by Drenten, Peters, Leigh, & Hollenbeck (2009) once again focuses on motivations associated with tailgating. Although largely similar to prior TG research, a notable and unique aspect of this study is the use of the term "ritual" to describe tailgating and the examples given to illustrate why this term is used. Territorial competition, self-recognized "die-hard" fans (p. 102), and preparation weeks or even months before the event itself provide this southeast university study with hard evidence

of the importance this activity holds with college football fans. Delaney (2008) mentions the latent and manifest reasons people participate in TG. Latent reasons, or those that are unintended, could be the community experienced and bonds shared by fellow tailgaters. Manifest functions of TG could bear the more connotative activities involving food and alcohol. Whatever the reasons to TG may be, existing research has suggested fans are positively affected by performing this ritualistic behavior (Delaney, 2008).

It is clear that (1) TG is widely used by sports fans nationwide, (2) it is an influential spectacle in the sports tourism industry, and (3) TG is a major, if not defining part of fans' overall game day experience (OE). While the economic benefits of tailgating may seem obvious, the value placed in the activity by the fans should be considered. Does tailgating effect the satisfaction level of the fans with their entire football experience? Could it be of equal importance when compared to the football game itself? In the methods to follow, the intent is to outline the specific process that has been used to cultivate the data that will result in an answer to these questions.

Chapter III

Methods

Research Considerations

As mentioned previously, tailgating in the United States is a lucrative business. From equipment used, gasoline for travel, and food and beverage, this ritual requires a wide array of resources. This produces a variety of economic impacts. Due to the variety of resources used for this activity, surrounding local businesses benefit immensely from this branch of tourism. It is for this reason organizations that benefit from this famed tradition must realize it is their duty to cater to these devoted fans and to keep them satisfied with the intent to return to future events. The importance of this research was realized in the Fall of 2009 when a pilot study was conducted at a major southeast university. The results from this study led to the improvement and re-use of this research idea.

Research Questions

The main goal of this research is to contribute to the growing body of tailgating literature by assessing the validity of a proposed theoretical model. The analytical path of this model assesses four questions associated with Tailgating (TG), Overall Game Day Experience (OE), Overall Satisfaction (OS), and Future Behavioral Intentions (FBI):

RQ1 To what extent do Tailgating and the Overall Game Day Experience

correlate with one another?

RQ2 To what extent does Tailgating affect Overall Satisfaction?

RQ3 To what extent does the Overall Game Day Experience affect

Overall Satisfaction; and

RQ4 To what extent does Overall Satisfaction affect Future Behavioral

Intentions?

In an effort to fill the recognized void found in the literature around this topic, a

scale to measure satisfaction, perceived service quality, and intent to return is needed.

A number of methods have been previously employed to measure similar factors

in various settings. SERVQUAL, as developed by PZB (1988), has been used more

frequently than others, which alone adds significant validity. Because of its known

shortcomings in outdoor environments (Carman, 1990; Cronin & Taylor, 1994), a

modified scale incorporating both SERVQUAL and SPORTSERV was used. A sport-

specific scale (SPORTSERV) was needed for certain factors characteristic of this

research setting and coupled with a proved scale such as SERVQUAL for validity.

To date, very little research has been done to link tailgating to overall satisfaction

levels with the entire game day experience. The little research done on tailgating

specifically has examined motivations heavily, leaving out important factors such as

satisfaction and future behavioral intentions (Drenten, Peters, Leigh, and Hollenbeck,

(2009); James, Breezeel, and Ross, (2001); Kurtzman and Zauhar (2005); Wann, Grieve,

Zaplac, and Pease, (2008)). This research attempts to seek out the correlation, or relationship, between satisfaction with both tailgating and the game itself.

Plan for Research

Before moving forward to test these hypotheses, identifying an ideal population for the current research, theoretical model development, research instrument development, IRB approval, and instrument employment all required consideration.

Methodological Overview

Having completed a pilot study quite similar to this research in the Fall of 2009, several obstacles had to be overcome in order to obtain the maximum possible response rate from this sample. The research setting for the pilot study included surveying popular tailgating areas around a large southeast university campus. Paper surveys were distributed to fans during normal tailgating conditions and retrieved upon completion. It was realized after this arduous on-foot effort that to conduct this research on a larger scale a different approach to survey distribution and data collection would have to be taken. Because of its widely accessible nature, the World Wide Web was deemed the most appropriate means of mass distribution and collection for the current research.

Research Sample

The main goal of data collection was to survey college football fans that participate in TG activities. In order to accomplish this goal, surveys were distributed over the Internet via several websites including Yahoo! Rivals and the Facebook social networking database. Below is a thorough description of each distribution method used.

Yahoo! Rivals, a site dedicated to providing devout college football fans with a hub for recruiting information, player performance and other important statistics was chosen. Social media was the primary target for data collection due to its unmatched growth as a common interest in recent years (Facebook, 2010). Three separate channels were utilized in distribution of the web-based survey, and are described as follows:

- Yahoo Rivals: this source serves as a common place for over 11.5 million active users, willing to pay a monthly fee to be a network member. Following is a quote from the Yahoo! Rivals website that adds significant validity to this source:

  "Rivals.com is frequently sourced in major daily newspapers across the country and appears regularly on ESPN, FoxSports, and other national and regional sports programming. Rivals.com is also the exclusive home of the Nike Football Training Camps and is the sole choice of the Football Writers Association of America and Basketball Writers Association of America as the two organizations' recruiting coverage provider" (rivals.com/content).

- Facebook: The world's leading social networking site (Facebook, 2011), attracting over 500 million active users worldwide. This channel was used because of its football fan "groups" established by fans to provide other followers a virtual meeting place to exchange any information related to that particular team. A link to the appropriate school's tailgating survey was posted on the main page of these "fan group pages". In addition to

these groups, a link to the online survey was seen throughout Facebook

users of numerous schools due to its shared nature.

- Email: those members of alumni groups, those belonging to a listserv

  supporting special groups such as season-ticket holders, or simply anyone

  unable to access the survey via the two previously mentioned methods

  were sent an email with a link to the web-based survey attached and asked

  to complete immediately following their tailgating experience.

To prevent bias within the results, settings were made so that no one user could

repeatedly submit data following an initial submission. Survey Monkey allows each

member to restrict IP address duplication, meaning no one user could respond more than

once.

Yahoo! Rivals, one of the three methods of participant solicitation, requires a

monthly premium to be paid for use of the site. This excludes not only those who do not

participate in membership, but also those not willing to pay for site use. Facebook also

requires registration and membership, but does not charge a fee to belong. Lastly,

electronic mail is a voluntary service for anyone with internet access and minimal

knowledge of information technology.

Theoretical model

Having disclosed the research questions, it is important to fully explain the

theoretical model that will be used in this research. It is the diagram that describes the

sequential flow of possible fan experiences, evaluations, and their outcomes. There are

four factors involved in the model for this research: tailgating (TG), overall game day experience (OE), overall satisfaction (OS), and future behavioral intentions (FBI).

Figure III: Theoretical Model
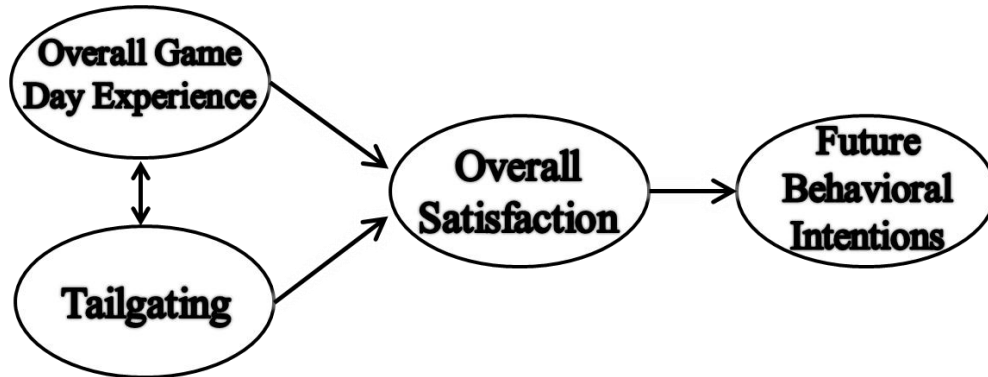
The understanding of the model used for this research is vital in realizing the importance of topics covered by the survey instrument. As discussed in the literature review, OS has made a clear presence as an important determinant of FBI. What has yet to be determined and will soon be addressed is the importance of TG versus the OE with relation to OS and FBI.

Research Instrument

The survey was designed using a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions in four different sections labeled demographics, tailgate/game, satisfaction, and future behavioral intentions. Quantitative questions consisted mainly of demographic indicators and overall satisfaction rankings across specific TG variables. Answers for these questions were based on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1-5, 1 being highly dissatisfied

and 5 being highly satisfied. Qualitative questions had open-ended response blanks for

respondents to type their answer. These were used for questions seeking a tailored

response such as a fan's offerings for feedback to improve TG at their home team's

location. Below are examples of questions from each category:

- Demographics: gender, ethnicity, age, occupation, etc.

- Event-specific indicators: activities participated in before/after game or when home team is away, etc.

- TG satisfaction: restrooms, tailgate location, staff appearance, police presence, etc.

- Future behavioral intentions: likelihood to return and recommend

Ethical Considerations

Great attention was given to ensuring exact requirements were met with relation

to conducting research on human subjects. Both the researcher and committee members

are CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) trained and have earned the

required certification to conduct social/behavioral research on human beings. The

Institutional Review Board of Auburn University reviewed and approved the current

research idea and proposed methods after examining the construct, relevant literature,

proposed survey, and any chance that harm could be evoked upon participants.

Instrument administration and participant anonymity has remained and is controlled by

the host website from where the survey was developed.

Data Collection

The pilot study confirmed that for the maximum possible response rate to be achieved, the use of a web-based survey was deemed the most efficient means of data collection for this research. Only through the World Wide Web could football fans from Universities across the United States be surveyed effectively and simultaneously. Survey Monkey, "… the world's leading provider of web-based survey solutions" (www.surveymonkey.com), was used for development, distribution, and collection of survey data. The ease and immediate allowance for participants to complete and return the survey raises the likelihood of response, leading to better population representation. In addition to response rate improvement, distributing the survey and collecting data online both help to eliminate costly, unsustainable paper products typically required for this type of research.

Yahoo! Rivals moderators for the six participating teams were sent an email with the corresponding survey URL link for their school prior to each of their home games. The survey link was then made available to active members of each team's site by way of the message boards utilized in each environment. Moderators "pinned" the link to the message board to allow members to see it first in the list of announcements on said message board. Those choosing to participate were instructed to click on the link and were directed to Survey Monkey, where they were administered a fan-tailored survey to complete at their discretion. Results were stored on Survey Monkey's database and made available to the researcher. Results were downloaded using Microsoft excel, and then transferred to an SPSS v. 18 database for analysis.

Non-response Bias

The final sample was retrieved on the last day of the 2011 NCAA collegiate football regular season, November 27, 2010. This allowed for all participating teams' fans willing to respond a chance for survey participation. The current research sample size includes 1,519 total respondents. Of this, 1,246 completed and usable surveys were retained for analysis, representing an approximate response rate of 82%. This strong representation shows not only the identification fans have towards TG, but also the personal value found within.

Summary

This chapter has effectively arranged the methodological processes for conducting such social/behavioral research in a simple, efficient, and ethical way. The research questions and overall plan for conducting the current research has been outlined for the reader's understanding. Following this chapter is a determination of the results having analyzed significant data. The results from collected data will further explain the significance of this research and also highlight future opportunities within collegiate TG.

Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

This chapter will offer the overall results collected from the survey data, presenting sections for each aspect of the questionnaire. Before the details of the current research are approached, pilot research conducted prior to this study will be explained to ensure the reader's understanding of the research climate. Following this, a short description of the sample demographic will be examined. The measurement instrument will then be explained and illustrated, followed by an assessment of validity and reliability. Finally, a summary will cap what has been presented within the results chapter.

Pilot Research

In order to investigate this issue and validate a plan for future research, a pilot study was conducted during the 2009 Auburn University (AU) Football season (Townsend, Nemec, & O'Neill, 2010). Following a modest literature review, a twenty five item questionnaire addressing various elements of the typical "game-day experience" was created and distributed to visitors at four different home football games. The questionnaire took the form of a direct disconfirmation measure where respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction across all variables on a five point Likert-type scale anchored at (1) Highly Dissatisfied through to (5) Highly Satisfied. Additionally, respondents were also asked to rate the extent to which they intended to return to another

collegiate football game and the extent to which they would recommend visitation to others. A series of demographic questions were also asked. A total of 500 surveys were distributed, of which 381 were returned representing an approximate response rate of 76%. This pilot study allowed for a test of a proposed tailgate satisfaction scale.

Of the 361 responses there was almost even gender representation with a 53/47% male/female split. Some 46% of respondents classified themselves as students, with the balance made up of homemakers, employed, retired and unemployed citizens. Just over 34% of respondents were in the age range 20-29, with some 32% being 50 years and older. Almost 64% of respondents were parked off-campus. Just over 95% classed themselves as AU fans and 75% of respondents indicated that they had attended 15 or more games in the past. Of those that travel to away games (23%) some 75% stated that the AU "Game-day experience" was better than others attended.

The analysis next turned to the question of the overall reliability of the scale; the original 25 item scale performed well at $\alpha = .905$. The next stage of the analysis was to conduct an exploratory factor analysis of respondent data. This test was designed to give structure to the various game-day experience satisfaction domains. The analysis made use of the VARIMAX factor rotation procedure in SPSS version 16. A component matrix was initially generated to ensure that the analyzed variables had reasonable correlations (greater than or equal to 0.4) with other variables. Unrotated and rotated component matrices were inspected and variables that did not correlate or correlated weakly with others were excluded (De Vaus, 1996). The result of the corresponding KMO of "sampling adequacy" was 0.895 and Bartlett's test for sphericity was 4334.289, which is considered a high Chi-Square, yet significant at the level of 1 percent (sig. =0.001). The

results of these tests rendered the data factorable and consequently the factor analysis was generated.

This initial analysis identified factor loadings (item to total correlations) along six dimensions accounting for approximately 62% of the explained variance. Further analysis of the rotated component matrix identified four variables as having cross-loaded and one variable failed to meet the minimum cutoff of 0.4. The offending items were removed and the analysis rerun. A total of two additional analyses were run due to subsequent cross-loading leaving a total of 17 items, loading cleaning across four dimensions, explaining approximately 62% of the variance. The overall reliability on the revised 17 item scale remained high at $\alpha = .889$.

Demographic Information

The current research sample size includes 1,519 total respondents. Of this, 1,246 complete and usable surveys were retained for analysis, representing an approximate response rate of 82%.

Table 1 represents the demographic profile of the current sample. Of the 1,246 complete responses, 93.1% were male, with only 6.9% being female. The age range suggests a young group, as over 65% of the participants are 40 years old or younger. 97.5% of the sample was Caucasian and 86% employed. When examining the education level of the current sample, 78.8% have a bachelor's degree or higher with 61.7% of the total respondents earning more than $80,000 annually.

Table I: Demographic Profile of Participants

Frequency of Ages	N	%	Frequency of Gender	N	%
<21	37	2.5	Male	1160	93.1
21-30	577	38.3	Female	86	6.9
31-40	366	24.3	Missing*	0	0
41-50	238	15.8	Total	1246	100
51-60	171	11.5			
>60	97	6.4			
Missing*	21	1.4			
Total	1507	100			

Annual Income	N	%	Education Level	N	%
<20	70	5.6	High School or GED	154	12.4
20-49	149	12	Associate's	108	8.7
40-79	248	19.9	Bachelor's	659	52.9
80-109	271	21.7	Master's	204	16.4
110-139	164	13.2	Doctorate	113	9.1
140+	318	25.5	Missing*	8	0.6
Missing*	26	2.1	Total	1246	100
Total	1246	100			

Occupation	N	%
Employed	1072	86
Retired	57	4.6
Unemployed	31	2.5
Homemaker	7	0.6
Other	79	6.3
Missing*	0	0
Total	1246	100

*Non-response bias

Tables II & III illustrate the aspects of this research directly relating to TG and other respondent properties dealing directly with fandom. 87.7 % of respondents regularly attend home games and 31.8% regularly attend games away from home. 60.4 % of participants are Alumnus of their favorite team's school and 26.8% are claiming to strictly be fans. Only 7.1 % are actual students and a negligible representation from

visiting fans occurred. 82.6% said they felt the TG experience is better at a home game environment, rather than traveling to TG at an away game. Not included in the following table, the following percentages represent the portions of proclaimed fans from each school's location: Alabama, 42.7%; Mississippi, 21.5%; South Carolina, 21.5%; Michigan, 12.7%; and Colorado, 1.5%.

Table II: TG-specific Self-Identification (who they are)

TG Better at Home	N	%
Yes	1029	82.6
No	94	7.5
Unsure	100	8
Missing*	23	1.8
Total	1246	100

Attend Home Games	N	%	Attend Away Games	N	%
Yes	1093	87.7	Yes	394	31.6
No	150	12	No	845	67.8
Missing*	3	0.2	Missing*	7	0.6
Total	1246	100	Total	1246	100

*Non-response bias

Table III: Relationship with university (what they are)

Relation to School	N	%
Alumnus	753	60.4
Student	88	7.1
Parent of Student	41	3.3
Fan of Home Team	334	26.8
Fan of Visiting Team	5	0.4
Other	22	1.8
Missing*	3	0.2
Total	1246	100

*Non-response bias

Measurement of variables

The goals of the current research include answering the research questions by testing the declared hypotheses mentioned in the methods section. Data collected from the 20 questions gauging satisfaction with variables surrounding the TG experience are the focus in order to accurately test the hypotheses. These 20 questions were designed based on the work with similar variables in the pilot study previously mentioned. Loosely modeled after SERVQUAL and SPORTSERV, satisfaction questions were designed around four factors directly relating to a typical TG environment or experience: (1) Access, (2) Tangibles, (3) Reliability, and (4) Security. The factor labeled "Responsiveness" in the SPORTSERV scale was omitted due to the varying nature of actual service provision during a typical TG experience. Below is a brief description of each predicted factor:

1. Access: 6 items; e.g. the hurdles fans are presented before successfully reaching their ultimate TG destination on (or off) campus.

2. Tangibles: 5 items; e.g. those variables in the game-day experience that can be touched and actively affect satisfaction levels with TG itself. E.g. comfort on-site, waste management.

3. Reliability: 4 items; the services expected being delivered as promised e.g. ticket office services and ability to claim a TG location.

4. Security: 5 items; feeling safe in/around TG location e.g. noise, crowd control, police presence.

Respondents were asked to answer each question using a 5-point Likert-type scale; (1) being Highly Unsatisfied through to (5) as Highly Satisfied.   Below, Table IV shows these questions and their corresponding hypothesized factors:

Table IV: TG Satisfaction Scale

TG Satisfaction Scale
Please Rate your Satisfaction with the following:
1.   Restroom facilities (tangibles)
2.   Comfort on-site (tangibles)
3.   Waste management (tangibles)
4.   Opposing fan behavior (security)
5.   RV site availability (access)
6.   Campus security (security)
7.   After-hours campus lighting (security)
8.   Police presence/enforcement (security)
9.   Crowd management (security)
10.   Noise (tangibles)
11.   On-foot navigation (access)
12.   Parking (access)
13.   Traffic management (access)
14.   Claiming your tailgate location (reliability)
15.   Tailgate value (reliability)
16.   Ticket office (reliability)
17.   Rules / Regulations governing tailgating (access)
18.   Auburn University staff appearance (tangibles)
19.   Availability of information regarding tailgating (access)
20.   Alumni tent (reliability)

The overall performance means and standard deviations are shown below in table V. These scores are based on a Likert-type 5-point scale with 1 being Highly Dissatisfied through to 5 as Highly Satisfied. The lowest scores are those associated with the parking (3.06), traffic management (3.17), and TG rules/regulations (3.41) variables.

Table V: TGSAT performance scores

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Restroom facilities	1245	3.57	1.05
Comfort on-site	1244	4.03	0.75
Waste management	1244	3.91	0.89
Opposing fan behavior	1240	3.57	0.86
RV site availability	1201	3.27	0.81
Campus security	1232	3.77	0.8
After-hours campus lighting	1232	3.72	0.87
Police presence/enforcement	1240	3.88	0.82
Crowd management	1238	3.82	0.82
Noise	1235	4.03	0.79
On-foot navigation	1238	3.93	0.83
Parking	1240	3.06	1.28
Traffic management	1240	3.17	1.2
Claiming your tailgate location	1239	3.59	1.1
Tailgate value	1233	3.94	0.92
Ticket office	1227	3.54	0.93
Rules / Regulations governing tailgating	1232	3.41	1.07
Auburn University staff appearance	1232	3.85	0.77
Availability of information regarding tailgating	1230	3.57	0.91
Alumni tent	1219	3.44	0.78

Factor Analysis

The focus now moves to separating groups of variables into recognizable categories that better describe the TG satisfaction construct. These categories, or factors, will help to (1) spotlight significant variables affecting TG satisfaction, (2) eliminate insignificant variables, and (3) group these variables with other related ones. Simply defined, a factor analysis is "…a technique for identifying clusters of variables that relate to each other" (Field, 2009). An exploratory factor analysis was conducted with data collected from the above 20 questions.

The goal of this analysis with relation to the current research is to discover significant factors that strongly influence a fan's satisfaction with TG and OE, so that eventually the researcher can use these to determine how they affect FBI. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .925. The analysis made use of the VARIMAX factor rotation in SPSS version 18. A component matrix was initially generated to ensure that the variables had reasonable correlations with other variables. Factor loadings are a considered a measure of the functional importance of a given variable to a given factor. Typically, researchers take a loading of an absolute value of more than 0.3 to be important (Field, 2009). In large samples, smaller loadings can be considered statistically meaningful. Stevens (2002) recommends interpreting only factor loadings with an absolute value greater than .4, which explains around 16% of the variance in the variable.

The initial analysis introduced factor loadings along 4 dimensions that accounted for approximately 55.64% of the variance. Further work was done to increase robustness, including the elimination of one weakly-loading variable failing to meet the minimum cutoff of .4 (On-foot navigation), two more holding insufficient communalities (RV site availability, Opposing fan behavior), and yet another 2 were eliminated due to cross-loading (Rules/Regulations regarding TG, TG value). A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted on the final 15 items with orthogonal rotation (VARIMAX). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .92 ('superb' according to Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity X^2 (105) = 6051.53, p <.001, indicated that correlation between items were sufficiently large for PCA. Four components had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained

61.76% of the variance, while its reliability remained high at α =.87. The scree plot

showed inflexions that would justify retaining 4 components. Given the large sample

size, and the convergence of the scree plot and Kaiser's criterion on four components,

this is the number of components that were retained in the final analysis. Table 4 shows

the factor loadings after rotation. The items that cluster on the same components suggest

that component 1 represents variables relating to security, component 2 accessibility,

component 3 service personnel variables, and component 4 overall comfort.

Below, Table VI represents the 4 factor loadings from the current data set.

Table VI: Rotated Component Matrix

	Component			
	security	access	service personnel	comfort
8. police presence/enforcement	.831			
6. campus security	.720			
9. crowd mgmt.	.693			
7. after-hours campus lighting	.661			
10. noise	.575			
12. parking		.828		
13. traffic mgmt.		.728		
14. claiming your TG location		.702		
20. alumni tent			.784	
19. availability of information regarding TG			.726	
18. staff appearance			.663	
16. ticket office			.509	
1. restroom facilities				.808
2. comfort on-site				.738
3. waste mgmt.				.700
% of variance	37.382	9.533	8.181	6.720
Eigenvalue	5.599	1.430	1.227	1.008
Chronbach's Alpha	.819	.726	.754	.701

Assumptions and decision rules

In order for a factor analysis to be valid for this purpose, several conditions must be met regarding the data set itself; the following list describes those standards necessary to move forward.

(1) General – respondent data must have inter-item correlation (greater than or equal to .4), be normally distributed, independent of others, and showing linearity to the relationships between variables.

(2) Sample Size – In addition to a 5 to 1 qualifying ratio of subjects to variables, 300 cases is typically deemed acceptable. In this case, 1246 subjects to 20 variables posts closer to a 50 to 1 ratio, deeming the current sample size more than adequate (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007).

(3) Variance – the reported factor solution must account for at least 50% of the variance (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007). The current analysis accounts for approximately 61% of the total variance across four factors.

(4) Quantitative scales – all variables must be measured continuously.

(5) Factorability of the correlation matrix – Bartlett's test of sphericity should achieve $\alpha = .05$ or smaller and the KMO sample adequacy measurement should find a minimum value of .6 or higher. Steven's (1992) benchmark of .4 as the minimum standard for considerable values is used.

(6) Factor selection –For the current research, both Catell's (1966) scree plot and eigenvalues greater than one will both be assessed as determinants of worthy factors. This strategy will allow limiting of the most representative factors.

(7) Rotated component matrix – Varimax, also known as an orthogonal factor solution, is used in this study due to its ease of interpretation and reporting. It was chosen over a Direct Oblimin, or oblique, method which will often yield similar results (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007). In this case, both techniques were tested; the Varimax rotation factor solution was deemed more easily interpreted and therefore used solely.

The decision was made to eliminate any variable that loaded on multiple components or whose values did not meet the required .4 threshold (Stevens, 2002). Some problems occurred on the original factor analysis in individual items. On variables 4, 5, and 11 communalities fell below .4, and variables 15 and 17 were eliminated due to cross-loading.

Non-Response Bias

Earlier the overall participation rate was discussed: 1,519 total respondents participated in the online survey, while 1,246 were completed and used for analysis. Although this 82% response rate is considered robust for social science research, the 18% non-response must be addressed.

Non-response bias is important to consider when analyzing survey respondent data. The two different types of participants, early and late respondents, could potentially report differing data and in turn reveal that the sample is not generalizable to the overall population. However, if both groups respond similarly, this indicates a good representation of the population in using the current sample. If it can be proven that late

respondents are no less enthusiastic about TG, it can be assumed that both types of respondents have similar levels of involvement with TG.

The sample was split; the first half of the 1,246 usable surveys' data was compared to that of the last half. An Independent Samples T-test was conducted with both halves, assigning the numbers "1" and "2" based on submission chronologically. The test to determine differences in early and late responders showed no statistical significance, suggesting an increase in the confidence level of the results' generalizability.

Additional Analyses

Additional thought must be given to addressing the stated research questions. A series of questions was strategically inserted at the end of the questionnaire to determine several things: the fan's (1) overall satisfaction with TG at home, (2) overall satisfaction with their home game day experience, (3) importance level of home football game, (4) importance level of TG at home, (5) likelihood of returning to home TG, and (6) likelihood of recommending TG at home. Responses were based on a Likert-type scale much like that of the satisfaction scale previously mentioned. Understood differences are the varied response options relative to the question. For example, a question about likelihood would lend itself to an answer labeled (1) Highly Unlikely to (5) Highly Likely, as opposed to Highly Satisfied or Unsatisfied. Below, Table VII shows frequencies for each overall satisfaction, importance, and FBI-related question.

Table VII: Overall Satisfaction and Future Behavioral Intentions

	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Importance of...	**HU**		**U**		**N**		**I**		**HI**	
Football Game	10	0.8	2	0.2	6	0.5	101	8.3	1092	90.1
Tailgating	17	1.4	24	2	93	7.7	489	40.2	591	48.6
Likelihood to…	**HU**		**U**		**N**		**L**		**HL**	
Return to Home TG	11	0.9	16	1.3	19	1.6	119	9.7	1057	86.4
Recommend Home TG	10	0.8	19	1.6	38	3.1	174	14.3	977	80.1
Overall Satisfaction with…	**HD**		**D**		**N**		**S**		**HS**	
Home TG Experience	25	2	21	1.7	40	3.3	503	41	639	52
Home Game Day Experience	11	0.9	44	3.6	37	3	404	33	728	59.5

Key:
H= Highly   U= Unimportant/Unlikely/Unsatisfied   I= Important
N= Neither   L= Likely   S=Satisfied

Table VIII: Mean and Standard Deviation

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Importance of...			
Football Game	1212	4.86	0.503
Tailgating	1215	4.33	0.822
Likelihood to…			
Return to Home TG	1223	4.79	0.631
Recommend Home TG	1219	4.71	0.69
Overall Satisfaction with…			
Home TG Experience	1228	4.39	0.807
Home Game Day Experience	1224	4.47	0.796

In order to fully satisfy the research questions, the analysis now turns to an attempt to link these scores with one another; in an effort to gauge relationships between each factor, a bivariate correlation has been conducted. Correlative relationships will be

used to show if satisfaction with one variable predicts satisfaction with another, and if these things make respondents more likely to return or recommend. An overall satisfaction score has been computed using scores from the TG satisfaction scale previously mentioned. Below, Tables IX-XII report the results of the bivariate correlations.

Table IX: RQ1

	Overall Game Day Satisfaction
Tailgating Satisfaction	.456**

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Table X: RQ2

	Overall Satisfaction
Tailgating Satisfaction	.854**

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Table XI: RQ3

	Overall Satisfaction
Overall Game Day Satisfaction	.852**

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Table XII: RQ4

	Intent to Return	Intent to Recommend
Overall Satisfaction	.417**	.581**

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

The variable "Overall Satisfaction" was computed using a sum of satisfaction scores from each separate TG and OE question. This method allowed for a score encompassing "overall satisfaction" with both variables combined.

Pearson's product-moment correlations are stated in the above tables to show the relationships between variables used in the theoretical model previously shown. Below, Figure I is a graphical representation of the theoretical model employed with added correlations between the illustrated variables.

Figure IV: New model with respective correlations
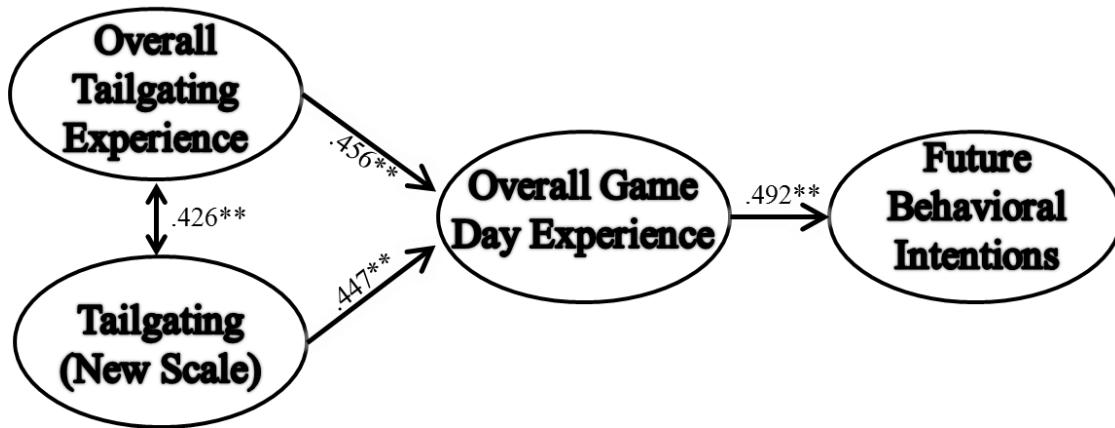
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

It can be seen that the inter-item correlations are of moderate strength and are statistically significant at r > .4, and p < .01. Table XIII shows the correlation between TG and FBI.

Table XIII: TG & FBI

	Intent to Return	Intent to Recommend
Tailgating Satisfaction	.317**	.491**

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Reliability

Reliability is most commonly used to describe the consistency of measurements (Zeller & Carmines, 1980). According to Field (2009), it is helpful to assess reliability when using a factor analysis to validate a questionnaire. "Reliability means that a measure should consistently reflect the construct that it is measuring" (Field, 2009). The more reliable a measure, the less it fluctuates due to random error (Zeller & Carmines, 1980). This is especially important to ensure the current measure can be used in future research if needed. An initial reliability test was necessary as this scale is entirely new. The original 20 item scale performed well at $\alpha = .899$, while the adjusted 15 item scale remained high at $\alpha = .870$. The following table presents these findings.

Table XIV: Coefficient of alpha scales

Scale	Number of Items	Alpha
Initial scale	20	.899
Final scale	15	.870

Validity

On measuring the truth and/or correctness of the current methods, validity presents itself as another important principle in these results. "The commonest definition of validity is epitomized by the question: are we measuring what we think we are measuring?" (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 457). Field (2009) puts simply, "Evidence that the content of a test corresponds to the content of the construct it was designed to cover." It is important to achieve validity in measurement methods to answer the question as to whether or not the method indeed measures what it is intended to measure. If it is suggested valid, the current behavioral research can then become valid scientific

knowledge (Kvale, 1995). Put simply, "Validation comes to depend upon the quality of craftsmanship in an investigation, which includes continually checking, questioning, and theoretically interpreting the findings" (Kvale, 1995). With the case of the current research, valid measurement would mean that the survey used was designed to sufficiently reflect the context of one's typical OE, and specifically the TG performed or experienced within.

Content validity

Content validity refers to the question of whether or not the measurement instrument measures what it has been intended to measure. Yahoo! Rivals, the main source of respondents to the questionnaire used is described previously in Chapter III. Having stated its reputation for holding members of utmost college football enthusiasm, it can be inferred that those responding have likely experienced the activities being studied. As for any other respondents, the questionnaire made clear the focus of the current research and solicited responses only from those having experienced a college football game day.

Construct validity

To validate simply means to authenticate, prove, or to verify. To give meaning in a student's research would be to validate the construct applied in their study. Speaking to scholarly research specifically, validation is the most important part of test development and use because it allows test scores to take meaning (Benson, 1998). Benson (1998) clarifies that a researcher does not validate a method used in a study, but validates the way scores are interpreted from the method used. Furthermore, validation is not a simple

'yes' or 'no' answer, nor does it require only one study to prove; it may require a number of efforts (Benson, 1998). Once validation has been assumedly reached, Benson (1998) assures us that it is an ongoing process, necessary due to the ever-changing nature of human behavior and traits exhibited in research on human subjects. Below, a three-stage process introduced by Benson (1998) for effective construct validation is presented, giving examples from the current research throughout; Substantive, Structural, and External stages are discussed.

The Substantive stage concerns how the construct itself is defined, theoretically and empirically. Within this stage, two common problems can occur: construct underrepresentation and construct irrelevancy. Underrepresentation occurs when the empirical realm is defined too narrowly (Benson, 1998). For example, within the collegiate game day experience (GDE), parking is an important variable to one's satisfaction with their experience. While it may be a major satisfaction contributor for many, parking alone is far too narrow of a focus when attempting to gauge a construct as broad as overall satisfaction. Construct irrelevancy occurs when the domain observed contains unrelated variables.

Next is the Structural stage, addressing the internal consistency of relationships among observed variables that are supposed elements of a construct. This is where statistical methods such as intercorrelations, factor analyses, and other tests are done to contribute to overall validity. Benson (1998) notes limitations to the famed factor analysis: "…both forms of factor analysis provide no information about what exactly is being measured: factor analysis reveals only that some number of factors can sufficiently explain the covariation among the observed variables."

This view of factor analysis is seemingly not widely accepted, as it is one of the most frequently used analyses in exploratory research; it used in the current study to detect factors contributing to overall satisfaction with Tailgating. A positive aspect of the factor analysis is its requirement of knowledge with respect to the theory being examined. A set of variables supposedly explaining a construct cannot be constructed without some existing knowledge of the construct itself. An explanation of the use of a factor analysis in the current research will be discussed later.

Finally, the third and final phase in Benson's (1998) plan to validate a construct is dubbed the External stage. This portion addresses relationships between different constructs observed in a study. A theoretical model has been developed for use in the current research and is intended to test and show relationships between each construct used, as well as convey the hypotheses in question.

Having described in-depth a strategy suggested for construct validation, it is important to review what has been done to ensure what can be done has been done. In an examination of Substantive elements occurring in the current research validity, two potential problems have been proposed by Benson (1998). Underrepresentation does not appear to be a problem when considering the initial 4 factors used in the pilot study loaded cleanly and explained 62% of the total variance. A similar approach with like results was conducted in the current research, contributing to the validation of the study. Irrelevancy, the second of two potential problems occurring in the Substantive stage talks to the possibility that variables observed could be unrelated to the overall construct; this is once again addressed in the pilot study. Those variables loading weakly or cross-loading were not considered for use in the current research.

When reviewing Structural components of the current research, the focus turns to the exploratory factor analysis conducted to reveal which variables contributed most to the total explained variance. A factor analysis was used primarily for the purposes of consistency after the pilot study was conducted. With regards to Benson's (1998) warnings against factor analyses' misrepresentation issues, alternative means of analysis could be sought in future research. This technique could then be compared to the existing factor analysis, further validating or failing to validate the use of factor analysis. Regardless of the analysis used, it is important to remember that it would not simply validate or fail to validate the construct, but merely raise or lower the degree of validation. As discussed at the beginning of this paper, an ongoing, more continuous measurement effort is necessary in any research on human behavior.

Externally, the theoretical model used in the research represents the four main constructs addressed in this research. These four constructs and their relationship with one another represent the four research questions proposed in this study. Convergent validity was addressed by way of a Pearson product-moment correlation among these four main constructs. Figure I illustrates these correlations. All correlations were significant at $p < .01$, with the inter-item correlation reaching $r > .4$ in all cases. This statistically significant inter-item correlation suggests the verification of the theoretical model being used.

Summary

Chapter 4 has offered the statistical results calculated from the instrument used for data collection in the current research. In an attempt to accurately describe the

demographic profile of the current sample, included in these results are characteristics such as age, gender, income level, occupation, and education level achieved. More specific to the topic of research, fandom and TG questions led to data explaining attendance to home and away games, and the respondents' relation to their home team/university. Most importantly, the original 20 TG satisfaction variables were presented over 4 proposed factors (Access, Tangibles, Reliability, Security), which eventually led to a Principle Component Analysis that revealed 4 new factors explaining approximately 62% of the total variance. The resulting scale, emerging from an analysis of eigenvalues and a scree plot, suggested a reduced 15 variables across factors that were re-named Security, Access, Service Personnel, and comfort. Finally, overall reliability, validity, and non-response bias were addressed as important factors that will affect any future research stemming from this. Next, a discussion section will seek to explain the findings, answer the proposed research questions, address limitations of the current research, and illuminate opportunities for future research.

Chapter V

Discussion

Overview

Spearheading the effort to deliver the reader a clear and concise representation of the current research, this chapter is divided into nine sections reporting the most significant conclusions derived from the study. First it will review again the description and purpose of the research, as well as re-state the research questions. Next, an explanation of the contribution and significance found from the results will put into perspective the initial importance this research represents. Limitations will follow, offering potential misrepresentation that can occur in research on human behavior. Next, future research opportunities, along with both academic and practitioner implications will be outlined to offer guidelines to those affected by this subject. Finally, a brief conclusion will be presented to summarize both the chapter and the entire study.

Description and Purpose of the Research

Chapter 1 has offered the reader an outline of noteworthy reasons to research TG satisfaction within the collegiate game day experience. Four main goals have been presented, centered on an afore-mentioned theoretical model that provides a path of feelings or emotions one might experience within a typical game-day event. These goals are to assess the extent to which (RQ1) tailgating affects the overall game day experience and vice versa, (RQ2) tailgating affects overall satisfaction, (RQ3) overall game day experience affects overall satisfaction, and (RQ4) overall satisfaction affects future

behavioral intentions. The reader can find the statistical analyses for each question in the previous chapter and the following section.

Addressing the Research Questions

The theoretical model shown in Chapters 3 & 4 highlights the research questions by using somewhat of a chronological path explaining a typical flow of feelings or emotions experienced by a fan participating in the game day experience. A Pearson's product-moment correlation was computed to assess the following four relationships. In this section, research questions will be paired with the reported findings for each issue.

- RQ1- To what extent do tailgating and the overall game day experience correlate with one another?

The OE consists of many optional social activities, one being TG.   There was a positive and significant correlation between fans' Tailgating experience and their Overall Game Day Experience: $r = .456$, $p < .01$. This result aligns logically with the literature, suggesting that Tailgating is an important part of the Overall Game Day Experience. It can then be suggested that fans' experience with either TG or their OE has a significant effect on the other. It is important to consider this when considering priorities that may be held by fans on a game day.

- RQ2- To what extent does tailgating affect overall satisfaction?

There was a positive and significant correlation between fans' Tailgating satisfaction and their Overall Satisfaction: $r = .854$, $p < .01$. This high correlation is understood partly because the OS score was determined using satisfaction scores from

both the TG and OE variables. Aside from this, TG is considered important to most fans, mean = 4.33, suggesting that TG should strongly affect one's OS. This statistic should be viewed as gospel for event planning managers, demonstrating the significance of this ritual as it relates to the overall satisfaction of fans and their game day experience.

- RQ3- To what extent does the overall game day experience affect overall satisfaction?

There was a positive and significant correlation between fans' Overall Game Day Experience and their Overall Satisfaction: r = .852, p < .01. Providing the afore-mentioned use of TG and OE variables to compute the OS score supplies a partial explanation to the high correlation between these two variables. Other reasons could include that the OE encompasses all activities surrounding one's game day experience, making it closely related to OS. Social activities other than TG include events held on campus prior to- and post-game, local business special events, restaurants, bars, and other promotional events surrounding a home-game weekend.

- RQ4- To what extent does overall satisfaction affect future behavioral intentions?

There was a positive and significant correlation between fans' Overall Satisfaction and their Future Behavioral Intentions. Values are reported respective to likelihood to return and recommend, respectively: r = .417, .581, p < .01. These statistics align with the ideals the literature suggests; it can then be derived that a fan's OS significantly and positively correlates with their likelihood to both return to- and to

recommend TG. Much like other satisfaction research (Shonk, 2006), a fan's OE and TG shows to be similar with regard to FBI being strongly affected by OS.

Other Contributions

Aside from the research questions there are other aspects of this research worth addressing. Similar to scales such as SERVQUAL, SPORTSERV, and TEAMQUAL, it was determined that a new satisfaction scale for tailgating was needed. To date no scale has addressed this ritual, leaving an opportunity for an exploratory framework to be developed to measure such. Affectively named with respect to its focus, the current scale will be referred to as TGSAT.

The final 15 variables remaining after the initial PCA suggest that four components comprise a solid representation of the contributing factors associated with one's TG experience at a home football game. These four factors include variables linked to Security, Access, Service Personnel, and Comfort. A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted on the final 15 items with orthogonal rotation (VARIMAX). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .92 ('superb' according to Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity X^2 (105) = 6051.53, p <.001, indicated that correlation between items were sufficiently large for PCA. Four components had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained a robust 61.76% of the variance, while its reliability remained high at α =.87.

It is important to realize the impact of such a scale. Results suggested both its reliability and its ability to explain a significant amount of the variance associated with

fan response. The success of this scale in its first deployment could encourage its use for future research in this area. A skeptic would question its validity after it having been used in only one study, therefore there is room for improvement through continued use. Its contribution to research in sports tourism and TG is both original and valuable, considering the lack of work in this area until now.

Finally, an important relationship was found between the research focus and its effect on FBI. TG is a large part of many fans' game day experience. Often times this activity occurs before, during, and after the main event, and has shown to be close in importance to fans as the football game itself. The correlation between fans' satisfaction with TG and their intent to return and recommend was moderate and significant at $r =$ .317 and .491, respectively. Both correlations showed statistical significance at $p < .01$.

Contribution and Significance

This study of TG is novel, relevant, and timely when considering the current rate of growth in popularity college football holds. The novelty of this project stems from the fact that very little research has been done in this area. As outlined in Chapter 2, the literature in this field has been devoted exclusively to customer satisfaction, service quality, and sport tourism with some linkage to future behavioral intentions. The TG experience itself has been little studied. What exploration there is has been limited to motivation, social aspects, and heavy drinking by college students.

The timeliness of such a project is twofold: (1) the southeastern school from which the majority of responses were obtained now holds the 2010 NCAA D-I Football National Championship Title, and (2) collegiate football is now more popular than ever

(Plunkett, 2009). Not only has possession of the national championship trophy led to increased interest in the football program at this school, but has likely increased the chances that fans will return to partake in the game day experience for years to come. This may lead to future research opportunities that will be discussed later. College football's popularity means that, because it is part of the OE, TG will also grow in popularity.

The ever-changing rules and regulations governing TG on college campuses are another reason this study is important right now. Schools across the United States have started to turn a time-honored tradition such as TG into a way to boost revenue. When in the past TG has always been included in regular game day festivities, it has now become a source of profit for many Division I-A universities. High-profile plots of land are being sold at a premium every season to those willing and able to pay for the convenience of prime territory, while those wishing to continue TG for no extra cost are being pushed to the outskirts of campus. Not only is space becoming expensive, but rules regarding the time fans are allowed to approach campus are becoming more stringent. Tailgaters are often being asked to refrain from claiming a TG location until the day-of the event. Finally, parking is yet another subject of controversy for many tailgaters. On-campus parking is becoming increasingly scarce, forcing a park-and ride situation that is not at all conducive to TG.

The relevance of the current research is explained in part by the financial contribution of TG. The sports industry in the U.S. alone boasts $441 Billion in revenue every year (Plunkett, 2008), with travel to these events totaling $182 billion each year (McCartney, 2009). This means that approximately $623 billion is spent each year

before lodging accommodations and dining are considered. Speaking to collegiate sports specifically, profitable university football programs are often able to fund the majority of additional sports that may not have means to sustain themselves financially otherwise (Plunkett, 2009). Although the TG scene at universities nationwide largely revolves around football games and not baseball or basketball, the level to which this ritual occurs each fall suggests a significant financial contribution to local business. The *American Tailgater Association* claims that in 2005, 20-23 million fans participated in TG. Christopher Megerian (2007) writes in a Business Week article *The Prize in the Parking Lot*, that according to the 2006 National eating trends survey the number of tailgaters has doubled in the past eight years. In the same year, 50 million tailgaters spent from $7 billion to $15 billion on food and equipment (Megerian, 2007). In a Baylor University news article, Cartwright (2005) estimates that about $500 is spent on food and drink alone per tailgater every season, and Delaney (2008) tells us that 47% of tailgaters do this six to 10 times every season. The current sample suggested a more modest average of approximately $300 per person, per event. These statistics represent the affluent nature of tailgaters and their impact on the host community. When examining the current sample, 78.8% have a bachelor's degree or higher with 61.7% of the total respondents earning more than $80,000 annually. This data represents the significant effect major sporting events have on the economic development and tourist traffic in a city or region (Hritz & Ross, 2010).

Limitations

Every effort has been made to reduce the inevitable development of limitations in this study, but as with any academic research these must be addressed. The following

section offers the impending limitations in order to improve future endeavors of researchers who wish to continue the study of the collegiate game day experience.

Although the current sample strongly reflects the environment in which data collection occurred and provides a quality voice in collegiate football, it could be suggested that the entire college football population is not adequately represented in this study. Yahoo! Rivals is an online home to 11.5 million avid football fans. It offers information ranging from player statistics and coaching staff interviews to inside recruiting information and videos taken at practices closed to the public. This wealth of information requires a monthly premium to hold membership, disallowing those who are unable to afford the cost or those simply not willing to pay for the information. This sample was limited to the population holding membership with Yahoo! Rivals and does not examine those outside of it.

This study and the particular football season being examined is a very small representation of what will happen within TG in the future. As the economy, job market, and TG rules set by universities change, this tradition will change drastically as well. Factors such as pre-season rankings, strength of schedule, wins and losses, cost of attending games, and changes in fuel prices all greatly affect participation and attendance at these events. Over time all of these will change, as will attitudes toward TG and fans' satisfaction.

There is an inherent weakness that is understood in all self-reporting survey instruments. The opportunity for question misunderstanding is greater when questionnaires such as this are limited to online participation. Also, this sample may not

accurately reflect the TG population with regards to age of respondents, as older or even elderly participants may not be "tech-savvy". This obstacle could either deter those subjects or altogether discount them as a part of the sample. Also, the survey included extensive demographic questions, technical TG questions, and asked participants for their satisfaction on a scale using several abbreviations. Looking at the saturation of the internet with surveys today, there seems to be an overflow of opportunities to participate in studies online. This and potential fatigue discussed earlier could lead to a decrease in percentage and quality of responses. Finally, the clear underrepresentation of research in this area leads to limiting comparing this research with other methods and results.

Future Research

While the current study provides a significant glimpse into many aspects of collegiate football event TG, it is only an initial attempt to explore the ritual and develop methods of theory and measurement. Following the limitations, these suggestions mirror what has been pointed out as factors limiting the acceptance of the current study. This section outlines some of the principle areas for future research.

Yahoo! Rivals is an excellent source for access to the most avid college football fans, however, it could be suggested that this site excludes participation by those fans who may not be as interested in the core event. The 35% of TG that never set foot inside the stadium (Megerian, 2007) are most likely not going to hold membership in Yahoo! Rivals, but possibly to the American Tailgaters Association (ATA) or other sport tourist's online forums. A similar approach could be used to a group such as this by gaining

approval from the site moderator and asking for their support in posting an online survey link on the website for members' perusal.

In response to the 'snapshot' in time that this study illustrates, there are many opportunities to address this constraint. One might consider following a set number of fans throughout several years of game day participation, allowing their changing attitudes and satisfaction levels to be shown through the progression of time and experience. This longitudinal approach could (1) confirm the original study, and (2) reveal the response a control group gives to the changing environment of college football game day festivities. Additionally, the impact of a winning or losing season can and should be observed in the future. The fans contributing the highest percentage of data in this research belong to the football team that now holds the 2010 Bowl Championship Series (BCS) trophy, making this particular data set valuable for future research when comparing it to OS and FBI of those fans belonging to schools with less successful football programs. Not only would this research be unique, but valuable for universities and event management alike. The ability to measure the impact on OS and FBI a winning season has on fans over a less successful season is valuable in and of itself. Additional opportunities lie within the differences between successful and unsuccessful seasons.

In increasing the strength associated with the survey instrument, several techniques could be applied in the future. A shorter, more focused survey that is available to a larger sample would fundamentally produce a sample with increased representation of the entire population. The use of the internet for distribution could be coupled with hand-delivered surveys to close the gap between those who frequent the internet and those who do not. Finally, future research in this area will alone strengthen

the perception of such instruments, allowing methods and results to be compared over time.

Academic Implications

For suggestions to academia looking to conduct research in this area, an examination of the research questions is again necessary. First, TG and OE are closely related because one is part of the other. At the locations surveyed, taking away one of these would drastically affect the other. The effects of both TG and OE on OS are naturally high due to the nature of the analysis used. A more individualized, stand-alone examination of TG could lead to new discoveries in fan behavior and their satisfaction using a focused approach. As with previous satisfaction research discussed in Chapter II, the effects OS levels have on FBI are statistically significant. The implications of this are that TG alone has some statistically significant effect on whether or not fans intend to return and recommend a collegiate football game day experience.

Some findings worth pointing out are the mean scores across several of the TG satisfaction questions. These scores are based on a Likert-type 5-point scale with 1 being Highly Dissatisfied through to 5 as Highly Satisfied. The lowest scores are those associated with the parking (3.06), traffic management (3.17), and TG rules/regulations (3.41) variables. These weaknesses could suggest overall fan dissatisfaction in the time spent approaching and constructing a TG location. The displeasure with rules/regulations speaks to the overall unrest with changes happening on campuses everywhere. Parking and traffic management are related and are a significant challenge when taking into account the thousands of out-of-town cars descending on a college campus for a home game weekend. Future work addressing these areas should add a qualitative measure and

seek to ask not only "what", but "why" these variables score low. Just as event managers have experience in planning, fans are able to see problems from a different perspective and therefore would be potentially able to offer suggestions otherwise unheard. Each institution undoubtedly has strengths and weaknesses unique to its own campus and fans. Those variables attaining the highest satisfaction scores include on-site comfort (4.03), noise (4.03), and TG value (3.94). These variables should not be forgotten, however, as often times the high scoring items are the most easily impacted and improved. There is room for improvement in any variables falling below "top-box" or 4.2 (class notes, HRMT 5530 10/19/09) as well as the opportunity for academia to further study and seek improvement in these variables.

The question addressing fans' satisfaction with the alumni 'tent' should interest the academic realm. Over 60% of this sample claim to be Alumni, a group known often to return to their alma mater to support events that will benefit the institution, but also give them the opportunity to excel by making contacts and exchanging information beneficial to their personal interests and success. The overall mean score for this variable was 3.44. While this survey did not separate alumni from other respondents, it is crucial for universities nationwide to address alumni satisfaction separately from all other fans. Through a satisfied group of alumni, a University can further promote and craft events that will lead to lasting fund raising opportunities, student recruitment opportunities, scholarships, and even overall school spirit.

The portion of this sample occupied by students of the home university may seem small at just over 7%. This should not discount their role that often provides the foundation for athletic program support. This feeling is carried throughout the week by

those who remain on campus while other supporting fans are no longer on location. Students live and breathe a university's creed and could be suggested the most avid fans, continually immersed in the sprit some fans only feel on Saturdays.

Another important point to make for academia is that this study provides a controlled (similar from season to season) environment to examine OS and FBI, unlike many other service settings that vary from experience to experience. TG is something that, unless changed by the host university, will remain similar, mimicking year after year what has happened in the past.

Practitioner Implications

For those involved in the planning and operations coinciding with a collegiate football game day, implications for this research apply differently. Mentioned previously with relation to financial impacts of TG, the overall impact this activity has on game day revenues should interest event planning and other administrative personnel. In addition to revenues on game days, the effect TG satisfaction has on alumni donations, scholarships, and legacy enrollment at host universities are other ways this area of research could contribute to practitioner interests.

In order for universities to benefit from TG research, it is important that the areas of opportunity first be identified. There are a multitude of implications for the entire host school as well as each individual department within. Not only can academic departments use TG as a harness for program promotion, but also an avenue for alumni to be immersed again in the college experience and potentially be more likely to offer donations or encourage their children to carry on a legacy by attending that same school.

The mean score of fans' overall satisfaction with their home TG experience was fairly high at 4.39, while the mean score for fans' overall game day experience was even higher at 4.47. These scores, although already strong, could be improved. An overall mean score in both areas passing 4.5 would suggest that most respondents are highly satisfied with their entire game day experience. To achieve this, practitioners should pay attention to those lower scoring variables and seek to improve the determinants of these while at the same time continuing to improve even those variables that score highly. Specifically, a number of TGSAT variables performed well below "top-box", including several tangibles and security items. Tangible items that show room for improvement include restroom facilities (3.57), waste management (3.91), and staff appearance (3.85). These scores could be improved simply by employing a larger number of sanitation staff devoted to cleaning restrooms, picking up trash on campus, and making sure these employees look presentable while embracing the game day. Opposing fan behavior (3.57), campus security (3.77), after-hours lighting (3.72), police presence/enforcement (3.88), and crowd management (3.82) are all security issues that should be addressed to boost the overall satisfaction score with TG. Security is of utmost importance to fans both home and away. If security is an issue to fans, they will feel unsafe which will in turn affect their intent to return and recommend TG and the OE.

Variables affecting fan access to campus such as parking (3.06), traffic management (3.17), and RV site availability (3.27) are important determinants of OS and FBI. Practitioners should give these issues high priority by making sure student parking is not affected by game days, out of town guests can easily determine where they are intended to park (improved signage), planning for increased capacity through the construction of

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parking structures, and providing shuttles from remote overflow locations. Increased

satisfaction with fan ease of access should increase positive word of mouth as well as

increase the likelihood they will return to their respective home campus for game day.

Conclusions

This study has presented applicable research and analyses of satisfaction, service

quality, and future behavioral intentions surrounding tailgating at college football games.

The benefits surrounding this research are both practical and important for consumers and

business alike. Most significant are the contributions to academic literature this research

has made. Satisfaction and future behavioral intentions are important to any service

setting, but until now very little has been completed. This study furthered the awareness

of academia, business and consumers alike in understanding the importance of tailgating

at sports events.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Informed Consent

"The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use From August 24, 2010 to August 23, 2011. Protocol #10-220EX1008."

INFORMATION LETTER:

For a Research Study entitled: An exploratory investigation of the collegiate game day experience: tailgating satisfaction and its effect on future behavioral intentions.

You are invited to participate in a research study to examine the current state of fan satisfaction with tailgating throughout the United States. The study is being conducted by Benjamin Nemec, Graduate Student at Auburn University in Hotel & Restaurant Management. You were selected as a possible participant because of your interest in collegiate football and the fact that you are age 19 or older. If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to complete an anonymous on-line survey. Your total time commitment will be approximately 15 minutes. There are no known risks associated with participating in this study. If you participate in this study, you can expect to be provided with a full account of all results through a completed Thesis project following data collection, analysis, and publication. Beyond the information shared, no personal benefits are anticipated. If you wish to withdraw, simply close your browser without submitting the data. Once you have submitted anonymous data, it cannot be withdrawn due to it being unidentifiable. Your participation is completely voluntary. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the Department of Nutrition and Food Science or the Hotel and Restaurant Management program. Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. We will protect your privacy and the data you provide by not collecting identifiable information. Information collected through your participation may be published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting, etc. If you have questions about this study, please contact Benjamin Nemec at (256) 361-5593 or Dr. David Martin at (334) 844-3291. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION ABOVE, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE CONTINUE TO THE SURVEY.

1. Are you…

   o   Male

   o   Female

2. What is your ethnicity?

   o   Caucasian

   o   African American

   o   Hispanic

   o   Asian

   o   Other

3. Are you currently…

   o   Employed

   o   Retired

   o   Unemployed

   o   A homemaker

   o   Other

4. What is your favorite college football team?

5. How old are you?

6. Where do you live? City/State

7. Do you regularly attend the home football games of your favorite college football team?

   o   Yes

   o   No

8. Do you regularly attend the away games of your favorite college football team?

   o   Yes

   o   No

9.	Regarding the most recent football game that you attended, how much money did you spend on tickets?

10.	How many tickets did you purchase?

11.	How much money did you spend once inside the stadium?

12.	What is your highest completed education level?

	o	Less than high school or GED

	o	High school or GED

	o	Associate

	o	Bachelors

	o	Masters

	o	Doctorate

13.	What is your average annual household income?

	o	< $20,000

	o	$20-49,000

	o	$50-79,000

	o	$80-109,000

	o	$110-139,000

	o	>$ 140,000

14.	Tailgating at home is better than the tailgating experience I have had at other schools…

	o	Yes

	o	No

	o	Not sure

15. Are you a(n)…

    o   Alumnus

    o   Student

    o   Parent of Student

    o   A fan of the home team

    o   A fan of the visiting team

    o   Other

16. Total number of games attended in your lifetime?

17. Including cost of transportation, food, beverages and any fees, approximately how much money do you think you will spend on your tailgate today? If you are paying for multiple people, please include their expenses as well.

18. How many children (under 18) are with you today?

19. What did you do before the game?

    o   Tailgate

    o   Go to a restaurant with a bar

    o   Attend an event at a private residence

    o   Go home

20. What are your plans for after the game?

    o   Tailgate

    o   Go to a restaurant with a bar

    o   Attend an event at a private residence

    o   Go home

    o   Other

21. When your home team is playing an away game, what would you do before or after the game was televised?

  o Entertainment activity (golf, movie…)

  o Weekly shopping

  o Event with friends/family

  o Work or study

  o Home project

  o Other

22. Do you have any feedback on improving tailgating at your home university?

23. Please indicate the quality of the weather you experienced during your tailgating

  o Extremely poor

  o Poor

  o Just ok

  o Good

  o Extremely good

24. Were alcoholic beverages consumed during your tailgating experience, by either yourself, or members of your tailgating party?

  o Yes

  o No

  o I am not sure

25. Please rate your overall satisfaction with...

  o Tailgating at home (HD/D/N/S/HS)

26.   I expect my home team to win:

    o   A conference or national championship

    o   10 or more games

    o   8-9 games

    o   Less than 8 games

27.   In regards to your tailgating experience, how satisfied are you with the following: (HD/D/N/S/HS)

    o   Restroom facilities

    o   Comfort on site

    o   Waste management

    o   Opposing fan behavior

    o   RV site availability

    o   Campus security

    o   After hours campus lighting

    o   Police presence/enforcement

    o   Crowd management

    o   Noise

    o   On-foot navigation

    o   Parking

    o   Traffic management

    o   Claiming your tailgate location

    o   Tailgating value

    o   Ticket office

    o   Rules and regulations governing tailgating

    o   Home University staff appearance

    o   Availability of information regarding tailgating

  o Alumni hospitality tent

28. Rank the importance of the following: (HU/U/N/I/HI)

  o Home University Football Game

  o Tailgating at Home

29. How likely are you to do the following: (HU/U/N/L/HL)

  o Return to tailgate at home

  o Recommend home university tailgating to others

30. Please rate on a scale of 1 to 5: (HD/D/N/S/HS)

  o Overall Home University game day experience

Appendix B: TGSAT Scree Plot

Scree Plot