CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE DIVISION I FOOTBALL SPORTSCAPE

A THESIS

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Table of Contents

Abstract...........................................................................................................................................6

Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................................7

Chapter 1 – Introduction ...................................................................................................................8

   Statement of the Problem.................................................................................................................14
   Statement of the Purpose ..................................................................................................................15
   Research Questions..........................................................................................................................15
   Assumptions.....................................................................................................................................16
   Limitations.......................................................................................................................................16
   Delimitations.....................................................................................................................................16
   Definition of Terms...........................................................................................................................17

      Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) Regions..........................................................................17
      Critical Incident Technique.........................................................................................................17
      Customer Satisfaction...................................................................................................................17
      Fan Identification..........................................................................................................................18
      Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS).................................................................................................18
      FBS Power Five (P5).......................................................................................................................18
      FBS Group of Five (G5).................................................................................................................18
      Football Championship Subdivision (FCS)..................................................................................18
      National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA).....................................................................19
      NCAA Division I (D-I)....................................................................................................................19
      Season Ticket Holder....................................................................................................................19
      Servicescape..................................................................................................................................19
Appendix G – Midwestern Division I Member Institutions.................................115
Appendix H – Recruitment Email........................................................................116
Appendix I – Consent Form..................................................................................117
Appendix J – Table 2 .............................................................................................118
Appendix K – Table 3 .............................................................................................119
Appendix L – Table 4 .............................................................................................120
Appendix M – Table 5 .............................................................................................121
Appendix N – Table 6 .............................................................................................122
Appendix O – Table 7 .............................................................................................123
Appendix P – Table 8 .............................................................................................124
Appendix Q – Table 9 .............................................................................................125
Appendix R – Table 10 ............................................................................................126
Appendix S – Table 11 ............................................................................................127
Appendix T – Table 12 ............................................................................................128
Appendix U – Table 13 ............................................................................................129
Appendix V – Table 14 ............................................................................................130
Appendix W – Table 15 ............................................................................................131
Appendix X – Table 16 ............................................................................................132
Appendix Y – Table 17 ............................................................................................133
Appendix Z – Conceptual Framework ...................................................................134
Abstract

THESIS PROJECT: Customer satisfaction in the Division I football sportscape
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As early as the late 19th century, universities in the United States capitalized on the popularity of college sports, especially football, through the sale of tickets and the collection of donations from alumni and loyal fans. Today, the business model of college athletics remains largely like the strategy used over a century ago, as ticket sales and athletic donations continue to represent two of the largest sources of athletics revenues. However, a growing number of college football fans are reporting dissatisfaction with their game day experience due to rising service expectations, and declining college football attendance is threatening the success and profitability of Division I NCAA athletics programs. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship that the sportscape, service quality, and personal fandom have with customer satisfaction of season ticket holders and athletic donors of NCAA Division I football institutions, and whether customer satisfaction varies between different levels of D-I college football competition (i.e., FBS P5, FBS G5, & FCS). Respondents indicated that aspects of personal fandom ($p=.002$) and the sportscape ($p=.018$) had a significant positive relationship with satisfaction, while the service influence ($p=.509$) did not. Additional results indicated that significant differences were present between reported satisfaction among each competition level, with FBS G5 respondents ($M=5.50$) reporting the highest levels of satisfaction, followed by FBS P5 respondents ($M=5.27$) and FCS respondents ($M=4.76$). Further differences between the three samples are analyzed and implications from the findings are discussed.
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Chapter 1 – Introduction

In June of 1852, Yale University student James Whiton observed a smooth stretch of water along the Winnipesaukee River from inside a train car belonging to the Boston, Concord, and Montreal (BC&M) rail line (Mendenhall, 1993). Whiton, who participated in rowing with other members of the Yale class of 1853, pitched the idea of a regatta being held on the Winnipesaukee to BC&M agent James Elkins, adding the possibility for an observation train for spectators to follow the races (Mendenhall, 1993). Elkins, who was known to never shy away from a chance drum up publicity, was intrigued by the idea of an excursion train, and exclaimed: “if you will get up a regatta on the lake between Yale and Harvard, I will pay the bills” (Mendenhall, 1993, para. 4).

The race started in Center Harbor Bay, one of the northern-most points of Lake Winnipesaukee, and a popular location among adventurous resort goers (Mendenhall, 1993; Smith, 1990). Center Harbor possesses a unique natural characteristic in that its banks slope gently down to the water, allowing easy access for spectators. Elkins marketed this feature by flooding local neighborhoods with posters stating: “the ground has been so selected that any number of spectators however large will obtain each an equally good view!” (Mendenhall, 1993, para. 9). Thousands reportedly gathered along the shores, as well as in their own skiffs and sailboats to see the prestigious universities compete.

After the conclusion of the event, which saw Yale win by two lengths, the success of the first ever Harvard – Yale regatta at Lake Winnipesaukee led the rail company to immediately seek out additional races (Mendenhall, 1993). Moreover, the 1852 regatta’s mention in the New York Harold newspaper helped lend to the impact and spectacle of the event. Eventually, future races between the schools became major spectator events, sometimes attracting as many as
100,000 spectators (Grinold, 1993). Additionally, up to 10,000 fans would eventually pay top dollar to ride in custom train cars which followed the race (Grinold, 1993). More importantly, the success of the races and the actions of the individuals who created them triggered a series of events which led to the popularity and mass-incorporation of collegiate athletics in American society and culture. One such event that the Harvard-Yale regatta paved a way for was the first ever intercollegiate football game played between Princeton and Rutgers on November 6th, 1869 (Grundy & Rader, 2016). An event that preceded a wave of popularity and support for the brutality of rugby-style football, especially from affluent men who still held strong memories and attachments to the Civil War (Grundy & Rader, 2016; Smith, 1990). This popularity eventually behooved universities to construct temporary wooden bleachers at municipal fields on college campuses throughout the Northeast United States in the late 19th century, allowing students, faculty, and alumni an opportunity to cheer on their university in intercollegiate competitions (Ingrassia, 2012).

However, many college administrators and faculty underestimated the attachment that local residents would form with the spectacle of college football, lauding the sport and local universities for promoting violent masculinity, and forming nationalistic pride around the ritual of the sport (Grundy & Rader, 2016). Moreover, fans increasingly valued athletic success as a point of personal pride, and assessed university prestige through that lens as much or more than academic prowess (Downs & Seifried, 2019b). This development prompted Harvard engineering professor Ira Hollis to consult then Harvard president Charles William Eliot in 1902, to construct a larger permanent structure for Harvard football, using the recent technological advancement in construction of steel-reinforced concrete (Ingrassia, 2012). In doing so, the university would
maximize the sale of tickets and create an elaborate on-campus home for college football, unsusceptible to weather or fire (Ingrassia, 2012).

Eliot approved the proposed idea. As a result, the $310,000 stadium, the largest steel-reinforced concrete structure in the United States at the time, was completed in 1903 with funding from a multi-faceted financing approach utilizing ticket sales and private donations (Ingrassia, 2012). Unknowingly, this decision created a centralized social anchor for the college community, including alumni, students, and nearby residents, permanently positioning college football in the center of both campus and culture (Downs & Seifried, 2019b; Ingrassia, 2012). Charles William Eliot also set in motion an era of campus planning through example, which other prominent universities followed throughout the early 20th century, further engraving college football into the college culture (Downs & Seifried, 2019b).

Rapidly, large elaborate steel-reinforced concrete football stadiums were built on college campuses throughout the northeast states. Soon after the conclusion WWI, college football stadiums became key characteristics of college campuses throughout the west and south as well, as universities recognized the potential prestige and financial opportunities they brought (Ingrassia, 2012). These giant structures became feasible for universities throughout the country thanks to increases in post-war college enrollment, additional government funding, reinvigorated feelings of nationalistic pride, and the rapid expansion of both college and city populations outside of the Northeast (Ingrassia, 2012; Schmidt, 2007). The latter reasoning largely made possible through substantial improvements in transportation and infrastructure, including the introduction of major roads and highways to these formerly isolated areas (Schmidt, 2007).

As a symbol of institutional supremacy, many prominent universities embraced the entanglement of athletics and academics through the construction of massive elaborate facilities,
as well as through the emphasis of success on the gridiron. Downs and Seifried elaborated by conveying that “the construction and/or renovation of massive permanent football stadiums on university campuses during the twentieth century emerged as the most tangible evidence of the desire to attract outside revenue, visitors, and alumni” (2019b, p. 280). These practices were also carried out in pursuit of tangible benefits such as increased ticket sales, alumni donations, and student enrollment (Seifried & Tutka, 2016). Residents in southern or rural communities were especially responsive to athletic success of local universities, as they often felt themselves to be the victims of judgement by the urban north (Doyle, 1994; Grundy & Rader, 2016). Success in athletic competition was viewed by these residents as a challenge to perceptions of northern superiority (Doyle, 1994).

Up until World War II (WWII), universities produced a wide array of stadium designs in attempts to create budget-friendly facilities that maximized seating capacity while still offering a degree of convenience for customers (Schmidt, 2007). This led to wide variations in stadium characteristics such as the slope of the stands, distance from the first row of seats to the field, elevation of the first row of seats, and the share of seats placed in between the field’s goal lines (Schmidt, 2007).

After the events of WWII, many college stadiums underwent systematic expansion to accommodate increased enrollment figures resulting from shifts in educational expectations attributed to the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (GI Bill) and post-Great Depression attitudes towards the promotion of educational attainment for the betterment of the country (Seifried, 2014). Since this period, collegiate football stadium construction and renovation has focused around continuously adding amenities in an effort to demonstrate modernity (Doyle, 1994). Examples of this included the addition of wider concourses, more comfortable or
luxurious seating options, devoted space for journalists, media and broadcasters, and improved technology, all in an effort to increase revenue from ticket sales, concessions, retail shops, advertising, and broadcasting (Downs & Seifried, 2019a; Seifried & Pastore, 2009).

While many developments in modern collegiate football and associated stadiums, as they pertain to college culture, may have been unanticipated, it is important to note that all aspects of contemporary stadiums are a result of human agency. Ingrassia touched on this by stating “just as games were won by systematically gaining yardage and minimizing the chance of losing the ball, successfully staged athletic drama did not happen by luck” (2012, p. 141). To elaborate, sport managers are continuously adapting and changing facility and service aspects in an attempt to satisfy spectators. In the context of collegiate athletics, which have a deeply engrained role in American society and college campuses across the country, these decisions are evidently crucial.

Since the Harvard - Yale regatta of 1852, intercollegiate athletic competition has formed an integral component of higher education in the United States (Smith, 2011). Athletics offer national visibility with marketing opportunities for universities, especially in the case of historically revenue generating sports such as college football and men’s basketball (Gustafson, 2005; Ingrassia, 2012; Smith, 2011). Athletic events also provide a space for strengthening ties between current and former students, as well as, fans within the local community (Grundy & Rader, 2016). Additionally, the popularity of intercollegiate athletics as spectator events creates numerous commercial opportunities and benefits for universities. As early as the late 19th century, universities in the United States capitalized on the popularity of college sports through the sale of tickets and the collection of donations from alumni and loyal fans (Ingrassia, 2012; Schmidt, 2007; Smith, 2011). Today, the business model of college athletic departments at major universities remains largely similar to the strategy used over a century ago, as ticket sales and
athletic donations continue to represent two of the largest sources of athletics revenues among Division I (D-I) athletics (Fulks, 2018).

However, recent concerns over attendance at college football games has threatened the financial viability of the traditional college sport business model. The 2018 college football season marked the lowest per-game average attendance across the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) since the 1996 season (Dodd, 2018). The average of 41,856 spectators across the FBS was down 347 from the 2017 season and marks the fifth straight year-to-year attendance decrease (National Collegiate Athletic Association [NCAA], n.d.a). These statistics align with a larger trend of average home football game attendance for FBS institutions, which has shown a total decrease of more than 5,000 spectators over the last 10 years (Dodd, 2018; NCAA, n.d.a). The Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) has also experienced declines in average game attendance. In fact, between the 2017 and 2018 seasons, average FCS home game attendance decreased by 4.5% and dipped below an average of 8,000 spectators for the first time since average attendance began being recorded by the NCAA (Burton, 2019; NCAA, n.d.a).

Prior research has assessed spectator satisfaction through the perceived quality of the service environment at a sporting event (Gustafson, 2005; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; Wakefield et al., 1996; Yoshida & James, 2010). However, additional service influences, such as interactions with employees and time spent waiting at a facility, have also been shown to impact satisfaction (Greenwell et al., 2002; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Ko et al., 2011; Mahoney & Pastore, 2004; Palmero & Price, 2015). Furthermore, research suggests that personal aspects of fandom such as fan identification and team loyalty significantly impact satisfaction with a sporting event. (Bennett, 2016; Cottingham, 2012; Hardin et al., 2013; Harvard, 2014; Lock & Heere, 2017; Yoder, 2011). Based on this understanding,
recognizing and responding to fans’ expectations of the college football game day experience, especially in light of recent declines in attendance, becomes imperative now more than ever for D-I athletic departments. By increasing satisfaction with the college football game day experience, especially among season ticket holders, athletic donors, and other highly identified and loyal fans, athletic departments may avoid following the current trend of declining college football attendance.

**Statement of the Problem**

Current college football attendance trends are threatening the success and profitability of Division-I NCAA athletic programs (Burton, 2019; Dodd, 2018; NCAA, n.d.a). A growing number of college football fans are reporting dissatisfaction with their game day experience due to rising service expectations (Fisher, 2014; Hardin et al., 2013). Understanding the spectator experience in college football games, especially as it pertains to season ticket holders, athletic donors, and other highly loyal fans, is critical to the success of athletic departments. Previous research examined spectator experience through assessment of the tangible service environment, or sportscape (Gustafson, 2005; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; Wakefield et al., 1996; Yoshida & James, 2010), intangible service encounters (Greenwell et al., 2002; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Ko et al., 2011; Mahoney & Pastore, 2004; Palmero & Price, 2015), and personal fandom influences (Bennett, 2016; Cottingham, 2012; Hardin et al., 2013; Harvard, 2014; Lock & Heere, 2017; Yoder, 2011). However, no prior literature combined the previously mentioned areas in order to gain a holistic view into fan satisfaction. Furthermore, the majority of previous research within collegiate football has solely examined FBS Power Five Conference institutions located in the mid-south/southeast (Bennett,
Statement of the Purpose

Based on the aforementioned points, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship that the sportscape, service quality, and personal fandom have with customer satisfaction of season ticket holders and athletic donors of NCAA Division I football institutions, and whether customer satisfaction varies between different levels of D-I college football competition (i.e., FBS P5, FBS G5, & FCS).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

**RQ1.** Does the sportscape influence (i.e. scoreboard quality, venue aesthetics, space allocation, layout accessibility, seat comfort, & venue cleanliness) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

**H1.** The sportscape influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ2.** Does the service experience influence (i.e. employees & wait time) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

**H2.** The service experience influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ3.** Does the personal fandom influence (i.e. fan identification & team loyalty) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

**H3.** The personal fandom influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ4.** Are there differences in results based on level of Division I college football competition (i.e. FBS P5, FBS G5, & FCS)?

**H4.** There will be significant differences in satisfaction between each level of competition.
Assumptions

1. All participants in the survey will be season ticket holders or donors of a D-I college football program during the 2019-2020 season.

2. All participants will have attended at least one home college football game at their associated university prior to answering the survey.

3. The thoughts and opinions of the participants completing the survey will be of their own and no outside individuals will influence their answers.

Limitations

1. This study will be geographically limited to one region of the United States. There are a great number of D-I football programs in this region, but responses may not be representative of season ticket holders across all D-I football.

2. With the distribution of the survey being conducted online, response rates will be low (Nulty, 2008). With online survey research there is also no way for researchers to ensure participants are completing their own surveys with their own views and opinions, nor a way to verify reliability of answers from participants.

3. Survey distribution and subsequent data collection will begin in the mid-to-late 2019 football season and end soon after the season’s completion. As a result, responses may be influenced by factors such as the team’s performance or weather.

Delimitations

1. Only one geographic region of the United States was purposively chosen for the study due to the complete lack of analogous studies in that area, as well as an abundance of D-I college football programs at all three levels of competition being examined (i.e. FBS P5,
FBS G5, & FCS). However, further research investigating season ticket holders across all NCAA D-I football would produce a more accurate understanding of current trends.

2. The present study also utilized convenience sampling in order to reach a small portion of season ticket holders and athletic donors that were personal contacts of the researchers.

**Definition of Terms**

**Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) Regions.** The BEA regions are comprised of American states, grouped together for their similar location and sociocultural aspects. The BEA further highlighted the theory and purpose for the regional classifications by explaining,

The regional classifications, which were developed in the mid-1950s, are based on the homogeneity of the states in terms of economic characteristics, such as the industrial composition of the labor force, and in terms of demographic, social, and cultural characteristics. BEA groups all 50 states and the District of Columbia into eight distinct regions for purposes of data collection and analyses (Bureau of Economic Analysis [BEA], n.d.).

**Critical Incident Technique (CIT).** A qualitative research method founded by Flanagan (1954) to collect, content analyze, and classify observations of human behavior in the form of events, incidents, processes, or issues. The objective of using this method is “to gain an understanding of the incident from the perspective of the individual, taking into account cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements” (Chell & Pittaway, 1998, p. 56).

**Customer Satisfaction.** A post-choice cognitive judgement that is connected to a particular purchasing decision (Day, 1984). In the present study, customer satisfaction with a sporting event is assessed through the spectator’s desire to stay for the entirety of the event and the intent to be a return patron (Jang, 2014; Wakefield et al., 1996).
**Fan Identification.** The personal commitment and emotional involvement an individual has with a sport organization (Sutton, McDonald, Milne, & Cimperman, 1997).

**Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS).** Formally known as Division I-A, the FBS represents the highest level of the most competitive division of college football. The FBS consists of 10 affiliated conferences, and a total of 130 member institutions. Of that 130-member total, six programs compete as independents (no conference affiliation). Schools that participate in bowl games at the end of the season, rather than the NCAA-run football championship, belong to the FBS (NCAA, n.d.b).

**FBS Power Five (P5).** The Power Five conferences consist of the FBS’ major universities, who are typically the most financially affluent, and most competitive within intercollegiate athletics. Member conferences include the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), the Big Ten Conference (B1G), the Big Twelve Conference (B12), the Pacific-12 conference (Pac-12), and the Southeastern Conference (SEC).

**FBS Group of Five (G5).** The Group of Five conferences consist of the FBS’ mid-major universities, who are moderately affluent and athletics-minded, but not as much so as the major universities in the Power Five conferences. Member conferences include the American Athletic Conference (AAC), Conference USA (C-USA), the Mid-American Conference (MAC), the Mountain West Conference (MWC), and the Sun Belt Conference.

**Football Championship Subdivision (FCS).** Formally known as Division I-AA, the FCS represents the lower level of Division I football competition. The FCS consists of 13 affiliated conferences, and a total of 126 member institutions. Universities “that participate in the NCAA-run football championship belong to the Football Championship Subdivision” (NCAA, n.d.b).
National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA). “A member-led organization dedicated to the well-being and lifelong success of college athletes” (NCAA, n.d.c). More specifically, the NCAA represents the primary legislative governing body for collegiate athletics.

NCAA Division I (D-I). Division I represents the highest level of athletic competition and commitment within the NCAA (Gustafson, 2005). The NCAA expounds on this,

Among the three NCAA divisions, Division I schools generally have the biggest student bodies, manage the largest athletics budgets and offer the most generous number of scholarships. Schools who are members of Division I commit to maintaining a high academic standard for student-athletes in addition to a wide range of opportunities for athletics participation (NCAA, n.d.b).

Season Ticket Holders. Fans who provide an upfront fee prior to the start of a team’s competitive season for the rights to specific seats in a team’s stadium, from which they can spectate all home games. Season ticket holders have frequently been described as the most loyal, involved, and invested fans in major sports (Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; McDonald, 2010).

Servicescape. The physical surroundings of a service consumption environment. More specifically, the dimensions of the servicescape as determined by Bitner (1992) were ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality, signs, symbols, and artifacts, as well as typology and environment.

Sportscape. Developed from Bitner’s servicescape model, the sportscape describes the physical service environment of a sporting event. Wakefield et al. (1996) developed the sportscape model with five dimensions: stadium access (i.e., parking & entrance size and
location), facility aesthetics, scoreboard quality, seating comfort, and layout accessibility (which is made-up of two subdimensions labeled as space allocation and signage).
Chapter 2 - Review of Literature

Hardin et al. (2013) described college athletics events as a unique experience, unattainable anywhere else due to its historically-based team traditions, distinct fan rituals, and involved fan atmosphere. Since the inaugural intercollegiate athletic competition between Harvard and Yale in 1852, intercollegiate athletics have been deeply-seated in American culture, and developed into major spectator events (Downs & Seifried, 2019b; Ingrassia, 2012; Smith, 2011). This is especially true among sports that produce large revenue streams for university athletic departments, namely, men’s basketball and football. College football is particularly crucial for athletic departments, as it produces the largest portion of generated revenues for athletics programs in both the FBS and FCS (Fulks, 2018).

However, despite the growing popularity of collegiate athletics, the vast majority of NCAA member institutions operate at a yearly financial deficit (Fulks, 2018). Even at the FBS level, comprised of the NCAA’s most prominent athletic institutions, only 19% of athletic departments turned a profit in the 2018 fiscal year, according to the NCAA revenues and expenses report (Fulks, 2018). It could be argued that football programs are poor financial investments for universities to undertake, despite their mass popularity. According Fulks (2018), only 54% of FBS football programs were profitable in the 2018 fiscal year, and in the FCS, that statistic falls to just 2%. Therefore, researching and understanding ways to improve the profitability of college athletics has become a major concentration for athletic departments and scholars, alike.

Previous literature has suggested that improving the viability of college athletics starts with researching the fans (Coulter et al., 2003; Drenton et al., & Hollenbeck, 2009; Gentile et al., 2007; Hardin et al., 2013; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Fans are crucial to the success and
profitability of collegiate athletic programs because they directly provide two of the largest sources of revenue for athletic departments, in the form of ticket sales and athletic donations (Fulks, 2018). Highly identified and loyal college sports fans, such as season ticket holders or athletic donors represent key stakeholders to university athletic departments (Drayer et al., 2012; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015). However, recent trends show that attendance at college football, the NCAA’s largest revenue producing sport, is declining (Burton, 2019; Dodd, 2018; NCAA, n.d.a). Research suggests that this is likely caused by rising fan expectations of the college sport event experience (Greenwell et al., 2013; Hardin et al., 2013; Fisher, 2014). With poor aesthetic qualities, insufficient space and comfort, and limited amenities, many college football stadiums do not provide an adequate service environment for modern sport fans (Fisher, 2014).

Prior research has assessed the experience of spectators at athletics events in several ways. One of the most prominent lines of research in this field stems from the sportscape model, created by Wakefield et al. (1996) to comprehend the physical service environment of a sporting event, and its effect on perceived service quality by spectators (Gustafson, 2005; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo, Hardin, & Dittmore, 2015; Wakefield et al., 1996; Yoshida & James, 2010). Other scholars attempted to measure service quality through intangible service interactions such as employees or time spent waiting, which spectators encounter while at a sporting event (Greenwell et al., 2002; Jang, 2014; Ko et al., 2011; Mahoney & Pastore, 2004; Palermo & Price, 2015). Some researchers instead evaluated the characteristics of personal fandom such as fan identification and team loyalty (Bennett, 2016; Cottingham, 2012; Harvard, 2014; Lock & Heere, 2017; Yoder, 2011), and others implemented qualitative methods such as
critical incident technique in order to gain in-depth perspectives of the fan experience at sporting events (Greenwell et al., 2013; Hardin et al., 2013; Ruhiley & Greenwell, 2012).

All prior research lines offered important insights into the fan experience. However, there are limitations to each individual perspective as well. In order to further expand research in sporting event satisfaction, a more complete model and instrument is necessary. This model should provide greater insight into the factors that influence satisfaction, while also offering more useful data for practitioners.

**Servicescape**

Economist Colin Clark (1940) suggested that the natural progression for developing economies is for the largest sector of the labor force to transition from agriculture, to industry, to commerce and service. Soon after Clark’s assessment, the end of WWII saw an expansion of the United States’ service industry, thanks to a number of associated outcomes (Bound & Turner, 2002; Downs & Seifried, 2019a; Fuchs, 1977). Firstly, a rise in educational attainment and expectations resulted from an explosion in college and trade school enrollments, made possible by the GI Bill (Bound & Turner, 2002; Fuchs, 1977). In total, over 22 million WWII veterans attended college on the GI Bill, accounting for approximately one in every eight servicemen (Olson, 1974). Additionally, Bound and Turner (2002) believed that the GI Bill largely democratized the collegiate population, allowing men of all social classes and ethnicities a more equal opportunity for educational advancement. Secondly, wartime efforts encouraged women to enter the workforce for the betterment of the country, many of whom continued working in service positions after the War (Fuchs, 1977). Finally, increased free time brought on by economic growth led to shifts in ideals regarding personal leisure time, as well as increased consciousness of health and activity (Downs & Seifried, 2019a; Fuchs, 1977).
As a result of service industry expansion in the United States, researchers prioritized studying the service industry (Bitner, 1992; Fuchs, 1977; Fuchs, 1980; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011; Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008; Smith, 2011). A service is defined as an interaction or transaction between a customer and service provider, in which the service provider performs or enables an activity that emotes an affective, or emotional response, from the customer (Ko & Pastore, 2004; Pullman & Gross, 2004; Ramaswamy, 1996; Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996). Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) detailed services as having four distinguishing dimensions. First, services are intangible, meaning that their purpose is not to provide a physical product, but rather encourage an affective response from customers that leads to feelings of excitement, pleasure, or fulfillment. Secondly, services are heterogeneous, meaning that they consist of multiple uncontrollable factors and there is no guarantee that the service delivered will meet the planned or expected outcome. Thirdly, services are simultaneously produced as they are consumed, and customers participate in and affect the transaction. Lastly, services are perishable, and cannot be returned, refunded, or resold (Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996).

Due to the intangible and heterogeneous nature of services, service quality can be difficult to define (Ko & Pastore, 2004; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011; Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008). However, there is a general congruency amongst service quality definitions that assessing service quality is subjective to the individual consumer. Parasuraman et al. (1985) proposed that service quality is assessed by the consumer based on a comparison of the consumer’s expectations with actual service performance. From this definition, the Gap Model of service quality was conceptualized, which quantified multiple independent variables that could be summed into two groups, expected service and perceived service (Parasuraman et al., 1985). By subtracting the perceived service group from the expected service group, a quantifiable value for
service quality could be determined (Parasuraman et al., 1985). However, later research concluded that service quality is not assessed strictly from the service experience but is also influenced by the organization itself (Bitner & Hubert, 1994; Ko & Pastore, 2004). Therefore, service quality has since been presently defined as "the consumer's overall impression of the relative inferiority/superiority of the organization and its services" (Bitner & Hubbert, 1994, p. 77).

The 1990’s saw a shift in the service industry’s focus on internal aspects, such as organizational efficiency and productivity, to external aspects, such as consumer well-being, behavior, satisfaction, and loyalty (Ko & Pastore, 2004). As a result, service literature also shifted from internal aspects to external (Bitner, 1992; Bitner & Hubert, 1994; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999; Wakefield et al., 1996; Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996). Bitner (1992) spear-headed the shift in focus of service literature with the development of the servicescape, or the physical environment of a service location. Additionally, the servicescape model was formed in an effort to display the relationship that service environments had with customer and employee behavior (Bitner, 1992). This seminal work spurred a multitude of studies involving servicescape (Bitner & Hubert, 1994; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999; Wakefield et al., 1996).

The servicescape model and associated literature were continued and expanded upon through the 1990’s and into the turn of the 21st century (Ko & Pastore, 2004; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). The first of three major servicescape studies performed by Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) assessed the effects and importance of the servicescape in relation to service
quality. The results of the study determined that the servicescape is comprised of two elements: spatial layout and functionality (i.e., the design and layout of the facility), and elements related to aesthetic appeal (i.e., architecture, upkeep, and cleanliness) (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). Further, Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) elaborated that effective servicescapes should be aesthetically pleasing and comfortable for patrons. These conclusions are supported by later findings in service research that demonstrate the need for creating comfortable and visually appealing service environments for consumers (Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Palmero & Price, 2015; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011; Wakefield et al., 1996).

Next, Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) turned their servicescape research towards predicting behavioral intentions in customers. Using the servicescape model developed by Bitner (1992), researchers found that as the length of an event increased, service satisfaction would become more dependent upon the perceived quality of the servicescape (Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Rosembaum & Massiah, 2011; Pullman & Gross, 2004; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). Additionally, researchers indicated that the original servicescape model could be strengthened by the addition of variables related to assessing interior layout and design of the physical servicescape (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996). This finding coincides with later service research that assessed the influence of design and aesthetic elements (Biscaia et al., 2013; Palmero & Price, 2015; Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Pullman & Gross, 2004).

Previous research applied aesthetic elements to the traditional servicescape in a multitude of approaches in order to better assess consumer responses to service settings (Biscaia et al., 2013; Palmero & Price, 2015; Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Pullman & Gross, 2004). Pine and Gilmore (1998) conducted an analysis exploring the growing concept of experience design and its
influence within the service industry. Experience design is defined as using physical context elements to support the organization’s underlying vision, metaphor, or theme (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). This concept when applied to the service experience had psychological effects in customers that led to greater service experience and perceived quality (Pullman & Gross, 2004). Biscaia et al. (2013) described aesthetics quality as the perception of aesthetically pleasing features and ancillary products of an event. Three important factors play a part in the aesthetics of a service event: visual information, emotion, and experience (Biscaia et al., 2013). Palmero and Price (2015) expanded on the aesthetics of the servicescape by considering the effects of facility atmospherics. This exploration stemmed from research by Kotler (1973), who described atmospherics as conscious designing of a space to create specific efforts in buyers. Palmero and Price (2015) applied Kotler’s research to service experience and discovered that atmospherics factors such as music, fan noise, crowding, seating, facility aesthetics, and color enhance the experience of spectators.

Wakefield and Blodgett (1994; 1996) acknowledged that while the servicescape is an important model in assessing consumer experience and perceived service quality, there are some areas in which it can be improved. Therefore, the literature was further developed by viewing the service experience through both tangible and intangible factors (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). Tangible factors of the service experience are controllable physical factors of the organization that can include facility design features and aesthetics. Intangible factors involve the experiences that customers have that create an emotional response, such as interactions with service employees (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999).

Bitner’s (1992) servicescape model assessed tangible factors but lacked inclusion of intangible factors that have been shown to affect service quality and the service experience (Ko
& Pastore, 2004; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). According to Wakefield and Blodgett (1999) both tangible and intangible service factors have an impact on affective responses (i.e., repatronage and recommendations to attend) as well as perceived quality and excitement. Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) expanded on the research by creating the “perceived servicescape” (p. 471) as a possible updated replacement for the traditional servicescape model proposed by Bitner (1992). The perceived servicescape is composed of four dimensions (physical, social, socially symbolic, & natural environment) (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011). The first three dimensions (physical, social, and socially-symbolic) are categorized as tangible aspects of the service experience. The fourth dimension (natural environment) accounts for all intangible factors of the experience. Rosenbaum and Massiah identified three intangible aspects of the perceived servicescape that fall under the natural dimension that had not been previously reported: being away, fascination, and compatibility. The first of the three stimuli that make up the natural dimension, being away, encompasses temporary feelings of escaping from normal everyday life. The second, fascination, describes a service environment’s ability to captivate or hold the attention of the patron. Finally, compatibility refers to an environment’s ability to provide patrons with a natural sense of belonging (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011).

Bitner’s (1992) servicescape originally consisted of three main dimensions; ambient conditions, spatial layout & functionality, and signs, symbols, and artifacts. These dimensions were evaluated by Brauer (1992), who determined that the final two dimensions of the servicescape could be combined and categorized as the interior layout and design of a facility. To elaborate, Brauer defined aspects of the interior layout and design as layout plans, furniture and furnishings, decorative standards, and interior design. Other aspects of the servicescape including architectural design, landscape, and site design fall within exterior layout and design (Brauer,
These interior and exterior layout and design elements make up the aesthetics of a service environment (Brauer, 1992; Jang, 2014; Palmero & Price, 2015; Robinson, 1997). Aesthetics are especially important in the service industry considering that aesthetics act as the first impression that customers have when assessing the quality of a service facility.

**Sportscape**

With prior literature highlighting the importance of the physical environment in the service setting (Bittner, 1992; Brauer, 1992; Kerin et al., 1992), researchers later furthered these studies into specific areas of the service industry such as sporting events (Greenwell et al., 2002; Gustafson, 2005; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; Ulrich & Berkenstein, 2010; Wakefield et al., 1996; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999; Yoshida & James, 2010). A prominent early example of the extension of Bitner’s research within the sport industry came from Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) who utilized Major League Baseball stadiums as a medium for determining quality of a service facility and found a positive relationship between stadium quality and both consumer excitement and patronage intentions. Using these findings, Wakefield et al. (1996) altered Bitner’s servicescape model in order to develop the sportscape model to describe the physical service environment of a sporting event. The premise behind the model was that some aspects of a sporting event are unique in comparison to other service environments, which impacts spectator pleasure with the facility and event (Gustafson, 2005; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; Wakefield et al., 1996; Yoshida & James, 2010). Wakefield et al. (1996) developed the sportscape model with five dimensions: stadium access, facility aesthetics, scoreboard quality, seating comfort, and layout accessibility (Wakefield et al., 1996).
The sportscape model has been cited as an effective predictor in determining the relationships between the physical facility or stadium, pleasure with the event, and behavioral intentions of spectators, including desire to stay and repatronage (Greenwell et al., 2002; Gustafson, 2005; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Ko et al., 2011; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; Palmero & Price, 2015; Slavich et al., 2017; Wakefield et al., 1996; Yoder, 2011; Yoshida & James, 2010). These findings have been impactful on the sport industry, with many facilities built or renovated with improving the sportscape and spectator experience as top design priorities since the turn of the 21st century (Greenwell et al., 2002; Ko et al., 2011; Palmero & Price, 2015; Robinson, 1997). However, understanding the context of the sporting environment is critical when attempting to gauge how much of an effect the sportscape has on spectator satisfaction. Specifically, fans of longer sporting events will be influenced by sportscape quality more so than those of shorter events (Gustafson, 2005; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Koo et al., 2015; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). Therefore, the longer a sporting event typically lasts, the more critical sportscape quality becomes in facility design and management.

While the sportscape is a significant part of the sporting environment experience for spectators, customer satisfaction with the sportscape tends to be influenced by outside factors (Greenwell et al., 2002; Ko et al., 201; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Koo et al., 2015; Mahoney & Pastore, 2014; Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008; Ulrich & Benkenstain, 2010). Firstly, it is important not to overlook the impact of service employees on the customer experience (Greenwell et al., 2002; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Ko et al., 2011; Mahoney & Pastore, 2004; Palmero & Price, 2015). While the sportscape accurately displays the environment that effects a consumer’s service experience, many aspects of a service experience are directly
presented to customers through the attitudes and performance of service employees (Greenwell et al., 2002; Jang, 2014; Ko et al., 2011; Mahoney & Pastore, 2014). The second major influence on customer satisfaction with a sporting environment is the presence of personal spectator factors related to sport/team fandom (Bennett, 2016; Cottingham, 2012; Hardin et al., 2013; Harvard, 2014; Lock & Heere, 2017; Yoder, 2011). Lastly, an additional influence to the customer experience is the spectator behavior of others, elicited by the organization itself (Ko et al., 2011; Palmero & Price, 2015; Ulrich & Berkenstein, 2010). Understanding that interactions between fans can add or subtract from the overall satisfaction with an event experience is crucial for sport managers (Ko et al., 2011; Ulrich & Berkenstein, 2010).

**Fan Experience**

Researchers have often acknowledged the importance of the sportscape in assessing spectator satisfaction at sporting events. However, the sportscape alone does not account for all intrinsic elements that influence the way fans experience a sporting event (Hardin et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2012; Sutton et al., 1997; Underwood et al., 2001; Verhoef et al., 2009). Verhoef et al. (2009) expressed that personal experience is holistic in nature and therefore difficult for managers to visualize and positively stimulate in spectators. However, prior research has shown that improving the experience of fans at sporting events leads to benefits including increased attendance, team commitment, revenues, and brand loyalty (Coulter et al., 2003; Drenton et al., 2009; Gentile et al., 2007; Hardin et al., 2013; Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

Stadium experience can be improved or hindered by sensory, social, and psychological aspects that spectators intrinsically experience throughout a sporting event (Lee et al., 2012). Positively affecting these aspects can be achieved by sport managers through crowd interaction and alteration of stadium aspects (Hardin et al., 2013; Slavich et al., 2018; Sutton et al., 1997;
Underwood et al., 2001). Underwood et al. (2001) found that crowd interaction and stadium alteration leads to better group identity amongst fans and a strong sense of group affiliation with the team. While interaction with sports spectators often happens within the physical service aspects of the sportscape, additional actions can be done by organizations to activate a positive affective response in spectators (Hardin et al., 2013; Slavich et al., 2018; Sutton et al., 1997; Underwood et al., 2001). The most effective way to accomplish this is by creating ways to highlight history, traditions, and moments of prior success within the organization (Slavich et al., 2018; Underwood et al., 2001).

Team traditions are described in prior research as any form of regularly repeated actions or characteristics between organizations and spectators that promote the history of a team (Slavich et al., 2018; Sutton et al., 1997). Traditions can come in the form of team cheers, music, uniforms, videoboard graphics, etc., as well as stadium design aspects that make the facility unique from its competition (e.g., Fenway Park’s green monster, Wrigley Field’s ivy covered outfield wall, Indianapolis Motor Speedway’s yard or bricks.) (Hardin et al., 2013; Slavich et al., 2018). The development and incorporation of team traditions create a sense of nostalgia in fans, which has been shown to increase involvement and interaction between the fans, organization, and the fan community (Coulter et al., 2003; Slavich et al., 2018; Underwood et al., 2001). Team traditions also give fans a stake in the event and some sense of control over how the event plays out (Hardin et al., 2013).

**Fan Identification**

Identifying and interacting with fans is key to success in sport organizations, especially in collegiate athletics (Bennett, 2016; Coulter et al., 2003; Hardin et al., 2013; Yoder, 2011). In prior research of sport fandom, Sloan (1989) highlighted the differences between fans and
spectators at sporting events. According to Sloan, while spectators merely attend a sporting event for the enjoyment of observing the activity, fans have an additional devotion and enthusiasm attached to the experience, which is far more impactful. The impact of sport fandom is crucial to not just the experience of an event, but to modern society as a whole (Dunning et al., 1986). Findings from Dunning et al. (1986) on the sociological connections between fandom and spectator behavior suggest that fandom “has come to form one of the principal media of collective identification in modern society and one of the principal sources of meaning in life for many people” (p. 222). Understanding an individual’s level of sport fandom, or fan identification, is key for sport managers, as highly identified fans have been shown to provide many benefits to organizations including higher commitment, pride, loyalty, and involvement with a specific team (Bennett, 2016; Drenton et al., 2009; Kerstetter et al., 2012; Yoder, 2011).

Fan identification is defined by Sutton et al., (1997) as the personal commitment and emotional involvement an individual has with a sport organization. High levels of fan identification lead to affective responses related to social prestige, self-esteem, and a sense of empowerment linked to attachment with an organization, also known as vicarious achievement (Cottingham, 2012; Fink et al., 2002; Yoder, 2011). Wann and Branscombe (1990) explored the behavior of subjects who possessed high levels of fan identification, in response to the success or failure of the organization they associated themselves with. The findings of Wann and Branscombe indicated that highly identified fans will respond to their organization’s success by BIRGing, or “basking in reflected glory” (p. 103). The examination elaborated on this by explaining that fans will use words such as ‘we’, ‘us’, or ‘our’ when discussing their associated team with others, showing the attachment and identification the fan has with their preferred team. The opposite of BIRGing is CORFing, or “cutting off reflected failure” (Wann & Branscombe,
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE D-I FOOTBALL SPORTSCAPE

1990, p. 103). In this practice, individuals use language, such as ‘they’ or ‘them’ to distance themselves from an organization, especially after the organization’s public failures. However, research has shown that highly identified fans are less likely to practice CORFing, compared to individuals with low levels of fan identification (Wann & Branscombe, 1990).

Pride and loyalty have repeatedly been shown as qualities that highly identified fans choose to demonstrate at sporting environments (Bennett, 2016; Drenton et al., 2009; Hardin et al., 2013; Yoder, 2011). The greatest way in which fans demonstrate these qualities are through established fan rituals (Drenton et al., 2009; James et al., 2001; Kerstetter et al., 2012; Slavich et al., 2018). Rook (1985) defined rituals as a “symbolic, expressive activity constructed of multiple behaviors that occur in a fixed, episodic sequence, and that tend to be repeated over time” (p. 251). Kerstetter et al. (2012) stated that within the service setting rituals are routinized social activities, creating interactivity between highly identified fans. Slavich et al. (2018) added that rituals, especially in the sporting environment are often tied in with superstition. Often a fan may reflect on a positive outcome of the team, and connect the success with an action they made, even if they are aware that the two circumstances are not directly linked through a causal relationship (Slavich et al., 2018). These definitions require the reoccurrence of a specific activity that is tied to explicit symbolism or sociality but are otherwise broad. Fan rituals can constitute a wide variety of activities that individuals participate in for the sake of team loyalty and pride (Cottingham, 2012; Kerstetter et al., 2012; Lock & Heere, 2017; Slavich et al., 2018).

Some common examples of fan rituals are wearing team merchandise, decorating vehicles in team colors, face and body painting, etc. (Yoder, 2011). However, the most socially involved and highly studied fan ritual at sporting events is the practice of tailgating (Drenton et al., 2009; James et al., 2001; Kerstetter et al., 2012). According to the American Century
Dictionary (1995), to tailgate is “to participate in a picnic that is served from the tailgate of a vehicle, as before a sports event” (American Century Dictionary, 1995). James et al. (2001), claimed that hundreds of thousands of highly identified fans participate in tailgating every year, creating an opportunity for organizations to interact directly with an already highly invested fan base. James et al. investigated the commitment associated with fans who tailgate at the University of Illinois using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative study indicated that 47% of tailgaters at Illinois football games had been participating in tailgating 10 or more years, 43% tailgated and attended every home game of the season, and 31% of respondents participated in tailgating at a minimum of one away football game as well (James et al., 2001). The qualitative results provided insight into the motives of participating in tailgating, which included social aspects, fun/personal enjoyment, and beliefs that tailgating was a part of the complete game day experience (James et al., 2001). The third motive, believing that tailgating is a part of the complete game day experience, is noteworthy because it suggests that highly identified fans who participate in tailgating view the pregame tailgate and the actual game as two parts of the whole event experience (James et al., 2001).

Similar to the research of James et al., Drenton et al. (2009) sought to identify motives for fan commitment to game day rituals, specifically tailgating. The study reported four total motives for participation: involvement, social-interaction, inter-temporal sentiment, and identity. As a result, Kerstetter et al. (2012) used photo-elicitation, which is the process of giving cameras to participants and asking them to take pictures that in some way represented what tailgating meant to them. The purpose of using photo elicitation was for researchers to use participants to identify meanings and motives to the ritual of tailgating (Kerstetter et al., 2012). Prominent motives identified from the participants were socialization with family and friends, specific
foods that were made every year as a game day tradition, alcohol, and displays of pride and commitment towards the team (Kerstetter et al., 2012). James et al., 2001) implemented both the quantitative and qualitative tests that revealed a positive relationship between years tailgating and frequency of games attended. This finding suggests that generally, as the years in which someone tailgates increases, the more games they will attend and tailgate.

College football tailgating is just one example of features that make college sport a unique experience, unattainable anywhere else due to its historically-based team traditions, distinct fan rituals, and involved fan atmosphere (Hardin et al., 2013). Previous research implied that gatherings of highly identified fans, particularly those participating in fan rituals at college athletic events, create shared emotional experiences, a common mood, and group identity which is unique in comparison to other sports options (Cottingham, 2012; Hardin et al., 2013; Lock & Heere, 2017). The interactive college sport environment produces a mass experience in which all members are unified towards a common positive outcome for the organization they are affiliated with (Cottingham, 2012). College sport fans actively participate in the event through sharing smiles, cheers, high-fives, even hugs not only with friends and family but with what would otherwise be complete strangers (Cottingham, 2012).

Additionally, collegiate sport also sets itself apart from other sporting opportunities with school rivalries (Harvard, 2014). Team rivalries have been found to be more important to college sport fans as opposed to fans of professional sport, largely due to the high level of identification that college sport fans tend to have with their respective institution (Grundy & Rader, 2016; Harvard, 2014). College sport fans are also found to receive a greater deal of joy, excitement, and satisfaction from their affiliated team defeating rivals as opposed to non-rival opponents.
(Slavich et al., 2018). Previous literature recognized that highly identified fans will even rejoice the loss of rivals to other teams besides their own affiliation (Harvard, 2014).

**Critical Incident Technique**

Critical incident technique (CIT) is a qualitative method founded by Flanagan (1954) to collect, content analyze, and classify observations of human behavior. The use of CIT involves investigating significant occurrences identified by respondents through key words, phrases, stories, or observations (Chell & Pittaway, 1998; Flanagan, 1954; Gremler, 2004; Ruihley & Greenwell, 2012). Recorded incidents are then collected, content analyzed, and categorized based on reoccurring themes (Flanagan, 1954; Gremler, 2004; Hardin et al., 2013). The objective of using this method is “to gain an understanding of the incident from the perspective of the individual, taking into account cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements” (Chell & Pittaway, 1998, p. 56). The strength of CIT research is that it creates an opportunity for respondents to provide detailed feedback and describe the aspects of an incident that are most important to them (Stauss & Weinlich, 1997).

CIT is a common method used in service research, primarily when applying it to a specific event or experience. CIT is frequently utilized when recording incidents that contribute positively or negatively to the total service experience (Gremler, 2004; Grove & Fisk, 1997; Johnson, 2002; Stauss & Weinlich, 1997). Consumers within the service industry often interpret similar incidents in different ways, both positively and negatively (Greenwell et al., 2007; Gremler, 2004; Hardin et al., 2013; Stauss & Weinlich, 1997). Therefore, the popularity of CIT in service research may be attributed to the flexibility provided to respondents to identify aspects of an experience that significantly impact their perception of an event (Gremley, 2004; Stauss & Weinlich, 1997). Furthermore, CIT can be used by service organizations to identify and
emphasize the aspects of a customer’s experience, whether they elicit satisfaction or displeasure (Johnson, 2002).

Despite its popularity among service researchers, a limited number of studies in the sport industry have utilized CIT (Greenwell, et al., 2007; Hardin et al., 2013; Ruihley & Greenwell, 2012). However, these studies have revealed findings that may be incredibly useful to sports organizations (Greenwell, et al., 2007; Hardin et al., 2013; Ruihley & Greenwell, 2012). One of the most interesting findings from the use of CIT in the sport industry are customer responses regarding game atmosphere, entertainment, and promotions. These aspects of the sporting event experience have been reported by customers as significant aspects of the total event experience (Greenwell et al., 2007; Hardin et al., 2013). These aspects also share a commonality in that they are all used by practitioners to enhance the game day experience of fans within a sporting event. However, findings suggest that if executed poorly, aspects normally used to promote fan experience can instead have considerably negative effects on customers (Greenwell et al., 2007; Hardin et al., 2013). Fans have also reported significantly positive incidents of the game day experience in CIT research including specific occurrences of fan enjoyment, team pride, and tradition (Hardin et al., 2013). These findings are congruent with prior research regarding the effect of team traditions on fan experience (Coulter et al., 2003; Slavich et al., 2018; Sutton et al., 1997; Underwood et al., 2001). Common negative reports from customers in CIT research relate to facilities, policy and operation, prices, and transportation (Hardin et al., 2013).

Customer Satisfaction

An abundance of research has been conducted regarding customer satisfaction in a multitude of areas. A common definition for customer satisfaction stems from the research of Day (1984), who described the concept as a post-choice cognitive judgement that is connected to
a particular purchasing decision. Another popular understanding of customer satisfaction is a pleasurable, fulfillment response towards a good, service, benefit, or reward (Oliver, 1997). Understanding customer satisfaction is crucial for organizations, as it has been found to provide a direct link between quality and post-purchase intentions or the ability to create return business (Churchill & Suprenant, 1982; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Madrigal, 1995). However, prior literature has exhibited additional benefits to increasing customer satisfaction as well (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Boulding et al., 1993; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Heskett et al., 1997; Howat et al., 1999; Rust et al., 1995; Tornow & Wiley, 1991). Customer satisfaction has been shown to be linked to customer retention (Tornow & Wiley, 1991), purchase intentions (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Cronin & Taylor, 1992), willingness to repatronize (Boulding et al., 1993), and willingness to refer other customers (Rust et al., 1995; Heskett et al., 1997; Howat et al., 1999). All of the abovementioned components are instrumental in managing a successful business, yet Reichheld (1994) specifically identified customer retention as a variable connected to increased revenue, reduced costs, and revenue streams beyond the original purchase.

Customer satisfaction is often used in service literature as the primary dimension for measuring service quality (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993). Customer satisfaction is also experiential and unique to each individual customer (Oliver, 1993). Greenwell et al. (2002) explained that customer satisfaction depends on subjective perception and evaluation of service performance, rather than an organizations objective standards of quality. Research by Greenwell et al. exhibited customer satisfaction in service encounters as being determined by the perception of the quality of the performance and the extent to which the performance exceeds expectations. This reasoning was later simplified by Greenwell et al. (2013) who stated satisfaction as experience compared to expectations. Cronin et al. (2000), however, acknowledged that service
quality played a role in satisfaction, but also reasoned that the perceived value of the service from the customer’s perceptions, rather than the customer’s expectations, formed the overall level of satisfaction.

Each definition of customer satisfaction shares a commonality in explaining that customers form a cognitive evaluation of service quality, which leads to an emotional response or satisfaction assessment. This satisfaction assessment in turn leads to purchasing intentions (Greenwell et al., 2002; Lenhart, 2017; Wakefield et al., 1996). Wakefield et al. (1996) applied previous research regarding customer satisfaction to Bitner’s (1992) servicescape model which posits that positive responses will lead to approach behavior, or a patron’s attraction to a facility, willingness to stay and explore, spend money, return, and carry out plans involving the facility (Bitner, 1992; Wakefield et al., 1996). From this, Wakefield et al. created the behavioral intentions of a sport consumer. Behavioral intentions were defined as the spectators’ “desire to stay [and] patronize the sportscape in the future” (Wakefield et al., 1996, pp. 23-24). Wakefield et al. (1996) went on to describe behavioral intentions as the two most crucial concerns for sportscape managers, as they determine whether a customer will stay in a place for the entirety of an event and whether a customer will return to the facility for future events (i.e., repatronage).

Increasing customer satisfaction is a critical issue within the sporting event setting due to rising spectator expectations (Fisher, 2014; Greenwell et al., 2002; Greenwell et al., 2013; Yoshida & James, 2010). Greenwell et al. (2002), stated modern sport fans expect a stadium experience that is comfortable and convenient, and poorly designed facilities will have a negative effect on customer satisfaction. This is congruent with Yoshida and James (2010) who found that the facility can have a strong negative effect on satisfaction, suggesting the influence of poor facilities is detrimental to the customer experience. Service employees were also found to have a
strong negative effect on satisfaction, while game atmosphere was found to be a strong predictor for satisfaction (Yoshida & James, 2010).

Based on definitions of customer satisfaction that compare service experience to customer expectations, understanding the expectations that spectators enter a sporting event becomes imperative for sport managers (Greenwell et al., 2002; Greenwell et al., 2013). Research by Greenwell et al. (2013) revealed that customer expectations are dependent on experiences at prior sporting events attended, either based on the sport most familiar to the individual or another sport at a similar level of competition. If a spectator has direct prior experience with the type of sporting event they are attending, they will enter the event with predictive expectations of their gameday experience (Greenwell et al., 2013). However, if the spectator has limited experience with the type of sport in question, then they will enter with ideal expectations, in anticipation that the event will be a positive experience (Greenwell et al., 2013). Many college athletic departments may fall short of adequately understanding and meeting preconceived expectations of both new and returning spectators, as there is a perceived divide among fans between the cost to attend college football games, and the gameday amenities available (or lack thereof) in comparison to other sport options (Fisher, 2014).

**Purchasing Intentions**

Managers within the leisure and service industry, including sport events, are primarily fixated on two crucial concerns when it comes to customer intentions (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield et al., 1996). Firstly, managers are concerned with the amount of time in which a customer will spend within a service facility. Wakefield et al. (1996) stated that spectators of sporting events typically spend about two-to-four hours within the sport venue during the event. In these long-term service environments, customers are heavily affected by the surrounding
environment. If this environment is pleasurable, the spectator is likely to stay for the entirety of the event, which has been shown to increase customer spending as well as willingness to spend more than the customer originally intended (Donovan et al., 1994; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield et al., 1996).

The second crucial concern for managers regarding customer intentions pertains to whether the customer will be a return patron to the facility in the future (Jang, 2014; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield et al., 1996). This concept of returning to the facility for future events is often described in sport consumer research as repurchase, revisit, or attendance intentions (Bagozzi et al., 1999; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Trail et al., 2017), as well as repatronage (Jang, 2014; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield et al., 1996). Ko (2000) stated that the basic concept of repurchase intention is that satisfied customers tend to be highly committed to a service and eventually become loyal or return customers to an organization or facility. Ko (2000) expressed that customer satisfaction with the environment has a direct impact on repurchase intentions. Therefore, managers in the field should focus on satisfying customers by improving aspects of the sportscape, such as stadium accessibility and aesthetics (Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Wakefield et al., 1996). Otherwise, fans may develop negative perceptions of the facility, which has been shown to decrease the likelihood of revisiting (Bagozzi et al., 1999).

However, prior to determining how to satisfy spectators so that they stay for the entirety of an event and return to future events, managers in the field must understand what initially attracts spectators to a sporting event (Deschriver, 1999; Kahle et al., 1996; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Snipes & Ingram, 2007; Trail et al., 2017). Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) recognized that spectators may initially patronize a sporting event based on personal interest in the event. However, recent research has identified that a spectators’ potential interest is dependent upon the
values and characteristics of each consumer relative to the event (Kahle et al., 1996; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Snipes & Ingram, 2007).

Kahle et al. (1996) contributed to this research by identifying factors that motivate consumers to attend collegiate football games, and then grouping consumers based on this data into three consumer types (i.e. internalized highly involved sport consumers, referent power consumers, and unique self-expressive consumers). Internalized highly involved sport consumers were revealed to be motivated to attend college football games by aspects such as personal appreciation of the game or sport, quality of the competition in which the consumer’s aligned organization was facing in a specific game, and the perceived importance or stakes of a specific game (Kahle et al., 1996). These consumers are typically considered to be the most loyal to the organization and will experience vicarious achievement through closely identifying themselves with the organization, or feeling as though they play a part in the organization’s success.

Referent power consumers, on the other hand, were motivated by enjoyment stemming from the social experience and comradery between friends, family, and other spectators at college football games (Kahle et al., 1996). These fans are typically less motivated by aspects of the game, and more motivated by the enjoying the service experience with others. The third consumer type identified by Kahle et al. (1996) are unique self-expressive consumers. These consumers are motivated by the enjoyment associated with success and high caliber players (Kahle et al., 1996). This consumer type consists of fans who are not especially loyal to one specific organization, but instead follow winning teams and successful players for the sake of enjoying their achievements. This third consumer type consists of what many refer to as fair-weather fans, according to Kahle et al. (1996).
Snipes and Ingram (2007) simplified research by Kahle et al. (1996) by grouping consumers of sporting events into just two groups (i.e. loyal fans and occasional attendees). Loyal fans were differentiated by having higher levels of emotional attachment and regularly attending games, as opposed to occasional attendees who were less attached to the organization they were spectating (Snipes & Ingram, 2007). Results demonstrated that occasional attendees were more influenced by ticket prices than loyal fans when deciding to attend a sporting event. Conversely, loyal fans were found to be more influenced by fan participation games, corporate sponsorship, school spirit, and team record (Snipes & Ingram, 2007). Both loyal fans and occasional attendees however were influenced by game schedule and facility quality. Findings from Snipes and Ingram were congruent with Deschriver’s (1999) research in which he identified areas (e.g., promotional activities, ticket prices, and stadium age) for managers to market college football games to consumers. Koo and Hardin (2008) expanded on the research of Snipes and Ingram (2007) by assessing differences between fans and spectators (each defined similarly to loyal fans and occasional attendees, respectively) in their motives for attending collegiate athletics events. In this study, emotional attachment to the university was found to be a significant differentiating factor between the motives of fans and spectators. From their research, Koo and Hardin (2008) discovered the factors that affect spectators’ motives to attend college sports, such as facility aesthetics, high profile coaches, and star players, were less crucial to motivating fans because of their high levels of emotional attachment with the university. Therefore, Koo and Hardin (2008) recommended that practitioners in collegiate athletics emphasize winning and success when marketing to spectators, while also ensuring that facilities are aesthetically pleasing to new customers. According to Koo and Hardin (2008), following these recommendations will help athletic departments to foster emotional attachment in
spectators, eventually converting them to fans who are less critical of their event experience and more likely to continue attending events in the future.

The notion explained by Koo and Hardin (2008) that spectators or occasional attendees can be impressed and eventually converted into loyal fans who have attachment to the university was further researched by Trail et al. (2017), who sought to identify fans’ motives for future attendance intentions of collegiate athletics events. What they discovered was a cycle of behavior that explained why fans continue to annually repatronize athletics events year after year. Customers who regularly attend athletics events will display a high level of postseason role identity with the organization, similar to fans who display high emotional attachment and team loyalty towards the organization reported in prior research (Kahle et al., 1996; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Snipes & Ingram, 2007; Trail et al., 2017). Possessing a high level of postseason role identity was shown to then lead to higher pre-season attendance intentions, which in turn led to greater attendance behavior in college sport consumers (Trail et al., 2017). This then would lead back to higher levels of postseason role identity, displaying the cycle of fan attendance from year-to-year in collegiate sports. Therefore, demonstrating the importance of attracting and impressing new customers in order to convert them to fans who will fall into the cycle of regular game attendance (Koo & Hardin, 2008; Trail et al., 2017).

**Season Ticket Holders & Athletics Donors**

Producing loyal fans is key to the financial success of sports organizations, especially in DI collegiate athletics where ticket sales represent the largest stream of revenue for athletic departments (Fulks, 2018). The most loyal, involved, and invested fans in major sports are season ticket holders of the organization (Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; McDonald, 2010). In major spectator sports such as Division I college football, it is logical to assign a
portion of stadium seating to season tickets (McDonald, 2010; Pan & Baker, 2005). Doing so assures athletic departments of a known fixed income, which is paid upfront, prior to the start of the season (Drayer et al., 2012; Pan & Baker, 2005). The instantly secured capital from season ticket sales largely helps fund core activities of the athletics department (Hardin et al., 2013; Koo et al., 2015). Season ticket bases also aid the program in securing outside funding including corporate sponsorship opportunities by providing a predictable market base (Hardin et al., 2013; Koo et al., 2015; Pan & Baker, 2005). Additionally, any unsold tickets in the season ticket holder sections can be re-allocated to general admission, maximizing potential incomes while reducing the risk of having unsold seats in periods of poor on-field performance (Drayer et al., 2012; Koo et al., 2015; Pan & Baker, 2005). This is especially vital to the organization according to Drayer et al., who explained that unsold tickets represent perishable inventory in that every seat at an event is a potential revenue source that if not purchased prior to the event goes completely unutilized. Hardin et al. added to this by explaining that while other major revenue sources for athletic departments such as media rights contracts or NCAA and conference distributions are paid out evenly among conference members, ticket sales have a direct impact on revenues at individual institutions. Suggesting that ticket sales more accurately depict the financial performance of the athletic department.

NCAA Division I athletic departments also benefit from establishing a season ticket base through strengthened relationships with fans (Drayer et al., 2012; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; McDonald, 2010; Tsiotsou, 1998). Season ticket holders not only represent an organization’s most dedicated and involved fan base, they are primary stakeholders who invest greatly in the organization both financially and emotionally (Drayer et al., 2012; Koo et al., 2015). According to Koo and Hardin, season ticket holders identify heavily with the
organization, as though they are a part of its success. They often attach themselves not just to a specific team, but to the entire athletic department (Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015).

An additional financial benefit to cultivating highly loyal and involved fans in collegiate athletics is increased private donations to the university (Dempsey, 2001; Koo & Dittmore, 2014; Pan & Baker, 2005; Reynolds, 2015; Shapiro, 2010; Shapiro & Ridinger, 2011; Tsiotsou, 1998). Private donations are of major importance to university athletic departments, as they make up one of the top three revenue sources for these organizations (Fulks, 2018; Koo et al., 2015). According to the 2018 NCAA revenues and expenses report, private donations to athletics account for as much as 31% of the total average generated revenues for FBS institutions, and 29% of FCS institutions (Fulks, 2018). Stinson (2017) found that 15% of NCAA FBS athletic budgets were funded directly through private donations to athletics. Findings from Tsiotsou (1998) suggest that fans donate to athletic departments for many of the same reasons that they purchase season tickets. Using the Giving to Athletics Model (GAM), which Tsiotsou developed to examine characteristics of athletics donors, a positive relationship was found between fan involvement and emotional motivation. Both fan involvement and emotional motivation were then shown to have a positive relationship with athletic donations (Tsiotsou, 1998). Many athletic departments in major college sports have begun maximizing private donations by tying them directly to season tickets, making them available only to athletic donors, and offering the most favorable seats to the greatest contributors (Koo et al., 2015).

Critics of this practice by athletic departments have claimed that increasing emphasis on athletic giving will detract from private donations to academic programs at major universities (Koo & Dittmore, 2014; McCormick & Tinsley, 1990). However, research has contradicted this notion (Bowen & Shulman, 2001; Koo & Dittmore, 2014; McCormick & Tinsley, 1990; Stinson,
2017; Walker, 2015). Koo and Dittmore (2014) hypothesized that athletic donations at major institutions would create a crowding-out effect, in which athletic contributions would have a cannibalistic impact on donations to academic programs. What they found was rather than a crowding-out effect, athletic donations instead created what they termed a ‘spillover effect’ on academic contributions, meaning that increased athletic donations actually resulted in a slight increase in academic donations as well. This is congruent with much earlier works conducted by McCormick and Tinsley (1990), who revealed that athletics and academics maintained a symbiotic relationship in terms of private donations, where each benefitted financially from the other. Additionally, Stinson examined donor contribution behavior at NCAA FBS institutions, and found that 51% of all donors of the university give to both athletics and academics, rather than one area or the other. However, the most significant of contributors to universities maintain academic values over athletic values, with the top 5% of university contributors generally focus on funding academic programs rather than athletics (Bowen & Shulman, 2001).

With highly involved fans such as season ticket holders and athletic donors taking such a prominent role as stakeholders to the university and athletic department, satisfying these fans is of the upmost importance to athletic administrators (Drayer et al., 2012; Hardin et al., 2013; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; McDonald, 2010; Pan & Baker, 2005). As discussed previously, season ticket holders and other fans displaying high loyalty and emotional attachment to the organization tend to have increased repatronage intentions (Kahle et al., 1996; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Snipes & Ingram, 2007; Trail et al., 2017). However, if expectations are unfulfilled, season ticket holders will likely churn, or choose not to renew their tickets for the following season (Drayer et al., 2012; McDonald, 2010; Pan & Baker, 2005). Pan and Baker (2005) state that blame for the non-renewal of season tickets is often placed on the team’s on-
field performance or record. Mullins et al. (2005) however, refer to this assessment as sport marketing myopia, as it fails to identify the full scope of consumers’ needs and wants (2000). Pan and Baker elaborate by explaining that an effective sport marketing strategy should not solely highlight the success of the team, but rather present a product that contains value-driven attributes which are congruent with the wants and needs of consumers.

When attempting to promote season ticket renewal, Hardin et al. (2013) explains that athletic administrators should be crucially concerned with the service environment within the event experience. According to Hardin et al. (2013), providing a suitable service environment at sporting events is key to developing and retaining season ticket holders, athletic donors, and other loyal and involved fans. However, as major stakeholders of the organization, season ticket holders and athletic donors should also be offered additional incentives in the form of prime seating location, parking benefits, and access to coaches and administrators (Drayer et al., 2012; Leone, 2013). Drayer et al. even suggests the use of price guarantees to reduce the chances of churn (2012). This would mean crediting the difference in ticket price if individual game tickets fall below the average season ticket value in the event of a poor season on the field. Customers can then utilize these credited accounts towards the purchase of future tickets, merchandise, or concessions sales (Drayer et al., 2012).

Lastly, when creating marketing strategies aimed at maximizing athletic contributions from team stakeholders, universities should highlight a commitment to, and progress towards athletics success (Reynolds, 2015; Walker, 2015). Examples of this include constructing or renovating facilities, hiring prominent coaches, and aligning with major conferences, all of which positively impact athletic contributions (Reynolds, 2015). Postseason exposure in major spectator sports such as football and basketball have also been shown to positively impact private
donations to athletics in following years (Reynolds, 2015; Walker, 2015). In a study by Walker (2015) of Division I athletics success in relation to donor contributions, reported findings show that institutions who experienced major athletic success in the form of a final four appearance in the NCAA Men’s basketball championship tournament or prominent bowl game appearance in FBS football doubled the percent increase in private contributions over the following two-year period.
Chapter 3 - Methodology

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the relationship that the sportscape, service influence, and fandom influence have with customer satisfaction of season ticket holders and athletic donors of NCAA Division I football institutions. The study incorporates the sportscape and revisit intention questionnaire from Jang (2014), sport fandom questionnaire from Wann (2002), and the sport spectator identification scale from Wann and Branscombe (1993). Scoreboard quality, venue aesthetics, space allocation, layout accessibility, seat comfort, and venue cleanliness were the variables chosen to measure the relationship between the sportscape and customer satisfaction. Employees and wait time were variables chosen to assess the relationship between the service quality influence and customer satisfaction. Both the variables in the sportscape influence and service influence have been adapted from Jang (2014). Finally, fan identification and team loyalty were variables selected to show the relationship between the personal fandom influence and customer satisfaction, adapted from Yoder (2011). Prior to this study, little to no literature had examined the satisfaction of college football season ticket holders through all three of these areas at once.

The secondary focus of this study is to determine whether customer satisfaction varies between different levels of D-I college football competition (i.e. FBS P5, FBS G5, & FCS). Very few prior studies in this field have examined Group of Five or FCS samples. Additionally, no prior studies utilized comparative analysis to evaluate similarities and differences between data from multiple institutions and competition levels.

Research Design

The quantitative study used purposive sampling to target season ticket holders and athletics donors of NCAA D-I football institutions within the Midwest region of the United
States. In the present study, the Midwest region is classified from the Bureau of Economic Analysis’ (BEA) Great Lakes region, and includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin (BEA, n.d.). Participants for the present study consisted of 2019 season ticket holders of college football programs, as well as athletic donors who attended college football games in the 2019 season, representing three levels of D-I competition (i.e. FBS P5, FBS G5, & FCS). Email questionnaires with a total of fifty-six items were sent to the participants using the online survey software Qualtrics. Afterwards, data was analyzed using SPSS. Frequency distributions were calculated for demographics and descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables. A regression analysis was used to assess research questions one through three. An ANOVA was used to analyze research question four, in order to compare all three samples simultaneously. All calculations were done using a .05 significance level.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

**RQ1.** Do sportscape elements (i.e. scoreboard quality, venue aesthetics, space allocation, layout accessibility, seat comfort, & venue cleanliness) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

**H1.** Sportscape elements will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ2.** Does service experience (i.e. employees & wait time) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

**H2.** Service experience will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ3.** Does personal fandom (i.e. fan identification & team loyalty) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

**H3.** Personal fandom will significantly predict customer satisfaction.
RQ4. Are there differences in results based on level of Division I college football competition (i.e. FBS P5, FBS G5, & FCS)?

H4. There will be significant differences in satisfaction between each level of competition.

Instruments

Demographics Survey

The full instrument used in this study is comprised of five total questionnaires, including a demographics form. The demographics form consisted of six questions used to identify demographics characteristics of the sample. First, a dropdown box was provided for participants to select the associated university to which they were a season ticket holder or donor. Then, the age of the participants was asked, followed by question three of the demographics form which asked participants to identify their gender from the choices of male, female, or other. Next, the race/ethnicity of the participants was evaluated by asking the participant to check all of the following categories that apply to them: Black/African-American, White/Caucasian, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, or other (please specify). The fifth question on the demographics form requested the participant to identify whether they were a university alumnus or not. Finally, the sixth question asked participants to identify whether they arrived early for games in order to partake in pregame festivities, including tailgating, at least half of the games they attend.

Sportscape and Revisit Intention Questionnaire: Part A

The first scale included in the questionnaire after the demographics form was part I of the Sportscape and Revisit Intention Questionnaire (SRIQA; Jang, 2014), labeled Sportscapes. Jang (2014) developed this questionnaire to be a modern in-depth assessment of the sportscape and
repatronage intentions as defined by Wakefield et al., (1996). This instrument was comprised of 31 items, with all items rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree, and forming eight subscales (i.e., scoreboard quality, venue aesthetics, space allocation, layout accessibility, seat comfort, venue cleanliness, employee, and wait time). Each subscale was constructed with three to five items and have shown significant levels of internal consistency reliability with reported Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .80 to .87 based on a sample of 481 professional sports fans (Jang, 2014).

**Sport Fandom Questionnaire**

The second scale used in the questionnaire was the Sport Fandom Questionnaire (SFQ; Wann, 2002). The SFQ identifies a participant’s level of sport fandom, or the importance of sport in a participant’s life. The instrument was made up of 5, 7-point Likert scales ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. Yoder (2011) reported high internal consistency reliability with a Cronbach’s alpha level of .93 for this instrument, based on a sample of 124 college football fans.

**Sport Spectator Identification Scale**

The third scale in the questionnaire was the Sport Spectator Identification Scale (SSIS; Wann & Branscombe, 1993). This instrument assesses the degree to which a fan identifies with a specific team or athlete. The scale was comprised of 7 questions evaluated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree/never (depending on the item) to (7) strongly agree/always. Yoder (2011) reported high internal consistency reliability with a Cronbach’s alpha level of .90 in a sample of 124 college football fans.
Sportscape and Revisit Intention Questionnaire: Part B

The fourth scale included in the study was part II of SRIQ, labeled “Revisit Intention” (SRIQB; Jang, 2014). This instrument was purposefully separated from SRIQ part I because it determines the present study’s singular dependent variable, or the participant’s satisfaction with an event and likelihood to be a patron at future events. This is congruent with Wakefield et al. (1996), who determined customer satisfaction in the sport setting through repatronage intentions and desire to stay for the full extent of the event. The instrument was made up of 4 items, all on a 7-point Likert scales ranging in answers from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. The instrument was found to have a high level of internal consistency reliability according to Jang (2014), with a reported Cronbach’s alpha level of .83 in a sample 481 professional sport fans.

Population and Sample

The population in this study consisted of football season ticket holders and athletic donors at FBS Power 5, FBS Group of 5, and FCS institutions. 102 respondents made up the present study’s sample, with 23 respondents representing FBS P5 programs, 38 representing FBS G5 programs, and 41 representing FCS programs. A total of 20 athletics programs were represented in the present study by the respondents, including 6 FBS P5 programs, 7 FBS G5 programs, and 7 FCS programs.

Sampling Procedures

Before any steps were taken towards the study, the researchers contacted NCAA D-I athletic departments in order to pitch the importance of this research and the opportunity it presents to the institutions who choose to participate. After establishing early contact, IRB approval was then sought. Once received, the questionnaire and consent form were sent to university athletic departments for distribution to season ticket holders and donors in their
databases. Additionally, researchers directly recruited participants who were known to be football season ticket holders or donors at D-I universities. Questionnaires were sent to participants in December and January, following the conclusion of the 2019-2020 football season. Data collection remained open for a total of eight weeks.

The quantitative study utilized purposive sampling, defined by Thomas et al. (2015) as the process by which “the researcher establishes criteria necessary to include in the study and then finds a sample that meets that criteria” (p. 310). In the present study, the chosen criteria consisted of season ticket holders and athletics donors of NCAA Division I football institutions within the Midwest region of the United States. The Midwest region, as classified by the Bureau of Economic Analysis’ (BEA) Great Lakes region, includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. All 30 of the D-I institutions which fit the above-mentioned criteria were contacted through email. A full list of these universities is provided in Appendix G.

Data Analysis

Using IBM’s Version 23.0 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program, this study analyzed four research questions through testing four proposed hypotheses. Once data was collected from Qualtrics, it was then numerically coded into SPSS for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were run and analyzed in order to group the data, allowing for a better general understanding of the data to be made, and important patterns or associations to be recognized. Following this, Cronbach’s alphas were calculated for each variable construct. Finally, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the theorized model’s goodness of fit before researchers began analyzing the data.

Three simple regression analyses were performed in order to examine the relationship between the three experience factors in this study and the mean of the variable being used to
assess customer satisfaction. In addition, a MANOVA was utilized in order to compare means for satisfaction from each of the three individual samples, and determine whether there were significant statistical differences between each samples’ means. A second MANOVA was then calculated to compare differences between responses from each sample regarding the three experience factors. Finally, a third MANOVA was calculated to compare differences between responses from each sample regarding the ten assessment dimensions, or independent variables included in the present study.

**RQ1.** Does the sportscape influence (i.e. scoreboard quality, venue aesthetics, space allocation, layout accessibility, seat comfort, & venue cleanliness) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

Simple regression analysis was utilized to answer this question, with the experience factor “sportscape influence” (i.e. scoreboard quality, venue aesthetics, space allocation, layout accessibility, seat comfort, & venue cleanliness) run against a single dependent variable (customer satisfaction).

**H1.** The sportscape influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ2.** Does the service experience influence (i.e. employees & wait time) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

Simple regression analysis was utilized to answer this question, with the experience factor “service influence” (i.e. employees & wait time) run against a single dependent variable (customer satisfaction).

**H2.** The service experience influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ3.** Does the personal fandom influence (i.e. fan identification & team loyalty) significantly predict customer satisfaction?
Simple regression analysis was utilized to answer this question, with the experience factor “fandom influence” (i.e. fan identification & team loyalty) run against a single dependent variable (customer satisfaction).

**H3.** The personal fandom influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ4.** Are there differences in results based on level of Division I college football competition (i.e. FBS P5, FBS G5, & FCS)?

A MANOVA was run, comparing results from the three competition levels (i.e., FBS P5, FBS G5, & FCS) against a single dependent variable (customer satisfaction). Additional MANOVA’s were also run to compare results from the three competitions levels against the three experience factors, and ten assessment dimensions.

**H4.** There will be significant differences in satisfaction between each level of competition.
Chapter 4 Manuscript

The popularity of intercollegiate athletics as spectator events creates numerous commercial opportunities and benefits for universities. As early as the late 19th century, universities in the United States capitalized on the popularity of college sports through the sale of tickets and the collection of donations from alumni and loyal fans (Ingrassia, 2012; Schmidt, 2007; Smith, 1990; Smith, 2011). Today, the business model of college athletic departments at major universities remains largely similar to the strategy used over a century ago, as ticket sales and athletic donations continue to represent two of the largest revenue sources at the Division I level (Fulks, 2018). Additionally, athletics offer national visibility with marketing opportunities for universities, especially in regards to major revenue sports such as college football and men’s basketball (Gustafson, 2005; Ingrassia, 2012; Smith, 2011). Athletic events also provide a space for strengthening ties between current and former students, as well as fans within the local community (Grundy & Rader, 2016).

However, recent concerns over attendance at college football games has threatened the financial viability of the traditional college sport business model. The 2018 college football season marked the lowest per-game average attendance across the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) since the 1996 season (Dodd, 2018). The average of 41,856 spectators across the FBS was down 347 from the 2017 season and marks a fifth straight year-to-year attendance decrease (National Collegiate Athletic Association [NCAA], n.d.a). These statistics align with a larger trend of average home football game attendance for FBS institutions, which has shown a total decrease of more than 5,000 spectators over the last 10 years (Dodd, 2018; NCAA, n.d.a). The Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) has also experienced declines in average game attendance. In fact, between the 2017 and 2018 seasons, average FCS home game attendance
decreased by 4.5% and dipped below an average of 8,000 spectators for the first time since average attendance began being recorded by the NCAA (Burton, 2019; NCAA, n.d.a).

In an effort to better understand the declining trend of college football attendance, athletic programs must first recognize the influences that shape spectators’ satisfaction with a sporting event. Researchers have assessed spectator satisfaction through the perceived quality of the service environment at a sporting event (Gustafson, 2005; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; Wakefield et al., 1996; Yoshida & James, 2010). However, additional intangible service influences, such as interactions with employees and time spent waiting at a facility, have also been shown to impact satisfaction (Greenwell et al., 2002; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Ko et al., 2011; Mahoney & Pastore, 2004; Palmero & Price, 2015). Furthermore, research suggests that personal aspects of fandom such as fan identification and team loyalty significantly impact satisfaction with a sporting event. (Bennett, 2016; Cottingham, 2012; Hardin et al., 2013; Harvard, 2014; Lock & Heere, 2017; Yoder, 2011). Based on this understanding, recognizing and responding to fans’ expectations of the college football game day experience becomes imperative now, especially in light of recent declines in attendance, more than ever for Division I athletic departments. By increasing satisfaction with the college football game day experience, especially among season ticket holders, athletic donors, and other highly identified and loyal fans, athletic departments may avoid following the current trend of declining college football attendance. Implications from this study will aim to provide recommendations for improving spectator satisfaction in the D-I college football setting.

**Service Quality in Sport**

Due to the intangible and heterogeneous nature of services, service quality can be difficult to define (Ko & Pastore, 2004; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011; Shonk & Chelladurai,
2008). However, there is a general congruency among researchers that assessing service quality is subjective to the individual consumer. Parasuraman et al. (1985) proposed that service quality is assessed by the consumer based on a comparison of their expectations with actual service performance. From this definition, Parasuraman et al. conceptualized the Gap Model of Service Quality which quantified multiple independent variables that could be summed into two groups, expected service and perceived service. Their model subtracts the perceived service group from the expected service group to find a quantifiable value for service quality. However, later research concluded that service quality is not assessed strictly from the service experience, rather it is also influenced by the organization (Bitner & Hubert, 1994; Ko & Pastore, 2004). Therefore, service quality has since been presently defined as "the consumer's overall impression of the relative inferiority/superiority of the organization and its services" (Bitner & Hubbert, 1994, p. 77).

Bitner’s (1992) seminal work on service quality hypothesized that individual aspects of the physical service environment would have a profound effect on a patron’s positive and negative internal responses to the service, and in turn could lead to future approach or avoidance behaviors. Bitner coined this physical service environment as “the servicescape” (p. 58), and created the servicescape model for measuring the impact of servicescape aspects on consumer’s internal responses and response behaviors. Using Bitner’s (1992) servicescape model, researchers have found that as the length of an event increases, service satisfaction becomes more dependent upon the perceived quality of the servicescape (Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Rosembaum & Massiah, 2011; Pullman & Gross, 2004; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999).
With prior literature highlighting the importance of the physical environment in the service setting (Bittner, 1992; Brauer, 1992; Kerin et al., 1992), researchers later furthered these studies into specific areas of the service industry such as sporting events (Greenwell et al., 2002; Gustafson, 2005; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; Ulrich & Berkenstein, 2010; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994; Wakefield et al., 1996; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999; Yoshida & James, 2010). A prominent early extension of Bitner’s research within the sport industry came from Wakefield and Blodgett (1994), who utilized Major League Baseball stadiums as a medium for determining the quality of a service facility. The authors of this study found a positive relationship between stadium quality and both consumer excitement and patronage intentions. Using these findings, Wakefield et al. (1996) altered Bitner’s servicescape model in order to develop the sportscape model, to describe the physical service environment of a sporting event. Importantly, some aspects of a sporting event are unique from other service environments, which impacts spectator pleasure with the facility and event (Gustafson, 2005; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; Wakefield et al., 1996; Yoshida & James, 2010). Wakefield et al. (1996) developed the sportscape model with five dimensions: (a) Stadium access, (b) Facility aesthetics, (c) Scoreboard quality, (d) Seating comfort, and (e) Layout accessibility.

The sportscape model has been cited as an effective predictor in determining the relationships between the physical facility or stadium, pleasure with the event, and behavioral intentions of a desire to stay and repatronage (Greenwell et al., 2002; Gustafson, 2005; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Ko & Pastore, 2004; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; Ko et al., 2011; Palmero & Price, 2015; Slavich et al., 2018; Wakefield et al., 1996; Yoder, 2011; Yoshida & James, 2010). These findings have significantly impacted the sport industry, with many
facilities built or renovated with improving the sportscape and spectator experience as top design priorities since the turn of the 21st century (Greenwell et al., 2002; Ko et al., 2011; Palmero & Price, 2015; Robinson, 1997). However, understanding the context of the sporting environment is critical when attempting to gauge how much of an effect the sportscape has on spectator satisfaction. Specifically, fans of longer-lasting sporting events will be influenced by sportscape quality more so than those of shorter events (Gustafson, 2005; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Koo et al., 2015; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). Therefore, the longer a sporting event typically lasts, the more critical sportscape quality becomes in facility design and management.

While the sportscape is a significant part of the sporting environment experience for spectators, it alone does not account for all intrinsic elements that influence the way fans experience a sporting event (Hardin et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2012; Sutton et al., 1997; Underwood et al., 2001; Verhoef et al., 2009). Thus, it is important not to overlook the impact of service employees on the customer experience (Greenwell et al., 2002; Hardin et al., 2013; Jang, 2014; Ko et al., 2011; Mahoney & Pastore, 2004; Palmero & Price, 2015). While the sportscape accurately displays the environment that effects a consumer’s service experience, many aspects of a service experience are directly presented to customers through the attitudes and performance of service employees such as ushers or concessions staff (Greenwell et al., 2002; Jang, 2014; Ko et al., 2011; Mahoney & Pastore, 2014). Additionally, event aspects which contribute to time spent waiting such as lines for concession stands or bathrooms can influence satisfaction with the service experience (Baker & Jones, 2011; Brady, 1997; Dickson et al., 2005; Hightower et al., 2002; Jang, 2014). Dickson et al. indicated that the time spent waiting at a sporting event may negatively impact a spectator’s experience in a stadium. Jang expounded on the impact of wait time in stating that “since wait time could create negative experiences for spectators, the wait
factor needs to be considered closely as an effect on customers' perception about service quality at sport venues” (p. 2).

**Individual Fandom Characteristics**

Identifying and interacting with fans is key to success in sport organizations, especially in collegiate athletics (Bennett, 2016; Coulter et al., 2003; Hardin et al., 2013; Yoder, 2011). Sloan (1989) highlighted the differences between fans and spectators at sporting events. According to Sloan, while spectators merely attend a sporting event for the enjoyment of observing the activity, fans have an additional devotion and enthusiasm attached to the experience, which is far more impactful. The impact of sport fandom is crucial to not just the experience of an event, but to modern society as a whole (Dunning et al., 1986). Findings from Dunning et al. on the sociological connections between fandom and spectator behavior suggest that fandom “has come to form one of the principal media of collective identification in modern society and one of the principal sources of meaning in life for many people” (p. 222). Understanding an individual’s level of sport fandom, or fan identification, is key for sport managers, as highly identified fans have been shown to provide many benefits to organizations including higher commitment, pride, loyalty, and involvement with a specific team (Bennett, 2016; Drenton et al., 2009; Kerstetter et al., 2012; Yoder, 2011).

Fan identification is defined by Sutton et al. (1997) as the personal commitment and emotional involvement an individual has with a sport organization. High levels of fan identification lead to affective responses related to social prestige, self-esteem, and a sense of empowerment linked to attachment with an organization, also known as vicarious achievement (Cottingham, 2012; Fink et al., 2002; Yoder, 2011). Notably, Wann and Branscombe (1990)
explored the behavior of subjects who possessed high levels of fan identification, in response to the success or failure of the organization they associated themselves with. Wann and Branscombe (1990) indicated that highly identified fans will respond to their organization’s success by BIRGing, or “basking in reflected glory” (p. 103). The examination elaborated on this by explaining that fans will use words such as *we, us, or our* when discussing their associated team with others, showing the attachment and identification the fan has with their preferred team. The opposite of BIRGing is known as CORFing, or “cutting off reflected failure” (Wann & Branscombe, 1990, p. 103). In this practice, individuals use language, such as *they or them* to distance themselves from an organization, especially after the organization’s public failures. However, research has shown that highly identified fans are less likely to practice CORFing, compared to individuals with low levels of fan identification (Wann & Branscombe, 1990).

**Season Ticket Holders and Athletic Donors**

Producing loyal fans is key to the financial success of sports organizations, especially in collegiate athletics where ticket sales represent the largest stream of revenue for athletic departments (Fulks, 2018). The most loyal, involved, and invested fans in major sports are season ticket holders of the organization (Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; McDonald, 2010). In major spectator sports, such as Division I college football, it is logical to assign a portion of stadium seating to season tickets (McDonald, 2010; Pan & Baker, 2005). Doing so assures athletic departments of a known, paid upfront fixed income prior to the start of the season (Drayer et al., 2012; Pan & Baker, 2005). The instantly secured capital from season ticket sales largely helps fund core activities of the athletics department (Hardin et al., 2013; Koo et al., 2015). Season ticket bases also aid the program in securing outside funding including corporate
sponsorship opportunities by providing a predictable market base (Hardin et al., 2013; Koo et al., 2015; Pan & Baker, 2005). Additionally, any unsold tickets in the season ticket holder sections can be re-allocated to general admission, maximizing potential incomes while reducing the risk of having unsold seats in periods of poor on-field performance (Drayer et al., 2012; Koo et al., 2015; Pan & Baker, 2005). Drayer et al. explained that unsold tickets represent perishable inventory in that every seat at an event is a potential revenue source that if not purchased prior to the event, goes completely unutilized. Additionally, ticket sales are a vital measuring tool for athletic department performance, because they have direct impacts on an individual program’s revenues, unlike other major sources of income such as conference revenue distributions from athletic performance and media rights contracts (Harden et al., 2013). Since most conferences choose to divvy up revenues evenly among its member institutions, individual programs have very little power over the performance of these revenue sources. Ticket sales on the other hand, are completely under the control of the athletic department (Hardin et al., 2013).

An additional financial benefit to cultivating highly loyal and involved fans in collegiate athletics is increased private donations to the university (Dempsey, 2001; Koo & Dittmore, 2014; Pan & Baker, 2005; Reynolds, 2015; Shapiro, 2010; Shapiro & Ridinger, 2011; Tsiotsou, 1998). Private donations are of major importance to university athletic departments, as they make up one of the top three revenue sources for these organizations (Fulks, 2018). According to the NCAA’s 2018 revenues and expenses report, private donations to athletics account for as much as 23% of the total average generated revenues for FBS institutions, and 30% of FCS institutions (Fulks, 2018).

Findings from Tsiotsou (1998) suggested that fans donate to athletic departments for many of the same reasons that they purchase season tickets. Using the Giving to Athletics Model
(GAM), which Tsiotsou developed to examine characteristics of athletics donors, a positive relationship was found between fan involvement and emotional motivation. Both fan involvement and emotional motivation were then shown to have a positive relationship with athletic donations (Tsiotsou, 1998). Many athletic departments in major college sports have begun maximizing private donations by tying them directly to season tickets, making them available only to athletic donors, and offering the most favorable seats to the greatest contributors (Koo et al., 2015).

Critics of this practice by athletic departments claim that increasing emphasis on athletic giving will detract from private donations to academic programs at major universities (Koo & Dittmore, 2014; McCormick & Tinsley, 1990). However, research has refuted this notion (Bowen & Shulman, 2001; Koo & Dittmore, 2014; McCormick & Tinsley, 1990; Stinson, 2017; Walker, 2015). For example, Koo and Dittmore (2014) found that increases in athletic donations created a ‘spillover effect’ on academic contributions, meaning that increased athletic donations correlated with an increase in academic donations as well. These findings align with much earlier works conducted by McCormick and Tinsley (1990), who revealed that athletics and academics maintained a symbiotic relationship in terms of private donations, where each benefitted financially from the other. Additionally, Stinson (2017) examined donor contribution behavior at NCAA FBS institutions, and found that 51% of all donors of the university give to both athletics and academics, rather than one area or the other.

With highly involved fans such as season ticket holders and athletic donors taking such a prominent role as stakeholders to the university and athletic department, satisfying these fans is of the upmost importance to athletic administrators (Drayer et al., 2012; Hardin et al., 2013; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; McDonald, 2010; Pan & Baker, 2005). As discussed
previously, season ticket holders and other fans displaying high loyalty and emotional attachment to the organization tend to have increased repatronage intentions (Kahle et al., 1996; Koo & Hardin, 2008; Snipes & Ingram, 2007; Trail et al., 2017). However, if expectations are unfulfilled, season ticket holders will likely churn, or choose not to renew their tickets for the following season (Drayer et al., 2012; McDonald, 2010; Pan & Baker, 2005). When attempting to promote season ticket renewal, Hardin et al. (2013) explains that athletic administrators should be crucially concerned with the service environment within the event experience. According to Hardin et al. (2013), providing a suitable service environment at sporting events is key to developing and retaining season ticket holders, athletic donors, and other loyal and involved fans.

**Method**

**Sample & Data Collection**

Before any steps were taken towards the study, the researchers contacted NCAA D-I athletic departments in order to pitch the importance of this research and the opportunity it presents to the institutions who choose to participate. After establishing early contact, IRB approval was then sought. Once received, the questionnaire and consent form were sent to university athletic departments for distribution to season ticket holders and donors in their databases. Additionally, researchers directly recruited participants who were known to be football season ticket holders or donors at D-I universities. Questionnaires were sent to participants in December and January, following the conclusion of the 2019-2020 football season. Data collection remained open for a total of eight weeks.

The quantitative study utilized purposive sampling, defined by Thomas et al. (2015) as the process by which “the researcher establishes criteria necessary to include in the study and
then finds a sample that meets that criteria” (p. 310). In the present study, the chosen criteria consisted of season ticket holders and athletics donors of NCAA Division I football institutions within the Midwest region of the United States. The Midwest region, as classified by the Bureau of Economic Analysis’ (BEA) Great Lakes region, includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin (BEA, n.d.). All 30 of the D-I institutions which fit the above-mentioned criteria were contacted through email. A full list of these universities is provided in Appendix G.

At the conclusion of the data collection period, a total of 102 responses were recorded, representing 20 of the NCAA Division I universities listed in Appendix G. Data was collected via an online questionnaire through the survey software program Qualtrics, and analyzed using IBM’s version 23.0 of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

**RQ1.** Does sportscape influence (i.e. scoreboard quality, venue aesthetics, space allocation, layout accessibility, seat comfort, & venue cleanliness) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

**H1.** The sportscape influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ2.** Does service experience influence (i.e. employees & wait time) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

**H2.** Service experience influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction.

**RQ3.** Does the personal fandom influence (i.e. fan identification & team loyalty) significantly predict customer satisfaction?

**H3.** The personal fandom influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction.
RQ4. Are there differences in results based on level of Division I college football competition (i.e. FBS P5, FBS G5, & FCS)?

H4. There will be significant differences in satisfaction between each level of competition.

Instrument

The full instrument used in this study is comprised of five total questionnaires, including a demographics form. The demographics form consisted of seven questions used to identify demographic characteristics of the sample. These seven characteristics included: (a) the Division I college/university in which the participant was affiliated with, (b) age, (c) gender, (d) race, (e) alumni affiliation, (f) number of years the participant has been a season ticket holder, and (g) whether or not the participant partakes in pregame festivities such as tailgating, prior to entering the stadium.

The first scale included in the questionnaire is part I of the Sportscape and Revisit Intention Questionnaire (SRIQA; Jang, 2014), labeled “Sportscapes”, which collected responses for the independent variables associated with the physical service setting of the sporting event. The second scale used in the questionnaire is the Sport Fandom Questionnaire (SFQ; Wann, 2002). The SFQ identifies a participant’s level of sport fandom, or the importance of sport in a participant’s life. The third scale in the questionnaire is the Sport Spectator Identification Scale (SSIS; Wann & Branscombe, 1993). This instrument assesses the degree to which a fan identifies with a specific team or athlete. The fourth scale included in the study is part II of SRIQ, labeled “Revisit Intention” (SRIQB; Jang, 2014). This instrument was purposefully separated from SRIQ part I because it determines the present study’s singular dependent variable, or the participant’s satisfaction with an event and likelihood to be a patron at future events. This is congruent with
Wakefield et al. (1996), who determined customer satisfaction in the sport setting through repatronage intentions and desire to stay for the full extent of the event.

**Data Analysis**

This study investigated four research questions through testing four proposed hypotheses, using IBM’s SPSS Version 23.0. After data was collected from Qualtrics, it was then coded into numerical data for statistical analysis in SPSS. Reliability assessments were first calculated for all independent and dependent variables of the present study in order to measure the reliability of each construct. Additionally, a confirmatory factor analysis was executed in order to confirm the proposed conceptual model (depicted in Appendix Z) had proper fit. Following this, descriptive statistics were run and analyzed in order to group the data, allowing for a better general understanding of the results to be made, and important patterns or associations to be recognized.

Three simple regression analyses were performed in order to examine the relationship between variables from the sample and the mean of the variable being used to assess customer satisfaction. In addition, a one-way ANOVA was utilized in order to compare means from each of the three individual samples. Two additional MANOVA tests were carried out to provide additional insights into the differences between responses from each classification.

**Results and Discussion**

**Reliability Assessments**

Before further evaluation of data could be performed, tests for reliability of constructs were conducted for all variables included in the present study. Tests revealed Cronbach’s alphas for all variables were within the acceptable range. Therefore, the researchers deemed the chosen variables for this study as reliable. Results from reliability of constructs tests are presented in Table 10.
Additionally, a confirmatory factor analysis was utilized to test the goodness of fit for the proposed model. Table 11 shows that the chi-square statistic was significant ($x^2 = 61.467, p < .001$), suggesting poor model fit. However, according to Kline (2005), the chi-square value is often sensitive to sample size. Additionally, Hoyle (1995) contended that it is vital to examine alternative fit indices. Therefore, the adjusted chi-square, RMSEA, and CFI were also analyzed to assess goodness of fit. Adjusted chi-square ($x^2/df = 1.921$) was below the cutoff value of 3.0, and thus indicated acceptable model fit. Additionally, the CFI indicated close fit ($CFI = .950$) for the proposed model. Finally, the value of RMSEA ($RMSEA = .095$) fell outside of the acceptable range to suggest reasonable fit. However, Hu and Bentler (1999) suggested that a RMSEA value between .08 and .10 still suggests a minimal fit. Therefore, after reviewing the adjusted chi-square, RMSEA, and CFI, the proposed model was deemed to have acceptable fit.

**Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics including means and standard deviations of all variables are presented in Tables 2 through 9. A total of 102 responses were collected from season ticket holders and athletic donors representing 20 Midwestern D-I institutions. 22.5% of respondents represented a total of 6 FBS P5 institutions, 37.3% represented a total of seven FBS G5 institutions, and 40.2% represented a total of seven FCS institutions. Of the three experience factors included in this study, the fandom influence ($M = 5.74, SD = .65$) was found to have the highest reported scores from participants. The next highest reported experience factor was the service influence ($M = 4.89, SD = .98$), followed by the lowest reported experience factor, the sportscape influence ($M = 4.42, SD = .96$).

Of the 10 assessment dimensions which made up the three experience factors in this study, the fan identification ($M = 5.76, SD = .73$) and team loyalty ($M = 5.72, SD = .69$)
dimensions were found to have the highest recorded mean scores by season ticket holders and athletic donors. Followed by service employees \((M = 5.05, SD = 1.06)\), layout accessibility \((M = 4.73, SD = 1.03)\), wait time \((M = 4.73, SD = 1.10)\), venue aesthetics \((M = 4.65, SD = 1.35)\), space allocation \((M = 4.60, SD = 1.09)\), scoreboard quality \((M = 4.56, SD = 1.28)\), venue cleanliness \((M = 4.49, SD = 1.17)\) and finally, seat comfort \((M = 3.50, SD = 1.31)\).

**Hypothesis Testing**

Regression analysis was utilized to examine the relationship between the three experience factors within the proposed model, and satisfaction. Results from the regression analysis were significant \((p < .001)\) and are displayed in Table 13. The first experience factor, the sportscape influence, was found to have a significant positive relationship with satisfaction \((\beta = .317, p < .018)\). This therefore confirms H1: “The sportscape influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction”, and H1 was accepted.

The second experience factor in the model, the service influence, was found to have an insignificant positive relationship with satisfaction \((\beta = .085, p < .509)\). H2: “The service experience will significantly predict customer satisfaction”, was rejected.

The third experience factor in the model, the personal fandom influence, was found to have a significant positive relationship with satisfaction \((\beta = .409, p < .002)\). H3: “The personal fandom influence will significantly predict customer satisfaction”, was accepted.

An ANOVA was utilized to test H4: “There will be significant differences in satisfaction between each level of competition”. Results from the ANOVA were found to be significant \((p < .001)\), suggesting that there are significant differences in satisfaction among season ticket holders and athletic donors between each level of D-I football competition. Table 14 displays results from the ANOVA, and shows that FBS G5 respondents reported the highest levels of satisfaction.
(M = 5.50, SD = .80). FBS P5 respondents were the next most satisfied group of respondents (M = 5.27, SD = .78). Finally, FCS respondents were shown to be least satisfied (M = 4.76, SD = 1.02).

In addition to the ANOVA utilized to test H4, two MANOVA’s were analyzed to identify additional differences in responses between the three competition levels in this study. The first compared the three experience factors (i.e., sportscape influence, service quality influence, and personal fandom influence) and results showed significant differences in responses regarding the sportscape influence (p = .001) and fandom influence (p = .033), but not the service influence (p = .062). Additionally, FBS P5 respondents recorded the highest mean scores for the fandom influence (M = 5.90) while FBS G5 respondents recorded the highest mean scores for the sportscape (M = 4.73) and service (M = 5.13) influences. Full details from the first MANOVA are displayed in Table 16.

The second MANOVA compared the 10 assessment dimensions which comprised the three experience factors. Results demonstrated significant differences in responses for all assessment dimensions except service employees (p = .215) and fan identification (p = .124). Highlights from this test are provided in the summary of findings, and full results are displayed in Table 17.

**Summary of Findings**

Descriptive statistics for the model’s experience factors revealed that the personal fandom influence had a larger recorded mean score by season ticket holders and athletic donors than both the sportscape and service quality influence. This finding reinforces previous research suggesting that season ticket holders and donors represent the most loyal, involved, and invested of fans (Koo & Hardin, 2008; Koo et al., 2015; McDonald, 2010). Therefore, it is unsurprising to
see respondents of this study report high levels of fan identification and team loyalty. Additionally, descriptive statistics for the assessment dimensions utilized in this study revealed that seat comfort, a dimension of the sportscape influence, was particularly unsatisfying for season ticket holders and athletic donors. This finding is intriguing in that it would contribute to what Wakefield et al. (1996) called perceived crowding, or a negative affective response resulting in feelings of anxiety related to being in cramped and congested surroundings.

Regression analyses used to test H1, H2, and H3 demonstrated statistically significant positive relationships between dimensions of the sportscape and fandom influence on customer satisfaction. The significance of the sportscape in determining customer satisfaction is congruent with prior findings (Jang, 2014; Wakefield et al., 1996). Additionally, the significance of the fandom influence in regard to satisfaction of season ticket holders and athletic donors supports prior findings which suggest that as personal fandom increases, so too do perceived evaluations of the game day experience and stadium environment (Koo et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2017).

Regression analyses also discovered an insignificant relationship between dimensions of the service quality influence and customer satisfaction of season ticket holders and athletic donors. This finding is contradictory to Jang (2014), who revealed significant relationships between service quality aspects such as service employee performance and wait time within a facility, and spectator’s willingness to return to future events, stay longer than anticipated at an event, and spend more than originally anticipated at an event. However, this preceding study was conducted using a sample of professional sport fans rather than collegiate sports fans. With very little service quality research available utilizing a sample of collegiate sport fans, future study may be beneficial in determining whether there are differences in the way professional sport fans and collegiate sport fans perceive aspects of service quality.
An ANOVA was utilized to test hypothesis 4 and found that there were significant differences among reported satisfaction levels for season ticket holders and athletic donors of FBS P5, FBS G5, and FCS programs. FBS G5 respondents were found to be most satisfied with their experience, while FCS respondents were least satisfied. Additionally, a MANOVA was carried out to compare results for each of the three experience factors in this study between each level of competition. This test found that FBS G5 respondents were most satisfied with the sportscape and service quality influences, while FBS P5 respondents had the highest reported influence from personal fandom. However, while there were significant differences between respondents of each competition level in regard to the sportscape and personal fandom influences, it was not found that there were significant differences in responses regarding the service influence.

Finally, in order to reveal further differences in results between respondents of each level of competition, a MANOVA was performed evaluating the ten assessment dimensions between each level of competition. Results from this test are provided in Table 17 and yielded some particularly interesting findings. First, results from the MANOVA showed no significant differences in responses regarding the service employees and fan identification dimensions, but all other assessment dimensions were found to contain significant differences between levels of competition. FBS G5 respondents, which reported the highest levels of overall satisfaction, also had the highest values in the layout accessibility, seat comfort, venue cleanliness, and wait time dimensions. FBS P5 respondents reported the highest mean values in the scoreboard quality, venue aesthetics, space allocation, and team loyalty dimensions, while recording the lowest value in the seat comfort dimension. Outside of the seat comfort dimension, FCS respondents reported the lowest mean values for all assessment dimensions.
Implications

Findings from the current study provide several implications for practitioners. The study contributes to research in measuring the influence of the sportscape and aspects of personal fandom in relation to spectator satisfaction with sporting events. Additionally, this study expands research lines further into the realm of college athletics, and provides a unique comparison of season ticket holders and athletic donors between levels of college football competition (i.e., FBS P5, FBS G5, and FCS).

Results from the regression analysis used to test H1, H2, and H3 revealed that the sportscape and personal fandom influences have significant positive effects on satisfaction, while the service influence has an insignificant positive effect. Athletic departments can apply these findings in two specific ways. Firstly, continuing to cultivate close relationships with fans, as results from this study show that aspects of personal fandom, such as fan identification and team loyalty, have the largest effect on overall satisfaction. Secondly, athletic departments would be smart to prioritize investing in aspects of the sportscape or physical facility, such as the seating comfort or venue cleanliness, rather than in the quality of service aspects, such as service employees.

Results from the ANOVA used to test H4 revealed that there are significant differences in responses among season ticket holders and athletic donors between each level of competition. Furthermore, the MANOVA tests comparing experience factors and assessment dimensions from the current study’s model revealed that there are also significant differences and among specific aspects of the spectator experience. These findings suggest that athletic departments should take different courses of action to improve the experience of season ticket holders and athletic donors, depending on their level of competition. For example, FBS P5 respondents recorded the highest
mean values for both scoreboard quality and venue aesthetics, as well as the second highest mean value for the venue cleanliness dimension. These three dimensions share a commonality in that they all lend to aesthetic qualities of the sports venue, suggesting that FBS P5 respondents are satisfied with these aesthetic qualities, in comparison to FBS G5 and FCS respondents. In contrast, FCS respondents reported the lowest mean values in each of these three previously mentioned dimensions (i.e., scoreboard quality, venue aesthetics, and venue cleanliness) by a significant margin, indicating that aesthetic qualities of the sports venue would be an area in which FCS athletic departments may benefit most by investing in.

FBS P5 respondents also recorded the highest mean values for the team loyalty dimension, suggesting that FBS P5 season ticket holders and donors are more loyal to one team, in comparison to their FBS G5 and FCS equals. However, FBS P5 respondents reported the lowest mean values in seat comfort by a significant margin, implying that these respondents are particularly unsatisfied with the seat comfort at FBS P5 venues. In response to this, FBS P5 programs would likely be able to improve spectator satisfaction among season ticket holders and athletic donors most efficiently by upgrading seating options for these fans, or at least diversifying the options available for them.

As mentioned previously, FBS G5 respondents recorded the highest satisfaction levels among the three competition levels included in the current study. Two assessment dimensions in which FBS G5 respondents were significantly more satisfied than their FBS P5 and FCS peers were layout accessibility and wait time. Additionally, FBS G5 respondents reported the second highest mean value for space allocation. These three dimensions share some commonalities in that they show that FBS G5 venues are perceived to have a more effective layout design and proper amount of space to comfortably suit the number of spectators they attract each given
game day, in comparison to FBS P5 and FCS facilities. In addition, FBS G5 respondents were found to be most satisfied with the seat comfort at their respective stadiums. In all, these results lead to a conclusion that spectators in these facilities experience the least amount of perceived crowding, which according to Wakefield et al. (1996) is a significant influence on pleasure with a sporting event. This may explain the comparatively high levels of satisfaction with the spectator experience among FBS G5 respondents, and D-I athletic programs should make a point to prioritize effective layout design and space when designing, constructing, and renovating their stadiums in order to provide the most comfortable experience for fans.

**Limitations & Future Research**

Several limitations are present in the current study. First, the current study was geographically limited to a single region of the United States. There are a great number of DI football programs in this region, but responses may not be representative of season ticket holders and athletic donors across all DI college football in the United States. Additionally, all survey responses were collected online, which limits the extent to which researchers may ensure that all participants are completing their own surveys with their own views and opinions. There is also no way for researchers to verify reliability of answers from participants. There is also a potential risk for responses to be influenced by factors that are out of control of practitioners and researchers, such as the team’s performance or weather.

Additionally, the service quality influence was not shown in the current study to have a significant effect on satisfaction, nor were there significant differences in assessments of the service influences between responses from each level of competition. However, the service influence was not removed from the study because aspects such as wait time within the facility still offered interesting findings when interpreting the results of the study. Previous research also
suggested that intangible service aspects are a vital influence in consumer’s perception of service quality (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). While the service influence was not found to be significant in this study, it may still provide significant results in future research.

Results from the current study reveal that experience factors including the sportscape and aspects of personal fandom have a significant positive relationship with the satisfaction of Division I college football season ticket holders and athletic donors in their spectator experience. The model provided may be used in future studies to measure the influences that effect spectator satisfaction in a variety of sporting events and environments. However, there are some potential recommendations for future research in this area. First, the service quality experience factor was not found to have a significant impact on satisfaction among D-I season ticket holders and athletic donors in this study. However, considering that there is very little available research assessing the impact of service quality aspects on college sport populations, additional future service quality research utilizing collegiate sport fans may be beneficial in understanding the way these consumers evaluate service quality, and the effect it has (if any) on satisfaction with the total event experience.

Second, the influence of technology and connectivity is becoming increasingly important to spectators at major sporting events (Fisher, 2014). Adapting the current model to include these aspects could prove beneficial in understanding the extent to which they influence spectator satisfaction. Third, this study utilized season ticket holders and athletic donors as the target population because they are key stakeholders to athletic departments who invest both financially and emotionally in specific teams and organizations (Drayer et al., 2012; Koo et al., 2015). However, it is important to recognize that some donors invest more than others, and the game day environment may potentially be very different for high- and low-level donors based on the
benefits available to them. Therefore, another future research prospect stemming from this study could compare differences in satisfaction among different levels of donors. The fourth, and final research suggestion, would be to study students and single game attendees as the make up a large portion of game day attendance at many universities.
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Appendix A - Demographic Survey

(This survey will be hosted on Qualtrics)

Please select the institution you hold season ticket with from the dropdown box below:

(Dropdown with list of participating universities)

Please record your age: (Open text box)

Please select your gender: (Male, Female, Other)

Please select your ethnicity: (Black/African American, White/Caucasian, Hispanic/Latino, Native American/American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Other)

Are you an alumni of (insert school)?: (Yes, No)

How many years have you held season tickets to (insert school) football?: (Open text box)

In at least half of the home games you attend, do you arrive early for pregame festivities (e.g., tailgating)?: (Yes, No)
Appendix B - Sportscape and Revisit Intention Questionnaire: Part A

Degree of Agreement: 1 (Strongly Disagree), 4 (Neutral), 7 (Strongly Agree)

(Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement regarding your experience at home football games)

Scoreboard Quality:

The scoreboards are entertaining to watch.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

The scoreboards add excitement to the game.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

The stadium scoreboards provide interesting statistics.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

Venue Aesthetics:

The venue is painted in attractive colors.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

The venue’s architecture gives it an attractive character.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

The venue is decorated in an attractive fashion.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

This is an attractive venue.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

Space Allocation:

The concession stands are big enough to handle the crowds.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7
The restrooms are large enough to handle the crowds.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

The walkways are wide enough to handle the crowds.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

The stadium allows enough space to handle the crowds.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

**Layout Accessibility:**

The venue’s layout design makes it easy to get to the kind of concessions you want.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

The venue’s layout design makes it easy to get to your seat.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

The venue’s layout design makes it easy to get to the restroom.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

Overall, this venue’s layout design makes it easy to get where I want to go.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

**Seat Comfort:**

There is plenty of knee room in the seats.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

There is plenty of elbow room in the seats.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

The seat arrangements provide plenty of space.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

This stadium provides comfortable seats.
Venue Cleanliness:

The venue maintains clean bathrooms.

1. 2 3 4 5 6 7

The venue maintains clean food service areas.

1. 2 3 4 5 6 7

The venue maintains clean walkways and exits.

1. 2 3 4 5 6 7

Overall, the venue is kept clean.

1. 2 3 4 5 6 7

Employees:

There are enough employees at the stadium to service customers.

1. 2 3 4 5 6 7

The employees are helpful.

1. 2 3 4 5 6 7

The employees are friendly.

1. 2 3 4 5 6 7

Wait Time:

Overall, there was not too much waiting while at the event.

1. 2 3 4 5 6 7

During the event, the time I spend waiting for services is minimal.

1. 2 3 4 5 6 7

During the event, there is no delay or waiting to receive service from employees.
1. I get through the entrance gates quickly without too much waiting.
2. I am able to exit the stadium quickly without too much waiting.
Appendix C - Sport Fandom Questionnaire

Degree of Agreement: 1 (Strongly Disagree), 4 (Neutral), 7 (Strongly Agree)

(Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement)

Fan Identification:

I consider myself to be a sports fan.

1......2......3......4......5......6......7

My friends see me as a sports fan.

1......2......3......4......5......6......7

I believe that following sport is the most enjoyable form of entertainment.

1......2......3......4......5......6......7

My life would be less enjoyable if I were not able to follow sports.

1......2......3......4......5......6......7

Being a sports fan is very important to me.

1......2......3......4......5......6......7
Appendix D - Sport Spectator Identification Scale

Degree of Agreement: 1 (Strongly Disagree), 4 (Neutral), 7 (Strongly Agree)

(Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement)

Team Loyalty:

It is important to me that this team wins.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

I consider myself to be a fan of this team.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

My friends see me as a fan of this team.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

During the season, I follow this team in person, on television, on the radio, through the newspaper, or on the internet almost every day.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

Being a fan of this team is very important to me.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

I dislike the greatest rivals of this team very much.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

How often do you display this team’s name or insignia at your place of work, where you live, or on your clothing?

Frequency of time displaying team merchandise. 1 (Never), 4 (About half of the time), 7 (Always)

1……2……3……4……5……6……7
Appendix E - Sportscape and Revisit Intention Questionnaire: Part B

*Degree of Agreement: 1 (Strongly Disagree), 4 (Neutral), 7 (Strongly Agree)*

*(Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement)*

**Revisit Intention:**

I would like to come back to a sport event at this team’s venue.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

I would recommend this sport event to my friends and family.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

I am willing to stay longer than I planned at this team’s venue for a sport event.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7

I am willing to spend more than I planned at this team’s venue for a sport event.

1……2……3……4……5……6……7
Appendix F - Critical Incident Technique

(Please provide any additional feedback about your game day experience at home football games)

Additional Information:

Please provide any additional positive feedback about your sport event experience at this venue.

(Open text box)

Please provide any additional negative feedback about your sport event experience at this venue.

(Open text box)
### Table 1

*Midwestern Division I Member Institutions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FBS Power 5</th>
<th>FBS Group of 5</th>
<th>FCS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Big Ten Conference</strong></td>
<td><strong>American Athletic Conference</strong></td>
<td><strong>Missouri Valley Conference</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana University, Bloomington</td>
<td>University of Cincinnati, Main Campus</td>
<td>Illinois State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td><em>Mid-American Conference</em></td>
<td>Indiana State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern University</td>
<td>Ball State University</td>
<td>Southern Illinois University, Carbondale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State University, Main Campus</td>
<td>Bowling Green State University, Main Campus</td>
<td>Western Illinois University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purdue University, Main Campus</td>
<td>Central Michigan University</td>
<td>Youngstown State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign</td>
<td>Eastern Michigan University</td>
<td><strong>Ohio Valley Conference</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan, Ann Arbor</td>
<td>Kent State University at Kent</td>
<td>Eastern Illinois University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin, Madison</td>
<td>Miami University, Oxford</td>
<td><strong>Pioneer Football League</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FBS Independents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FBS Independents</th>
<th>Midwest Division I Member Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Notre Dame</td>
<td>Northern Illinois University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ohio University, Main Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Akron, Main Campus</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Toledo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western Michigan University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Universities were collected from the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data Survey (IPEDS). The Midwest region is classified from the Bureau of Economic Analysis’ (BEA) Great Lakes region, and includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin.
Appendix H - Recruitment Email: Participating Universities

Dear Athletic Director,

My name is Skyler Fleshman and am currently a graduate student in the Sport Administration Master of Arts/Science program at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. I am reaching out to see if you may be interested in allowing season ticket (insert school) football holders of to complete an online survey for my thesis research project.

The aim of the study is to assess how aspects of the football stadium, service experience, and personal fandom affect customer satisfaction with the total event experience. While researchers in the past have looked at customer satisfaction through each of these three areas, this will be the first to combine them in order to create a more complete picture of the fan experience. This will also be the first study to compare survey results from fans at multiple levels of competition (FBS Power 5, FBS Group of 5, & FCS).

With most prior studies having been conducted at major universities in the south and southeast, my research will collect data from both major and mid-major institutions in the Midwest region of the United States. Any findings will be made available to you and the final draft of the thesis will be sent to you if you would like to read it. The results from this study should be very beneficial to (insert school) athletics in better understanding its season ticket holder base, and the strengths and weaknesses of its game day product through the eyes of season ticket holders, including what aspects they are most and least satisfied with.

Thank you for your consideration in sharing this with your football season ticket holders. If you would like any further information about the study, I would be happy to provide it. Please reply to this email at your convenience with your decision. Following IRB approval, I will email the survey to (insert school) athletics so it may be disbursed to season ticket holders.

Best,

Skyler Fleshman
Graduate Assistant – Sport Administration
Ball State University
HP 351
sffleshman@bsu.edu
Appendix I - Consent Form

I, ________________, agree to participate in this research project entitled, Customer Satisfaction within the Division I Football Sportscape. I have read the description of this project and give my consent to participate. I understand that I will receive a copy of this informed consent form to keep for future reference. All answers and participation will be kept confidential and at no time, will any information be released to anybody besides the researcher.

To the best of my knowledge, I meet the inclusion criteria for participation, described as a football donor of a Division I institution within the Midwest region.

_________________________  ________________
Participant’s Signature     Date

Researcher Contact Information

Principal Investigator       Faculty Supervisor
Skyler F. Fleshman, Graduate Student       Khirey Walker, Ph.D.
Sport Administration       Assistant Professor – School of Kinesiology
Ball State University       Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306            Muncie, IN 47306
Email: sffleshman@bsu.edu    Email: kbwalker@bsu.edu
Table 2

*Frequency of Respondents by University Classification*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>FBS-G5</td>
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<td>37.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>FBS-P5</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCS</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</table>
Appendix K - Table 3

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics of Respondents by Age*

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<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>45.72</td>
<td>14.25</td>
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</table>
## Appendix L - Table 4

### Table 4

*Frequency of Respondents by Gender*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>82.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>102</td>
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</table>
### Appendix M - Table 5

#### Table 5

*Frequency of Respondents by Ethnicity*

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<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American/American Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>87.3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>102</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
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### Appendix N - Table 6

#### Table 6

*Frequency of Respondents by Alumni Status*

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<td>No</td>
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<td>26.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>73.5</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Appendix O - Table 7

Table 7

*Frequency of Respondents by Participation in Tailgating*

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<tr>
<td>No</td>
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<td>27.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>72.5</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Appendix P - Table 8

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Experience Factors

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<td>Sportscape Influence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Influence</td>
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<td>Fandom Influence</td>
<td>5.74</td>
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Appendix Q - Table 9

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Assessment Dimensions

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<tr>
<td>Fan Identification</td>
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<td>.73</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Loyalty</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction*</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>.94</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Employees</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout Accessibility</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>1.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wait Time</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue Aesthetics</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Allocation</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scoreboard Quality</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>1.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venue Cleanliness</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seat Comfort</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.31</td>
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</table>
### Table 10 - Reliability of Constructs

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<th>Construct</th>
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<tr>
<td>Venue Aesthetics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Allocation</td>
<td>.877</td>
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<tr>
<td>Layout Accessibility</td>
<td>.909</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seat Comfort</td>
<td>.933</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venue Cleanliness</td>
<td>.939</td>
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<td>Service Employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wait Time</td>
<td>.890</td>
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<td>Team Loyalty</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fan Identification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
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</table>
Appendix S - Table 11

Table 11

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis*

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<tr>
<th>$x^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>$x^2$/df</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>CFI</th>
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<tr>
<td>61.467</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1.921</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.950</td>
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</table>
Appendix T - Table 12

Table 12

Summary Results for Regression Analysis for Experience Factors

<table>
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<tr>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$P$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.313</td>
<td>.292</td>
<td>14.880</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix U - Table 13

Table 13

Regression Analysis for Experience Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sportscape Influence</td>
<td>.317</td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Influence</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.509</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fandom Influence</td>
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</table>
Appendix V - Table 14

Table 14

Analysis of Variance for Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FBS P5</th>
<th>FBS G5</th>
<th>FCS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $F = 7.06$, $p = .001$
Appendix W - Table 15

Table 15

Analysis of Variance for Experience Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sportscape Influence</th>
<th>Service Influence</th>
<th>Fandom Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( F )</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( p )</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.033</td>
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</table>
Appendix X - Table 16

Table 16

Comparison of Means between Experience Factors and Competition Level

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<th>FBS G5</th>
<th>FCS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sportscape Influence</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Influence</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fandom Influence</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>5.54</td>
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</table>
Appendix Y - Table 17

Table 17

*Multiple Analysis of Variance between Assessment Dimensions and Competition Level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FBS P5</th>
<th>FBS G5</th>
<th>FCS</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scoreboard Quality</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue Aesthetics</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Allocation</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>4.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Layout Accessibility</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>.002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seat Comfort</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>3.35</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue Cleanliness</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Employees</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>.215</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wait Time</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>4.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fan Identification</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>5.59</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Loyalty</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>.015</td>
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</table>
Appendix Z - Conceptual Framework

Assessment Dimensions
- Scoreboard Quality
- Venue Aesthetics
- Space Allocation
- Layout Accessibility
- Seat Comfort
- Venue Cleanliness
- Service Employees
- Wait Time
- Fan Identification
- Team Loyalty

Experience Factors
- Sportscape Influence
- Service Influence
- Fandom Influence

Affective Response
- Satisfaction