

# **Sustainable user attitude toward the built environment and consequent behavioral intentions**

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**"The underlying foundation of beliefs provides the detailed descriptions needed to gain substantive information about a behavior's determinants. It is at the level of beliefs that we can learn about the unique factors that induce one person to engage in the behavior of interest..." (Ajzen, 1991)**

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## **1. Introduction**

Manaus, home to an average 1.8 million citizens, is like no other city selected as a host site for 2014 FIFA World Cup matches. This city, located in the heart of the Amazon rainforest is the result of Portuguese efforts to resist Dutch and Spanish invasion. Manaus, named for the Manaó Indian Tribe, became known as the "capital" of the rubber trade during the nineteenth century. In contrast, by the early twentieth century, the wealth enjoyed by a few deteriorated with the declining prices of rubber. Economic recovery came from other natural treasures such as petroleum and timber. Manaus is still nature's wonderland, as it is home to numerous rivers and waterfalls. Two-thirds of the earth's fresh water is located in the Amazon, and of course it offers the largest rainforest in the world. Additionally, the Amazon is the backyard to one-third of the world's plants and animals. Remarkably, its trees create 20% of the world's oxygen.

Although it is a natural hub, taking a close look at the city of Manaus would leave the impression that cleanliness is not high on the Manauaran list of priorities. The smell encountered on a leisurely trip downtown is enough to send the most avid world traveler packing. This city hosted four matches between June 14 and June 25, 2014, with teams from the United States, Portugal, Honduras, Switzerland, England, Italy, Cameroon and Croatia in a refurbished stadium, Arena de Amazonia. Far from the rain forest, several years prior, Airbnb executives were looking for the best location in South America to establish its regional headquarters. The typical multinational corporate entity would use the regular

corporate real estate criterion, but it is not limited to price per square foot, location, taxes, traffic, zoning, power and HVAC, local strategic partners, etc. However, Airbnb is anything but a “typical multinational company”, and this difference may be indicative of other multinational organizations opting to create workplaces that are welcoming to employees and customers, and clearly more environmentally sensitive than traditional corporate locations.

The construction and the use of the stadium (i.e., built environment or servicescape, Bitner 1992) will bring environmental awareness to citizens in the areas of sustainability, climate change, energy consumption, and waste management. Sustainability in the stadium is partially achieved through use of refurbished and recycled items. Additionally, rainwater will be collected and stored for various uses in stadium maintenance. Arena Amazonia will also incorporate green LEED lighting systems and temperature control will be implemented to reduce energy consumption. Many critics have labeled this environmentally sustainable stadium as a “white elephant” since the usefulness of the stadium beyond the 2014 world cup event is uncertain.

Current matches in the Amazonas league attract an average crowd of 588 fans, whereas the local teams attract a few thousand fans per match. Effectively using a 44,000 capacity stadium may prove to be challenging. The authorities have acknowledged that it is a challenge having to meet operating costs after the 2014 tourism, hosting exhibitions, conferences and the wildly popular annual *paladão* (scratch football) tournaments. "We'll have to be creative to attract people. Only time will tell how often we can fill it. We will find a use for it, but the question is whether we can generate enough revenue to maintain it," said Miguel Capobiango Neto, the head of the local organizing committee. This conceptual research manuscript focuses on fan revisit/repurchase intentions.

Social scientists of all disciplines, educational backgrounds, training, beliefs, and cultures have studied human behavior for centuries, and a lot has been discovered. Yet there are still enormous areas of “unknown white space” also known as unexplained and or under investigated areas in the literature that provide empirical evidence to explain human behavior. What is being done to better understand our knowledge of fan and/or customer behavior toward environmental sustainability? We use the 2014 FIFA World Cup and specifically the Manaus venue because Manaus is located in the middle of one of the last frontiers for global wild life, nature, and mankind.

This manuscript will review several areas of the attitude, facility management, and services that are marketing literatures. It will also utilize a recent worldwide sporting event (i.e., 2014 FIFA World Cup) Googleplex construction completion in 2015, and Apple's Headquarters also known as the "Spaceship" scheduled for completion in 2016 to introduce a conceptual model that is suggested to explain more of the variance in consumer and fan behavioral intentions than extant models. We hypothesize that our research model (Figure 3) explains more of the variance in sustainable consumer and sports fans' behavioral intentions than any other model.

## **2. Literature Review**

The word attitude comes from the Latin term *aptus*, which means fit. By the 1700's, attitude referred to bodily posture, and to this day attitude can mean general physical orientation with respect to something else. Charles Darwin, in the late 1800's uses the word in a biological context as a physical expression of an emotion. Even into the 1900's, researchers associate attitudes with physiological tendencies to approach or avoid something (c.f. Petty, Ostrom, and Brock, 1981). In recent times the concept of attitude has been broadened to reflect a person's mental position.

Attitude has been defined in many different ways over the past 400 years. Examples of some of the major 20th Century attitudinal definitions and conceptualizations are reviewed here. Baldwin (1901) suggests that attitude is "readiness for attention or action of a definite sort." Thomas and Znaiecki (1918) suggest attitudes were "individual mental processes that determine a person's actual and potential responses." Attitude is conceptualized as "the amount of affect or feeling for or against a stimulus" (Thurstone, 1931). Allport (1935) operationalizes attitude as "a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experiences, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related." Doob (1947) defines attitude as "an implicit mediating response to a stimulus object." The unobservable construct is defined as "an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual, and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of the individual's world" (Kretch and Crutchfield, 1948).

Kretch and Crutchfield's (1948) research (i.e., the traditional view of attitudes) which suggests that the construct includes cognition, affect, and conation (c.f., Smith, 1947; Cartwright, 1949; Katz and Scotland, 1959). The "major characteristics that distinguish attitude from other concepts are its evaluative or affective nature" (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). During the late 20th century, Zimbardo, Ebbesen and Maslach (1977) suggested that

”attitudes are the core of our likes and dislikes for certain people, groups, situations, objects, and intangible ideas.” Attitudes were suggested to involve “the categorization of an object on an evaluative continuum” (Allen, Machleit, and Kleine, 1992).

Rokeach (1968) examines the human belief system, and suggests that there is little agreement in the literature regarding belief, attitude, and value. He systematically approached the problems in the social psychology literature during that time. Rokeach (1968) integrates previous conceptualizations and empirical findings in order to provide a basis upon which to define attitudes, beliefs, and values.

Rokeach (1968) uses true experiments with paid confederates to test his hypotheses. The experiments are conducted in labs and in field settings with small samples where the subjects often had to make choices between various social conditions and environments. These results are often analyzed via analysis of variance and through fit techniques (e.g., chi-square, means, and frequencies, etc.).

Rokeach (1968) focuses primarily on the attitude-toward-situation and attitude-toward-object. He posits that “a person’s social behavior must always be mediated by at least two types of attitudes, one activated by the object, the other activated by the situation”. Rokeach (1968) suggests that if one focused only on attitude-toward-object, then one is going to observe inconsistency between attitude and behavior. This occurrence could also be expressed as a lack of dependence of behavior on attitude (c.f., LaPiere, 1934; Kutner, Wilkins, and Yarrow, 1952). Rokeach (1968) purports that behavior is a function of the interaction between two attitudes (1) attitude-toward-object and (2) attitude-toward-situation. He calls this belief the two-attitude theory.

It has been demonstrated above that the definition of attitude has changed several times since its origination. Rokeach (1968) defines an attitude as a package of beliefs consisting of interconnected assertions to the effect that certain things about a specific object or situation are true or false, and other things about it are desirable or undesirable. Due to the conceptual support for attitude-toward-object in the literature, the attitude- toward-a service provider is conceptualized in this study as suggested by Rokeach (1968).

There is also substantial evidence in the marketing and attitude literatures, which provides empirical and conceptual support for the notion that attitude is related to behavioral intentions (c.f., Smith, 1947; Cartwright, 1949; Katz and Scotland, 1959; Rokeach, 1968; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977; Oliver, 1980, 1981, 1997; Allen, Machleit, and

Kleine, 1992; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1988; Bitner, 1990; Lazarus, 1991; Bagozzi, 1992; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Gotlieb, Grewal, and Brown, 1994). In this research, behavioral intentions are synonymous with service encounter outcomes. Thus, an important objective of the research is to investigate the hypothesized direct positive effect of a consumer/sports fan's attitude-toward-the servicescape on the consumer/sports fan's behavior intentions.

It is suggested that a service firm can use its physical facilities (i.e., servicescape or built environment-Bitner, 1992) to signal the market segment for which the service is intended, and to differentiate the service firm from its competitors (Hightower, 2013; Brüggen et al., 2011; Rust, Zahorik, and Keiningham, 1996). By investigating the service provider's physical environment, the current research should be able to explain more of the variance in consumer/sports fan's behavior intentions.

Services marketing literature suggests that understanding the behavioral (service encounter outcomes) intentions of a service encounter is important. In order to better understand the outcomes, they must be clearly operationalized. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1994) and Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1996) suggest that there is a lack of empirical research examining the benefits of delivering superior service. Hightower et al. 2002, Brüggen et al. 2011, and Hightower 2013, suggests that the service encounter outcomes are similar to behavior intentions. The current research relies on these four: word-of-mouth communications, repurchase intentions, price sensitivity, consumer complaining behavior, and desire to stay. These service encounter outcomes from the services marketing literature are synonymous with sustainability service encounter outcomes (c.f., Hightower et al 2002, Brüggen et al. 2011, Hightower, 2013).

Word-of-Mouth communications are defined to include those occasions in which the consumer discusses the service provider with another person or group. This is similar to Boulding, Kalra, Staelin, and Zeithaml's (1993) willingness to recommend concept. Repurchase intentions are defined as the consumer's (or in this case the sports fan) intent to return to the service provider (c.f., Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1996). Sports fan's complaining behavior is the negative behavior, which stems from dissatisfaction and predicts or accompanies sports fan defection. Consumer/sports fan complaining behavior can be in the form of voice response (seeking redress from the seller), private response (negative word-of-mouth communication), or third party responses (taking legal action). The desire to stay in the environment is a heavily researched construct, which is

found in many different literatures (i.e., environmental psychology, leisure activities, retailing, and marketing). Desire to stay, in the current research, is defined to be the consumer/sports fan's willingness to remain in the servicescape.

In Hightower and Highsmith (2013), a convenience sample of multi-national corporations, facility management professionals, and educators responded to a number of items via an online questionnaire. The findings indicated initial support for the hypotheses that 1) companies will be more profitable if there are more International Facility Management Association (IFMA), Accredited Degree Programs (ADPs) producing facility management professionals (FM), 2) IFMA ADPs that have a recruiting pipeline that includes primary, middle, and high schools produce more FM graduates than those that do not have primary, middle, and high school contacts, 3) IFMA ADPs that actively engage in publishing FM research produce more FM professionals than those that do not engage in publishing FM research.

Hightower (2013) in an empirical study of over 500 participants tested a green LEED servicescape measurement scale that explains how a service firm's physical environment influences Brazilian consumers' purchase intentions. Servicescape is defined as everything that is physically present about an individual during the service encounter. A service encounter is defined as 'all' the customer's/individual's actual experience with the service provider during a transaction or exchange. The 2013 study introduced a servicescape manager's framework (see Figure 1) that was adapted from Bitner (2000). The key point here is that the recent facility management literature appears to suggest that overall attitude-towards-a green LEED service provider has a direct, positive effect on service encounter outcomes. A key step in predicting consumers' outcome behavior is to obtain a measure of their attitude-towards-the service provider.

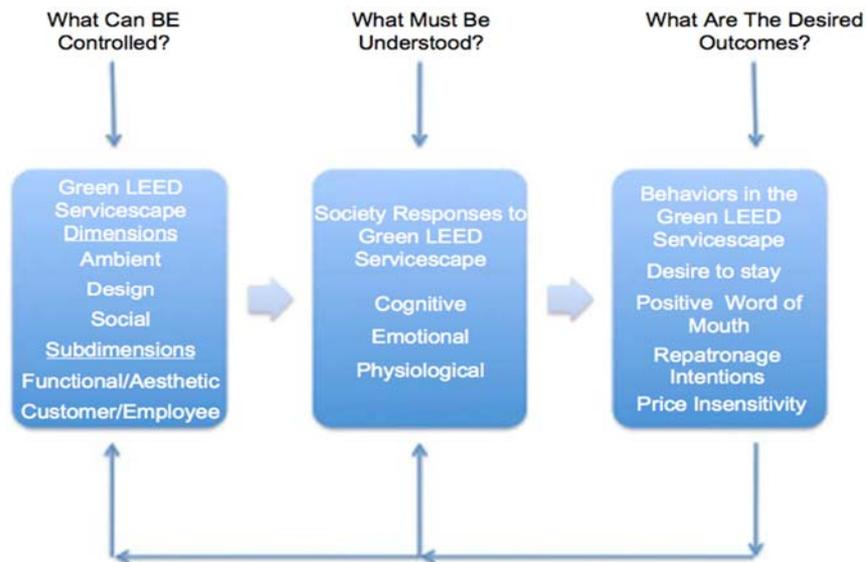


Figure 1: Servicescape Managers Framework (adapted from Hightower, 2013)

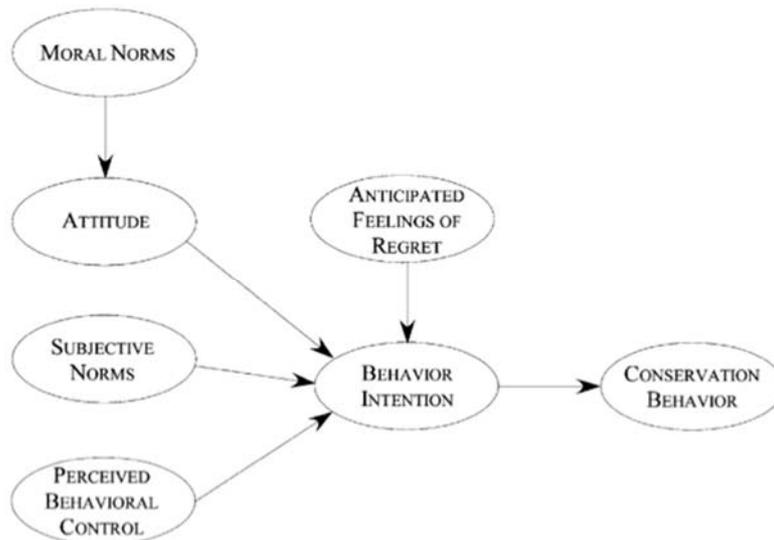


Figure 2: The morally fully extended general version of the TPB in conservationism

### 3. Best value environmental sustainability behavior intentions model development

Kaiser (2006) defines perceived behavioral control (PBC) as people’s confidence in their ability to engage in certain behavior. Kaiser and Gutscher (2003), investigated whether the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) must include PBC as a direct influence on behavior. An empirical analysis of a cross-sectional survey of 895 Swiss residents revealed PBC to be a significant direct predictor of one’s performance. Additionally a general version of the TPB based on aggregated measures revealed that PBC’s direct influence on behavior non-significant and thereby not generalizable. Kaiser and Gutscher (2003) suggest that perceived behavioral control could be omitted from the model. Ajzen (1988) and the more classical

Rokeach (1968) findings appear to be in line with Kaiser and Gutscher (2003). We agree with Kaiser and Gutscher (2003) suggesting that PBC should be omitted from the model.

Kaiser (2006) empirically sought to test a modified TPB model, in which moral norms are mediated by people's attitude before they affect intention and where anticipated feelings of moral regret are included as an additional predictor of intention. 607 West Germans and 787 East Germans returned a completed questionnaire which consisted of seven measures: (1) attitude toward behavior, (2) subjective and (3) moral norms, (4) perceived behavioral control, (5) anticipated feelings of moral regret, (6) intention, and (7) behavior.

Findings from the study resulted in an extensive overlap of at least 89% between moral norms and the attitude measure, thus attitude and moral norms are technically virtually indistinguishable. Additionally, Kaiser and Scheuthle (2003) present evidence to show that an overlap between attitude and moral norms exists that result in a suppressor effect. Therefore, moral norms are seemingly already represented in people's environmental attitude.

Zinas (2012) provides empirical results that from a technical standpoint suggest that attitude and moral norms are almost indistinguishable. This could be due to many reasons (i.e., study of a conservation context or lack of discriminant validity, etc.). The suppressor effect was observed again with moral norms and the attitude measure showed an 89% overlap.

Harland et al 1999 and Kaiser et al 2005 provide evidence showing that the net gain in explanatory power of morally extended theory is ambiguous with environmentally sustainable behaviors. A study utilizing compound measures for moral norms did not significantly improve the explanatory power. Based on the research reviewed above, we have omitted moral norms in our proposed model.

Subjective norms represent normative behavioral beliefs and the motivation to comply with these beliefs. (Kaiser, 2006, Kaiser and Scheuthle, 2003) Alternatively stated, a subjective norm is the subject's opinion about what the important people in their lives will think the subject should do. These subjective norms are determined by beliefs about the opinions of specific important others (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Trafimow and Finley (1996) conducted an empirical study of 148 subjects. The subjects were presented with random behaviors and asked to indicate their intention to perform the behavior, their attitude toward performing the behavior, and their subjective norm toward performing the behavior. The subject sample was divided into two sub-samples: subjects

whose within subject attitude intention correlation was greater than their subjective norm-intention correlation (attitudinal control) and subjects whose within subject attitude intention correlation was lower than their subjective norm-intention correlation (normative control). The two group's results after submission to between-subject analyses reveal that for the attitudinally controlled subjects, intentions were predicted just as well by attitudes alone as with attitudes and subjective norms (median  $r = .73$  and median  $R = .75$  respectively) and much less well with subjective norms alone (media  $r = .37$ ). It can be seen that including subjective norms has minimal effect on attitude measure. Therefore based on these findings, our model does not depict subjective norms.

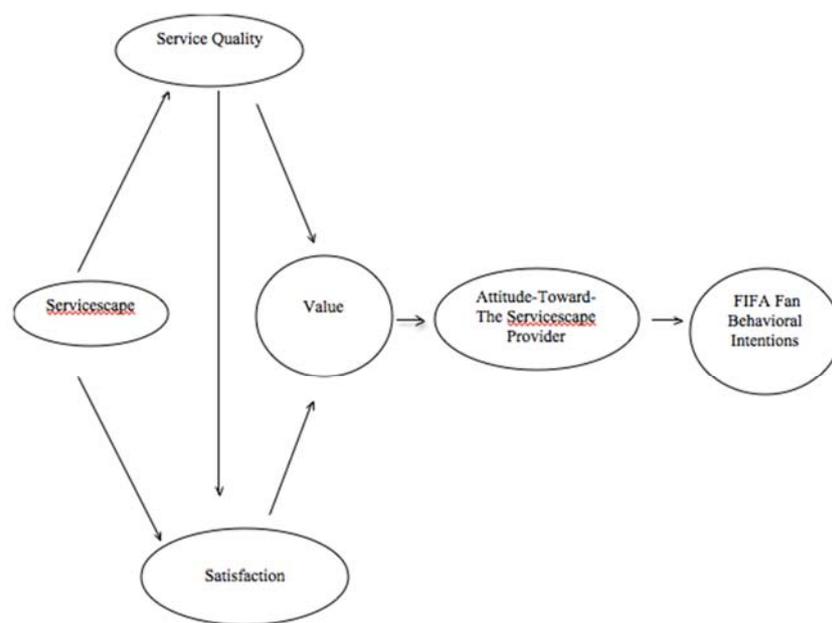


Figure 3: The Best Value Environmental Sustainability Behavior Intentions Model

Figure 3: The best value environmental sustainability behavior intention model

Our model (see Figure 3) is adapted from the 2006 Kaiser model (see Figure 2). As suggested by Manstead (1996) and others, some non-aggregated measures like perceived behavioral control and subjective norms may not need to be focused on in certain model scenarios. Thus, several constructs depicted in the model (Figure 2) above are removed in our research model (Figure 3).

This conceptual manuscript draws from three different literatures: services marketing literature, facility management literature, and attitude literature. Based on the literature reviewed herein, we hypothesize that the Best Value Environmental Sustainability Behavior

Intentions Model explains more of the variance in sustainable consumers and sports fans' behavioral intentions than any extant model. The introduction of Figure 3 as depicted above leads to our primary research hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: The Best Value Environmental Sustainability Behavior Intentions Model is posited to explain more of the variance pertaining to consumers and sports fans' behavioral intentions than any other environmentally sustainable behavioral intentions model in the extant literature.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The servicescape is critically important in services industries (i.e., commercial real estate, sporting events); perhaps due to the high level of intangibility inherent in services. The servicescape provides tangible clues about the service firm that help the consumer evaluate the service firm (i.e. their service quality). Basically, the servicescape provides the clues that people need in order to formulate a mental reality of the service "product." The services marketing literature suggests that regular consumers as well as sports fans use environmental cues to form opinions about these realities. The more intangible a product, the more the packaging influences a consumer/sports fan's behavior.

More specifically, we suggest that some consumers/sports fans rely on environmental cues in much the same way they rely on packaging to categorize and form their initial perceptions of sports organizations, entities, and institutions. Logical arguments could support the position that the servicescape has a direct positive effect on fans' perceptions of service quality. For example, a fan's perceptions are influenced by tangible clues (i.e., office seating, restaurant seating comfort, stadium seating comfort, etc.) because fans may base their perceptions of services on factors other than direct physical contact with the sports organization, such as the chef in the restaurant, or the players on the soccer team in the stadium.

We suggest that the servicescape causes emotional and cognitive responses (i.e. service quality perceptions) and that both influence an environmentally sensitive consumer/sports fan's behavior intention. The reasoning is that individuals typically engage in activities because of a desire to achieve certain outcomes. This framework depicts quality perceptions as the appraisal component, satisfaction as the emotional response component, and behavioral intentions as the coping response component (Hightower, 2013).

This finding is important to academics and especially to practitioners who must determine the best use of their scarce resources. In terms of the services marketing literature, it is suggested

that efforts designed to enhance consumer/sports fans' perceptions of the servicescape are relevant and effective, due to the impact that the servicescape has on consumers' and fans' overall perception of a sports organization, team and/or institution's service quality (Hightower, 2002).

Practitioners are generally interested because when an environmentally sensitive individual's desires are considered in a free marketplace, service firms benefit substantially from providing satisfying outcomes for their patrons (Hightower, 2013). In other words, customer satisfaction is more important than service quality in determining purchase behavior. Therefore, managers who are aware of this principle can implement programs that utilize service quality in conjunction with other satisfaction antecedents as a way to improve customers' satisfaction with the sports organization or business location, to increase profitability.

In contrast, managers that adopt the satisfaction → service quality conceptualization may inappropriately utilize programs that focus on service quality, without placing the appropriate emphasis on customers' satisfaction with the sports organization or non-sports related corporation. This approach may cause the firm to be less profitable due to the primary focus in strategic planning being on service quality perceptions rather than on customer satisfaction. Specifically, a sports organization or team can deliver high service quality and the customer/fan may still not return to the venue in the future because he or she is not satisfied with the servicescape provider for some reason. Note that a satisfied sports fan or non-sports related consumer is more likely to return to transact business in the future. Therefore, owners and team management should be aware of this principle that indicates satisfaction (as compared to service quality).

We suggest that when a fan perceives service quality to be good, it appears that he or she will 1) engage in positive word of mouth discussions with others, 2) repurchase the service, 3) have a desire to stay in the servicescape longer, 4) not to exhibit complaining behavior, and/or 5) be willing to pay more for the service. Likewise, it is suggested that when a sports fan has an unfavorable or low assessment of service quality, he or she will 1) engage in negative word of mouth communications, 2) will not repurchase the service, 3) have no desire to stay in the servicescape (i.e., leave early), 4) exhibit complaining behavior, and/or 5) be highly sensitive to prices. There is a notion that individuals usually engage in activities (i.e., go to a stadium; purchase a service) because of a desire to achieve certain positive outcomes. We suggest that

fans exhibit several common behaviors in an effort to maintain their level of satisfaction with a sports organization.

We suggest that a fan will remain in an environmentally sustainable green LEED servicescape longer, pay more for the service, plan to visit the sports organization again, and engage in positive word-of-mouth communication about the sports organization if they are satisfied with the sports organization. When a sports fan behaves as described above, it is suggested that the firm will increase its profitability.

Critical note here for practitioners (i.e., sport & non-sport industries), the company that understands the importance of consumers' or fans' attitude-toward-the servicescape provider can implement programs that enable the entity to influence attitudinal development toward the organization. This process, in turn, enables the firm to better predict and influence consumer behavior intentions. As organizations increase their ability to positively manage environmentally sensitive fans' and consumers' attitude-toward-the servicescape provider, they may build a competitive advantage over other organizations.

In the stadium industry, many variables effect attendance. We specifically suggest that stadium management should focus on the design factor of the servicescape as a means of attracting and keeping spectators. The design dimension includes, but is not limited to, stadium architecture, color, scale, style, and accessories as aesthetic factors. Functional factors include things like layout, comfort, and signage amongst others. We suggest that soccer spectators who are satisfied with their seating comfort, directional signage, scoreboard functionality (i.e. replay capability), ingress/egress capability, parking, the location and number of bathrooms, and vending areas are more likely to stay at the stadium longer, in turn spend more money, and be more likely to visit the stadium again. Stadium managers can enhance their favorable outcomes by turning a soccer match into more than just another match; they could turn it into an event for the entire family. Similarly, the same can be found with Airbnb's decision to choose Sao Paulo as the region location to house their entry into the South American market.

The current manuscript provides strong evidence to suggest that the servicescape directly influences customer satisfaction and service quality perceptions. This suggests that managers should determine if their firm's servicescape conveys the appropriate message to fans and consumers in terms of the service quality perceptions and their satisfaction in doing business with the firm.

## **5 Model Implications**

### **5.1 Contributions to Management**

Management is more likely to utilize a tool (i.e. a reliable and valid Best Value Environmental Sustainability Behavior Intentions Model) that is known to produce accurate results (Lodish, 1971a, 1971b, 1974). It would appear that the global business community needs a way to investigate key constructs of interest that model sports fan behavior intentions. Management can use such a model to improve its understanding of these highly complex relationships (i.e. the attitude-toward-the servicescape provider relationship to behavior intentions like repurchase intentions, price sensitivity, word-of mouth-communications, and desire to stay in the service environment). In other words, academic researchers and management could use the Best Value Environmental Sustainable Behavior Intention Model to determine things like sports fans' future guilt as it relates to the sustainability of the servicescape.

It is suggested that managing a sports organization's physical environment is based on its overall, dimension, and sub dimension levels because that is how sports fans make their evaluations. We suggest that management evaluate the design of the servicescape from aesthetic and functional standpoints, while at the same time incorporating both employee and customer interactions into their perception of the physical environment or stadium.

These recommendations suggest specific strategies for service businesses. The main implication is that management's attention should be focused on each given aspect of the servicescape (i.e., ambient, design, or social interaction factors as well as the aesthetic, functional, employee, and customer subdimensions) to ensure that sports fans are satisfied not only with the primary service (i.e., sporting event, match, game, etc.), but also with the entire service encounter.

### **5.2 Contribution to Marketing Theory**

The Best Value Environmental Sustainability Behavior Intentions Model is posited to make studying and understanding the built environment an easier task. First, we suggest that the physical environment contains three distinct components (i.e., ambient, design, and social interaction factors) that people regularly use to evaluate a venue. Marketing theory is also advanced via the knowledge acquired when managers utilize any of the three components to evaluate the servicescape.

This manuscript investigates attitudes-toward-the servicescape provider's effect on several major services constructs. Efforts in other literatures (i.e. retailing) have presented

investigating various parts of the environment's influence on customer behavior, however, few identify a comprehensive physical environment model such as the Best Value Environmental Sustainability Behavior Intentions Model contained herein, nor do they include the major services constructs (i.e., service quality, satisfaction, and attitude-toward-the-servicescape provider) as mediating variables or sports fan behavior intentions as consequences (i.e., as identified in Figure 3).

### **5.3 Research Implications**

This manuscript identifies several implications for future research. First, future research should compare Figure 3 advanced herein to other models that attempt to address similar physical environment components. For example, the Best Value Environment Sustainability Behavior Intention Model can be compared to the Kaiser 2006 model to determine which is superior in explaining sports fan behavior intentions.

Additionally, investigating hypothesis 1 in a future empirical study could provide strong evidence to support Rokeach's (1968) argument, which explains that a customer's behavior is mediated by at least two types of attitudes and that the Best Value Environmental Sustainability Behavior Intentions Model explains more the variance in fan behavior intentions.

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