

The Multi-day, Competitive Leisure Event: Examining Satisfaction Over Time

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The purpose of this study was to determine what factors affect a person's satisfaction over the course of a multi-day, competitive leisure event. Different types of satisfaction were measured across several distinct stages of recreational experiences. In this study, satisfaction with one's preparedness, performance, and overall experience were assessed. Correlations showed significant relations among the three measures of satisfaction but no significant relationships among expectations about chances of winning and any of the measures of satisfaction. Discriminant analysis was used to differentiate between those able to cope with adverse conditions and still have a satisfying experience and those unable to do so. Significant discriminant functions were found relative to satisfaction with performance based on preparation, satisfaction with overall performance, and accomplishing what one planned. The contributing predictive variables were "satisfaction with one's performance the first day of competition" and "familiarity with the climate of the area."

KEYWORDS: *Discriminant analysis, leisure experience, satisfaction, special events*

Introduction

Satisfaction is a multi-faceted concept. It results from confirmation of expectations or positive disconfirmation (Pizam & Milman, 1993). A national dog agility competition brought together participants from all over North America for what proved to be a difficult event under more extreme conditions than expected. These circumstances provided a unique opportunity to explore multiple phases of a leisure experience. The purpose of this study was to determine which factors affect a person's satisfaction with their leisure experience over the course of a multi-day competitive event by measuring different types of satisfaction across several distinct stages of a recreational experience and determining which factors influence that type of satisfaction. Satisfaction with one's preparedness, performance, and overall experience were assessed over time. This study did not address satisfaction with the implementation of the event or the event providers.

Literature Review

Leisure as Multiphase Experiences

Clawson (1963) was one of the first to suggest that leisure experiences have multiple phases. He outlined five specific, yet non-mutually exclusive decision stages that make up experiences. These included: anticipation and planning; travel to the site; on-site activity; travel from the site; and recollection.

tion of the activity. He noted that each stage involved distinct kinds of leisure experiences. For example, in the anticipation and planning stage people will look to the future and determine if special arrangements need to be made for such things as transportation, lodging, and/or reservations. During this stage people often visualize themselves actually involved in the activity. This visualization can continue into the travel to stage and, depending on the meaning of the activity to the participant, emotions (e.g., anxiety, exhilaration) may change as one nears the actual site.

The actual activity stage may focus on a singular event or a series of related events. When the activity stage lasts more than one day, a series of short travel from and recollection stages actually take place between involvement in each event. The longer an event lasts, the more likely participants are to experience changes in moods and attitudes toward or related to participation (Cashell, Lane, & Montgomery, 1996).

When the activity has ended, participants either head home or on to another activity. At this time, initial reflection regarding one's participation takes place. Participants might experience tiredness or rejuvenation, relaxation or anxiety, jubilation or depression, etc. Discussions that take place during the travel to stage are likely to be very different from those while traveling home.

The recollection stage occurs over an extended period of time, and, depending on the meaning associated with the leisure experience, may continue until the experience occurs again. At times, the anticipation and planning stage for future involvement may overlap the recollection stage from the previous leisure experience (Clawson, 1963).

Others have examined the multi-dimensional aspects of leisure experiences as well. Tinsley and Tinsley (1986) spoke to the variety (both positive and stressful) of mini-experiences that make up leisure. Mannell (1980) and Tinsley and Tinsley (1986) focused on transitory leisure experiences. They suggested that rather than being continuous in nature, leisure experiences occur in short, interrupted time periods. Lee, Dattilo and Howard (1994) combined several of the above efforts and demonstrated the multi-dimensional, transitory, and multi-phased nature of leisure experiences. They cautioned researchers to look at both the pleasant and unpleasant aspects of leisure when examining the total experience.

Hull, Stewart and Yi (1992) examined properties of experience patterns of hikers during a short, stressful day hike. They focused primarily on changes in mood, satisfaction, and perception of scenic beauty and determined that hikers do differ from one another, yet cluster into distinct, homogeneous groups.

Stewart and Hull (1992) focused on the differentiation between post-hoc satisfaction and real-time satisfaction over the course of a leisure experience. Relative to Clawson's (1963) stages discussed above, Stewart and Hull stated:

Generally, the experiences represented by this continuum are a package deal; one phase does not come without the other four. The continuum depicts a

dynamic recreation experience, one that evolves and matures across five phases. Because the experience changes, one would expect appraisals of the quality of that experience to change as one moves along the time-space continuum. (P. 196)

Thus, real-time satisfaction measures are best used to appraise a recreationist's current state, i.e., what they are thinking and feeling while on-site and participating. This is most appropriate during the actual activity phases, but also provides meaningful insight during every phase, when the means of assessing these characteristics are available. All of the previously cited studies concluded that behavior, attitudes, and opinions are dynamic, and often change throughout the course of a leisure experience.

Studies of leisure experiences over time have usually focused on experiences and/or events that have progressed along a predictable course. The participants typically have some preconceived knowledge of what will happen before the experience begins, and their expectations and perceptions are often actualized over the course of their involvement. However, many experiences do not follow this pattern. Experiences may be affected by adverse conditions, such as unexpected extremes in temperature and unusually long hours of competition. What effect, if any, do these conditions have on participants' perceptions of their own competitive performance? How do these conditions impact one's satisfaction with one's leisure experience? Does satisfaction depend on the use of coping strategies when the setting produces unanticipated circumstances? And, does satisfaction with the leisure experience, and more specifically one's competitive performance, change over time?

Leisure Satisfaction

Satisfaction has been defined as ". . . an act of judgment, a comparison of what people have to what they think they deserve, expect, or may reasonably aspire to. If the discrepancy is small, the result is satisfaction; if it is large, there is dissatisfaction" (Campbell, 1980, p. 22). Satisfaction differs from both happiness, one's temporary affective feelings at the moment, and morale, the future-oriented optimism or pessimism in one's life (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997).

Mannell (1989) developed a typology of leisure constructs model in which he identified distinct types of leisure satisfaction. One type, *component appraisal-satisfaction*, relates to the perceived quality of a specific activity or setting. This approach is usually not theoretically driven and assesses quality, and not just quantity of leisure involvement. Its emphasis is on what elements contribute to, and detract from, a person's leisure experience and quality of the experience. For example, Graefe and Fedler (1986) measured overall satisfaction with a chartered recreation fishing outing. The authors focused on both the overall trip and specific aspects of the trip, such as kinds and quantity of fish caught, and the degree to which participants were challenged while fishing. Hultsman, Hultsman, and Black (1989) examined the satisfac-

tion among hunters involved in a state lottery-regulated deer hunt, where the day of the hunt was randomly assigned to one of three hunt days. Often, examination of satisfaction with a specific event involves assessing the participant's satisfaction with his/her experience as well as his/her satisfaction with the production and/or operation of the event/activity. This last component is similar to examining service quality, which consumer behaviorists have indicated impacts people's perception of customer service.

Others (Williams, Schreyer, & Knopf, 1990; Ewert, 1993) have shown that differences in personality, level of experience, companions, and personal success influence perceived personal satisfaction. For some, levels of satisfaction may remain stable throughout.

Most of the research on satisfaction related to specific events has focused on single day activities. The event studied here is a multi-day competitive event. What happens when an event and all of the related preparation and activities take place over an extended period of time?

Measuring Changes in Satisfaction Over Time

The multi-dimensional aspects of leisure experiences leads to the question, "when is it most appropriate to measure constructs related to behavior and satisfaction?" Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) supported the investigation of immediate conscious experiences, rather than the more easily obtainable post-hoc satisfaction. Stewart and Hull (1992) investigated the viability of analyzing satisfaction during activity assessments (RTS or *real time satisfaction*) and via post activity assessments (PHS or *post-hoc satisfaction*). Both methods were used to help define and evaluate the quality of a leisure experience. PHS focuses on one's interpretation/evaluation of an experience after it has been completed. Assessment can take place immediately after the actual activity, on the return trip or the trip home, and/or during the recollection phase. "Because the assessment occurs at any time or place after the on-site recreation activity, it invites respondents to step out of their immediate context and make introspective evaluations on recollections of past events, needs, and experiences" (Stewart & Hull, 1992, p. 197). Stewart and Hull indicated that, while differences do exist in PHS when measured immediately after participation and again three months later, there is relatively little change in satisfaction measured any time after three months.

RTS focuses on that which is being experienced "right now." Assessment occurs during the on-site phase. "Because RTS is a direct evaluation of the quality of the on-site experience it may be useful in the study of the effects of situational variables on the actual context of the on-site experience" (Stewart & Hull, 1992, p. 206). Thus, when unanticipated factors impact one's on-site experience, being able to capture immediate reactions may reveal a different level of satisfaction than a measure taken after the event (PHS), when other variables may soften or heighten the impact of these situational factors.

Self-initiated tape recorders were used in a study by Lee, Dattilo and Howard (1994) where respondents recalled qualitative aspects of their ex-

perience immediately after completion. This method allowed respondents to share characteristics of their experience that aren't typically mentioned in the literature, such as disappointment, nervousness, and frustration. The immediate capturing of emotions provided insight that often is not recalled during evaluation at some future time.

Expanding the type of research methods used to study leisure experiences has been suggested by Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) and Lee et. al. (1994). They suggested accounting for intervening variables that can affect the experience unexpectedly. To advance research on multiple phases of the leisure experience, this paper takes both a quantitative and a qualitative approach to examining different types of satisfaction accessed during successive stages of a competitive leisure experience.

Expectancy Theory

Stewart and Carpenter (1989) suggested that research investigating associations between motives and settings needs to consider motive fulfillment to be conceptually and empirically complete. For competitors in amateur sporting events, motives are often associated with thoughts about one's chances of winning or placing high in the rankings. It is during the anticipation phases, prior to the event, when competitors first develop ideas about how they hope to perform. These expectations are largely based on previous experience (Schreyer & Lime, 1984; Williams, Schreyer, & Knopf, 1990). Participation in competitive events is expected to result in satisfaction if one does well.

Motives and expectation have been linked through expectancy and discrepancy theories. Driver (1976) stated that in expectancy theory, attitudes relative to planned behavior are closely related to actual behavior as long as planned behavior is known, expected, and valued. According to Stewart and Carpenter (1989), a frequently made assumption about applying expectancy theory to recreational behavior is that those recreating have accurate expectations relative to the recreation setting and their own behavior. Because recreation experiences can take place in new or non-routine environments, the assumption of familiarity is questionable, particularly for outdoor-related activities and events. Further, the unknown effects of weather also make familiarity a questionable characteristic. Driver (1976) indicated that the motivations of recreationists who lack the benefit of past experience (e.g., with a setting or activity), can not be measured as well as the motivations of those with greater familiarity. In addition, despite previous experience, the introduction of adverse environmental factors can alter expectations, both positively and negatively.

Ewert (1993), Iso-Ahola and Allen (1982), and Stewart (1992) all supported the premise that motives, expectations and preferences all change across time, and therefore, pre-activity measures may not be at all consistent with post-activity measures. This is the basis of dissonance theory, which describes the human ability to maintain cognitive consistency. Festinger (1957)

explained dissonance theory as people's rationalization of outcomes to maintain psychological consistency when faced with unmet expectations. Stewart (1992) and Ewert (1993) found that outdoor recreationists reported that expectations had been met and the experience satisfying despite post-trip experiences being inconsistent with pre-trip expectations of experiences.

Thus, for a competitive sporting event, one could expect that there would be a significant correlation between the chances competitors thought they had of winning top honors/placements, and their level of satisfaction with their performance. However, one might also assume that high levels of satisfaction could be attained without actually winning since unanticipated setting or programmatic circumstances might cause one to adjust expectations and consider other ways to have a satisfying experience.

The Setting

Agility Competition

A very fast growing team sport worldwide is the sport of dog agility. This canine/human activity involves a dog, under the guidance of his/her human "team member," negotiating a series of obstacles (e.g., jumps, tunnels, teeter totters, A-frames, tire jump) for time and accuracy. Unlike other dog performance sports, in agility the course is different every time. What makes this sport so attractive and addictive to both the competitor and spectator, are the challenges presented by this variety of courses.

There are three primary agility organizations in the United States. They are the North American Dog Agility Council (NADAC), the United States Dog Agility Association (USDAA), and the American Kennel Club (AKC). Each has its own unique qualities, yet they all judge competitors on the basis of speed and accuracy. Within each organization there are also three different levels of competition: a novice level, an intermediate level, and a highly skilled level. This study was conducted with participants of NADAC's Third National Championships, held in Scottsdale, Arizona in October, 1997. This was the first time that the Nationals were held outside the northwestern United States. Participants came from all over the United States and Canada for three full days of competition which culminated in awarding "Top Dog" honors to one canine/human team in each of four height divisions at the three different levels of competition.

The 1997 National Dog Agility Championships in Scottsdale, AZ

National competitions, in any format of agility, take on a different character than a regular show. Because national agility championships typically do not allow participants to work toward qualifying legs or titles, it is commonplace for the agility courses and rules to be somewhat different than one would find in a regular show. These changes are made to add greater challenge for the competitors as well as to introduce a level of novelty that would not necessarily fit under the guidelines for course design at regular

qualifying events. Competitors are informed of the activities that will be held at the nationals when they receive a Premium, indicating that they have qualified for competition and are eligible to compete. It is the discretion of the organizing body to set its own rules for national championships. Thus, NADAC agility courses/shows held at other times of the year would have the following characteristics (NADAC, 1995):

- between 14-16 (novice level) and 20-22 (elite level) obstacles;
- a 5-10 minute walk-through after each course change for handlers to learn the course;
- two rings run simultaneously or alternating when the number of participants exceeds 100;
- judging begins as the dog crosses the first obstacle;
- unless weather conditions become unsafe, shows run continuously from start to finish, with no intermission; and
- scoring is calculated as in equestrian Grand Prix, that is, as faults incurred, then time, with courses having a standard course time and faults incurred for exceeding that time.

All of these are fairly standard practices. However, for the 1997 Nationals, NADAC decided to:

- include 24 obstacles on some elite courses;
- allow 20-30 minutes for walk-throughs;
- run one ring;
- use a three jump start before the actual judging began;
- on Friday, the first day of competition, take a 3 1/2 hour break in the middle of the afternoon because of the heat, thus finishing the last run around one AM on Saturday; and
- change the scoring method to time plus faults, a method that did not put a premium on speed, but instead emphasized accuracy plus speed.

In addition, the misting system, which was to cool down the arena by approximately ten degrees, broke the evening before the event began. Temperatures over the three days averaged an unseasonable 103-105 degrees daily, with evening temperatures dropping to the low 90's.

Methods

Survey Design

In order to collect data across different stages of the leisure experience (Clawson, 1963), five different questionnaires were used (see Table 1). The first questionnaire solicited information about the planning and anticipation stages of one's trip to the 1997 Nationals. The second questionnaire was designed to assess mood (using real time questioning) when participants arrived at the event site, which was one day before the first day of competition. An adapted version of the work of Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and

TABLE 1
Composition and Distribution Schedule for Questionnaires

Stage	Question Topics	When Distributed	Questionnaires		When Due
			Number Distributed	Number Returned	
Anticipation/planning	Motives, agility experience, expectations, demographics	1 mo. prior to event	134	83	2 days before event
End of travel to/ begin of actual activ.	Mood upon arrival arrival	Day of	134	58	Same day
Travel to/actual activ.	Experiences enroute, travel companions, daily diaries, overall experiences, accommodations	Upon arrival	134	60	Last day
Travel home	Immediate reflections, satisfaction overall, thoughts about future	Upon arrival	134	55	As soon as home
Recollection	Satisfaction with plans, expectations met, souvenirs purchased	1 1/2 weeks	134	61	Within 1 week after event

O'Connor (1987) was used. Data from this questionnaire is not reported in this paper.

The initial part of the third questionnaire examined the "travel to" stage. The remainder of this questionnaire measured personal perceptions of one's thoughts and behavior over the course of three days of competition. This was done through the use of daily diary summaries (Butcher & Eldridge, 1990; Vogt & Andereck, 1996). Also included in this questionnaire were questions related to one's overall experience at the Nationals. Except for the travel to section, the remaining questions used real time data collection.

The fourth questionnaire was a short postcard that focused on the trip home. The fifth questionnaire focused on the recollection phase and assessed mood using the same scale as in the second questionnaire. It also assessed satisfaction with those items queried under the expectations section in Questionnaire One. In addition, participants were asked an open-ended question on if they were satisfied in accomplishing what they had planned at the Nationals.

Sampling

Participants were recruited using purposive sampling. According to Patton (1980), purposive sampling is used when the research aim is to explore and understand underlying phenomena as opposed to being able to generalize theory to a larger sample. All 134 of the individuals who qualified for

and indicated that they would be competing in the NADAC Nationals were individually invited to participate in this study via a personalized letter. Eight other individuals also competed, but they were all affiliated with the sponsoring organization, and therefore were not included in the study. Each participant was informed about the extensiveness of the study and told that he/she could choose to cease participation at any time without penalty. Of the original 134 participants, 83 returned the first questionnaire, and 55 (41% of the original sample) completed the remaining four questionnaires. This group of 55 participants comprised the sample for this paper. The demographic characteristics of the participants are summarized in Table 2.

Non-response Data

The author's familiarity with the majority of the competitors, together with personal conversations with non-respondents, provided some insight regarding those individuals who chose not to complete the series of questionnaires. First, 61% of the competitors returned the first questionnaire (See Table 1), which examined the anticipation and planning phase. This is considered a healthy return, as no additional prompting was done to increase the number of returned surveys due to time constraints prior to competition. Of those who did not return the remainder of the questionnaires, being "unwilling to commit time" was the reason most often reported (in conversation) after the study was completed.

There appears to be no connection between how well a person fared in competition and whether or not they completed the series of questionnaires. There was a fairly equal split between those who ultimately won top dog honors and completed the questionnaires and those who did not win

TABLE 2
Survey Participants

Demographic data

75% female

77% between 30-49 years old

80% had at least an undergraduate degree

Psychographic data

44% considered socializing a very important part of agility

77% said it was not important for them to win the "highest scoring dog" award

62% said it was important to be able to say "they competed in the Nationals"

98% owned some of their own agility equipment

60% said they "expected to qualify" for the Nationals

56% have annual household income over \$50,000

69% gave themselves a chance at making it into the "top 3" places in their height class and level

N = 55

honors yet still completed the questionnaires. Because each competitor knew beforehand that it would take time to complete all five questionnaires, and in order for the study to be most effective, all questionnaires needed to be completed. Lack of willingness to make a time commitment is considered the primary reason for non-response. This factor and its resulting non-response rate, however, should not bias the findings of this study.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected during five different leisure experience phases following Clawson's (1963) framework. While this paper examines satisfaction during the on-site, travel home, and recollection stages of the leisure experience, it is meaningful to understand the entire process of data collection.

The closing date for qualification (there were several ways in which one could qualify for the Nationals over the previous 11 months) along with receipt of one's Premium by the NADAC indicating one's desire to compete, was a month prior to the start of the competition. This made it possible to secure names of all 134 competitors and send out the first questionnaire prior to the competition. This questionnaire was due back two days before the competition began.

Each participant was required to register upon arrival. Therefore, it was possible to get information to everyone in exactly the same manner, through the "exhibitor bag" they picked up at registration. In the bag the second, third, and fourth questionnaires were placed. Instructions were given on each questionnaire as to when it should be completed and where it should be deposited after completion. The second questionnaire was deposited in a collection box on the information table the day before competition began, as it assessed mood upon arrival. The third questionnaire was deposited in the same box on the final day, after the competition ended. The fourth questionnaire, which covered the trip home, was printed on a stamped, addressed postcard and mailed back once the participant reached home. Using the same address list as was used for the first mailing, it was easy to send everyone the fifth questionnaire. It was mailed 1 1/2 weeks after the Nationals ended. It focused on the recollection phase of leisure experiences. All questionnaires were coded so that individual participant data could be matched.

Data Analysis

Pearson correlations were calculated between the competitors' expectations, their chances of winning and/or doing well, and the different measures of satisfaction. Paired sample correlations were conducted to examine the relationship between each of the three measures of satisfaction.

Discriminant function analysis was the statistical technique used to assess satisfaction. This technique was chosen because of its ability to interpret the

way that groups differ, and to classify individuals into groups based on a set of predictor variables. In discriminant analysis there must be two or more groups and at least two cases in each group (Klecka, 1980).

Three separate discriminant analyses were conducted, reflecting the on-site, travel from, and recollection phases of event participation. On questionnaires three and four, satisfaction was measured on a four-point Likert scale (i.e., 1 = very satisfied, 4 = very dissatisfied). Because of the scarcity of responses in the "very dissatisfied" category (two for questionnaire three, five for questionnaire four), the "dissatisfied" and "very dissatisfied" categories were combined. The discriminant analyses were then run with the remaining three categories as well as with the 'satisfied' and 'very satisfied' categories collapsed into one. The resulting discriminant analyses produced the same contributing variables. Thus, because satisfaction in accomplishing what was planned was measured dichotomously on the fifth questionnaire, each discriminant analysis was run measuring the grouping variable, satisfaction, dichotomously.

The grouping variable for the first analysis represented satisfaction with one's performance based on preparation. These data were collected during the event. The second discriminant analysis captured satisfaction with overall performance at the Nationals and was measured on the trip home. The third analysis examined satisfaction with whether one had accomplished what he/she had planned to at the Nationals, and was measured during the recollection phase. Table 3 shows the descriptives for each grouping variable.

The predictor variables for each discriminant analysis were age (measured in categories), number of dogs with whom they were competing, gender, satisfaction with performance (measured on a four point Likert scale) on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, encountering disappointments (measured dichotomously) on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and familiarity with the greater Phoenix area (measured on a nominal scale; live there, have visited before, this will be my first trip). Because the event was being held in a desert environment in a potentially very warm time of year, it was necessary to determine if familiarity with Phoenix, through having lived there or visited before, was relevant. Other variables initially included in the analysis were eliminated because they failed to show even moderate association.

Additional analyses included descriptives on demographic data; responses to open-ended questions on the support received from friends/others; and how competitors felt when the Nationals ended. Final thoughts during the recollection phase were assessed in order to provide a richer perspective on thought processes at specific times. The combination of questions included in this analysis should provide insight into how well one could distinguish between those who found satisfaction despite the significant extenuating circumstances and those who did not.

As stated earlier in this paper, Tinsley and Tinsley (1986) were advocates of understanding mini-experiences that make up the whole. To enhance the richness of the discussion about multiple phases of the leisure experience,

TABLE 3
Descriptive Data on the Satisfaction Variables

Grouping Variable	Satisfied		Non-satisfied		M	SD	
	n	%	n	%			
Satisfaction with performance based on preparation	48	87	7	12	1.12	.336	
Satisfaction with overall performance	47	85	8	15	1.15	.356	
Satisfaction with accomplishing what was planned	38	69	17	31	1.31	.446	
Predictor Variable	n	%					
Familiarity with Phoenix							
Live there		7	13				
Visited before	36	67					
First trip		11	20				
Number of dogs competing							
1		42	76				
2		12	22				
3		1	2				
Satisfaction with Performance	Satisfied		Non-satisfied		M	SD	
	n	%	n	%			
Friday	43	76	12	22	1.87	.883	
Saturday		40	72	15	28	1.93	
Sunday		37	69	17	31	1.74	1.022
Disappointments							
Saturday		36	66	19	43	1.29	.567
Sunday		36	66	19	43	1.22	.658

N = 55

a few personal story lines have been selected to demonstrate both thought processes and behavior across all five stages of the Nationals experience.

Results

Table 3 shows descriptive data for satisfied and non-satisfied competitors. Descriptives are shown for each of the three measures of satisfaction and for the predictor variables. There were significant differences between satisfaction with overall performance and satisfaction with accomplishing what was

planned ($t = -2.62, p = .011$), and between satisfaction with performance based on preparation and satisfaction with accomplishing what was planned ($t = -2.84, p = .006$). There were significant correlations between satisfaction with overall performance and satisfaction with performance based on preparation ($r = .461, p = .000$); between satisfaction with overall performance and satisfaction with accomplishing what was planned ($r = .394, p = .003$); and between satisfaction with performance based on preparation and satisfaction with accomplishing what was planned ($r = .335, p = .-12$).

Correlations

Correlations were calculated for items that related to four motives for participation. Table 4 shows that there were three significant correlations: winning (in general) and winning highest dog honors; winning (in general) and placing higher than rivals; and winning highest dog honors and placing higher than rivals.

Correlations between expectations about performance and satisfaction are listed on the bottom portion of Table 4. None of the items representing expectations had significant correlations with any of the measures of satis-

TABLE 4
Intercorrelations

Between Motives and Grouping Variables							
Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Winning (in general)	—	.740*	.061	.496*	-.030	-.061	-.168
2. Winning highest dog		—	.136	.419*	.095	-.114	-.206
3. Competing in nationals			—	.129	-.098	.118	
4. Beating rivals				—	.141	.195	.073
5. Satisfaction with perform.					—	.461*	.335+
6. Satisfaction overall							—
7. Satisfaction with accomp.							
Between Expectations and Grouping Variables							
Variable	1	2	3	4	5		
1. Satisfaction with perform.	.461*	.335+	.026	.146			
2. Satisfaction overall	—	.394*	.008	.003			
3. Satisfaction with accomp.		—	.212	.165			
4. Chance of making top 3			—	.746*			
5. Chance of winning class				—			

Note. N = 55

* = significant at .01 level

+ = significant at .05 level

faction. However, the expectation of “chance of making the top 3 in a class” correlated significantly with “chances of winning a class.”

Discriminant Analyses

Satisfaction with performance based on preparation. Table 5 summarizes the results of the first discriminant analysis. The discriminant function was significant ($p = .002$), indicating that individuals who were satisfied with their preparation for the Nationals differed from those who were not based on satisfaction with Friday’s performance and familiarity with the Phoenix environment. The eigenvalue (.292) indicates a moderate amount of variability, and Wilks’ Lambda (.774) indicates a moderate amount of discriminatory correlation. Twenty-three percent of the variation in the discriminant func-

TABLE 5
Discriminant Analysis on Satisfaction with Performance Based on Preparation

Function	Eigen-Value	Percent of Variance	Canonical Correlation	Wilks' Chi-Lambda	Square	df	<i>p</i>
1	.292	100.0	.475	.774	12.556	2	.002
Variables			Standardized Function Coefficients		Structure Coefficients		
Satisfaction w/Friday's perform.			.755	.729			
Familiarity with Phoenix climate			.685	.656			
Satisfaction w/Saturday's perform.				.211			
Gender						.146	
Satisfaction w/Sunday's perform.				.096			
Disappointments on Sunday				.094			
Number of dogs entered						.081	
Disappointments on Saturday						.068	
Age						.032	

n = 55

Group Centroid = satisfied, - .209; non-satisfied, 1.344

Classification Results for Satisfaction with Performance Based on Preparation

Actual Group	Number of Respondents	Predicted group (percentage)	
		Satisfied	Non-satisfied
Satisfied	47	38 (80.9%)	9 (19.1%)
Non-satisfied	7	2 (28.6%)	5 (71.4%)

Percentage of groups correctly classified = 79.6%

Proportional reduction in error statistic (tau) = .7980

tion could be attributed to differences on the measured variables between those who were satisfied and those who were not.

Satisfaction with overall performance. Table 6 summarizes the results of the second discriminant analysis. This discriminant function was also significant ($p = .001$), indicating that individuals who were satisfied with their overall performance differed from those who were not, with satisfaction with Friday's performance, familiarity with the Phoenix environment, and disappointments met on Sunday being the explanatory variables. The eigenvalue (.394) indicates a moderate amount of variability, and Wilks' Lambda (.717) indicates a moderate amount of discriminatory correlation. Twenty-eight percent of the variation in the discriminant function could be attributed to differences on the measured variables between those who were satisfied and those who were not.

Accomplishing what one planned. Table 7 summarizes the results of the third discriminant analysis. This discriminant function was also significant ($p = .002$), indicating that individuals who were satisfied with their accomplishments at the Nationals differed from those who were not, with familiarity with the Phoenix environment and disappointments met on Sunday being the explanatory variables. The eigenvalue (.285) indicates a moderate amount of variability, and Wilks' Lambda (.778) indicates a moderate amount of discriminatory correlation. Twenty-two percent of the variation in the discriminant function could be attributed to differences on the measured variables between those who were satisfied and those who were not.

The moderate values of the squared canonical correlation and the eigenvalues, as well as moderate Wilks' Lambdas, suggest that, while the groups may have some similarities, there are definite differences along the dimensions measured. Demographic variables did not play a large role in discriminating between satisfied and non-satisfied individuals, as indicated by the standardized function coefficients. Thus, the discriminatory power available in this function could result from perceptual variables rather than strictly from differences in demographics. The group centroid for satisfaction with accomplishing what was planned differs quite a bit from the group centroids for the other two measures of satisfaction. This, combined with a fairly low Tau, and a moderate level canonical correlation, would suggest that this measure of satisfaction alone is not sufficient for classifying competitors into satisfied/non-satisfied. The lack of clarity in the classification results would explain why the number of non-satisfied people doubled for satisfaction with accomplishing what was planned.

Because familiarity with setting is given much attention in the literature relative to satisfaction (Hull, Stewart, & Yi, 1992; Mannell, 1989; Stewart & Carpenter, 1989), t-tests were conducted for the predictor variable, "familiarity with the Phoenix environment", for each grouping variable. The only measure of satisfaction that yielded a significant difference for this variable was satisfaction with accomplishing what was planned ($t = 7.487$, $p = .008$).

The classification results of the discriminant analyses (see tables 5-7) provide another way of examining the predictive strength of the discriminant

TABLE 6
Discriminant Analysis on Satisfaction with Overall Performance

Function	Eigen-value	Percent of Variance	Canonical Correlation	Wilks' Chi-Lambda	Square	df	<i>p</i>
1	.394	100.0	.532	.717	16.122	3	.001
Variables			Standardized Function Coefficients			Structure Coefficients	
Satisfaction w/Friday's perform.			.625			.598	
Familiarity with Phoenix climate			.695			.518	
Disappointments on Sunday			-.622			-.428	
Satisfaction w/Sunday's perform.						.139	
Gender						.101	
Disappointments on Saturday						-.068	
Satisfaction w/Saturday's perform.						.067	
Age						.045	
Number of dogs entered						.015	

n = 55

Group Centroid = satisfied, - .263; non-satisfied, 1.444

Classification Results for Satisfaction with Overall Performance

Actual Group	Number of Respondents	Predicted Group (Percentage)	
		Satisfied	Non-satisfied
Satisfied	46	40 (87.0%)	6 (13.0%)
Non-satisfied	8	3 (37.5%)	5 (62.5%)

Percentage of groups correctly classified = 83.3%

Proportional reduction in error statistic (tau) = .8218

TABLE 7
Discriminant Analysis on Accomplishing what was Planned

Function	Eigen-value	Percent of Variance	Canonical Correlation	Wilks' Chi-Lambda	Square	df	<i>p</i>
1	.285	100.0	.471	.778	12.281	2	.002
Variables				Standardized Function Coefficients	Structure Coefficients		
Familiarity with Phoenix climate				.524	-.770		
Disappointments on Sunday				.673	.887		
Satisfaction w/Saturday's perform.					.205		
Disappointments on Saturday					.119		
Gender					.106		
Number of dogs entered					-.093		
Age					-.081		
Satisfaction w/Sunday's perform.					-.041		
Satisfaction w/Friday's perform.					-.004		

n = 55

Group Centroid = satisfied, .349; non-satisfied, -.785

Classification Results for Accomplishing what was Planned

Actual Group	Number of Respondents	Predicted Group (Percentage)	
		Satisfied	Non-satisfied
Satisfied	37	19 (51.4%)	18 (48.6%)
Non-satisfied	17	4 (23.5%)	13 (76.5%)

Percentage of groups correctly classified = 59.3%

Proportional reduction in error statistic (τ) = .50

function. For all three discriminant analyses, the majority of the cases were correctly classified (80%; 83%; 59%, respectively). Tau, the proportional reduction in error statistic, had strong values for all three of the analyses.

While the discriminant analyses do indicate statistical differences between satisfied and non-satisfied competitors for each measure of satisfaction, there is still more to the story.

Anticipation and Planning: Comparing Quantitative with Text-Based Responses

Marty, Kathy, Melinda, and Lyle each had their own way of looking at their experiences before, during, and after the competition. In some cases, their personal responses mirrored the statistical results described earlier, in other instances, there were differences. Here is what each had to say:

Marty. I felt satisfied when I learned I had qualified for the Nationals. I was working on my NATCH (highest title in NADAC agility). I think it is somewhat likely that my dog will finish in the top three places for her height and class, and just as likely that we will win our class. I had qualified last year for the nationals and expected to this year, too. My primary reason for getting involved in agility is to compete, but I also like to challenge myself mentally and physically. I got involved in the sport to join my wife, who also competes. She's very supportive of me, and is also competing here. Thankfully, we didn't encounter any hassles on our trip. We've been to Phoenix three times before, and as we neared the site we were glad the drive was over and anticipated having some fun with our dogs. Winning, spending time with old friends, doing better than last year, and earning ribbons are important to me. Winning highest dog honors is only somewhat important.

Kathy. I knew that I would have an automatic entry into this year's Nationals because I won one of the top dog honors at the nationals last year. However, I still wanted to qualify and it was real exciting when she (my dog) qualified with trials. This year my chances are somewhat likely for a repeat performance. I flew in and this is my first time visiting Phoenix. I participate in agility mainly to spend time with my dog, but I also enjoy socializing with friends and visiting new places. Socializing with others and being able to say I competed in the nationals are what's important to me. Earning ribbons and top dog placements are definitely less important. I traveled with someone who came just to watch. We had our luggage lost along the way, but the airline people were very nice to us. However, we were very hot when we arrived and then found out that our RV wasn't available yet, so that meant no air conditioning.

Melinda. My concern about qualifying was wondering if I would receive a premium list to return before all the available slots were filled. We qualified early in the year and I think our chances are somewhat good that we will do well in our height and class. I traveled to the Nationals with my husband who does not compete. He's

very supportive and proud of us when we are successful, and understanding when we are not. We've been to Phoenix many times before for both agility and family visits. We talked about the weekend in general, for most of the drive. As we neared the site our conversation focused on finding our way. I participate in agility mainly to prove something to myself, and to exercise. Winning, spending time with friends, and doing better than in the past are important to me at this nationals. Being able to say I competed is very important.

Lyle. Trying to qualify for the Nationals can be very distracting. Primarily, friends who are attending are very nervous. When I qualified I then spent time coaching others and just concentrating on having fun. I think it's very likely that we will place in the top three in our height and class, and somewhat likely that we'll win it all. This is my first Nationals, and I expected to qualify. I participate in agility to mentally challenge myself and to spend more time with my wife. She competes too, but didn't come out on this trip. I didn't have any problems on the way out, but I wasn't prepared for the heat and humidity so early and late in the day. Spending time with friends at the Nationals is very important to me. Winning and meeting new people are important, and less important are earning ribbons and winning top dog honors.

Participants' Reflections

There were a number of open-ended questions in the third, fourth and fifth questionnaires that assessed the participants' feelings about specific aspects of the event. These questions are included in this analysis to add a qualitative dimension to satisfaction with the experience at the nationals.

One of the recreational benefits that many individuals seek from competing in agility is the opportunity to socialize with friends. Two responses address this benefit:

"I did not receive any support/encouragement from 'friends' or 'acquaintances' because they were all too self-absorbed in their own problems/successes. [This continued for three days]"

"We probably would not have made it through the day [Friday] without the positive support of everyone."

In the fourth questionnaire, which covered the travel home stage, participants were asked how they felt now that the Nationals were over. While many individuals commented about their tiredness, the following quotes offer some more specific feelings:

"The heat and dust factor were unexpected hassles. I became very ill on the way home and have been sick [ever since]"

"I had fun and feel proud of my dogs' focus, but I could have done better handling. The delays in runs because of heat made for very long days with little rest for the next day".

In the fifth questionnaire, which covered the recollection phase, participants were asked if they had any final thoughts about their experience. The essence of both tiredness and excitement is revealed in the following quotes:

"It was a great experience, even surviving the heat was memorable, as was competing in the middle of the night- something new!"

"It was a very long and exhausting weekend. It was also humbling, exciting, and taught me several things I needed to know. I am very glad I was part of the experience. No regrets."

"I had hoped the Nationals would be fun, exciting, and a great chance to visit. Instead, it was a marathon with very little fun. I did get to visit with friends, but it turned into gripe sessions rather than pleasant chats."

Coping

The existence of unanticipated environmental and programmatic factors warranted the use of coping strategies by a number of competitors. For example, the following comments were offered on coping:

"Everything was good with the exception of the heat and food. I was not interested in being helpful. Trying to stay cool and keep my dog cool was my main interest."

"My dog and I did what was needed to cope with the heat. I left her in an air conditioned van whenever possible. I was careful to drink lots of water."

"I think the heat helped slow my dog down so I could control her!"

Immediate Reactions via Daily Diaries

The four competitors whose stories are being shared each had different reactions to the days' events.

Marty. On Friday I was satisfied with our performance, and very satisfied with the reactions I received from others. I knew we had a great jumpers round but it was nice to hear it from others. On Saturday in Gamblers, my dog did the greatest "out" of her career and we got more than 50 gamble points. Our little cheering section went "bonkers." Crossing the finish line after our last round on Sunday I was sure we had won the overall championship for our height and class and relieved I hadn't screwed up. I made a special effort to compliment others and not be too self indulgent. This was beyond our wildest dreams. Beyond winning, this was the most exciting agility event I have ever seen. I had an emotional high that lasted until Wednesday.

Kathy. On Friday I won Gamblers, the thing I do the worst in. On Saturday, I was extremely tired and suffered a little heat exhaustion, but my dog did great. On Sunday, with all the heat, traveling, and stress my dog had to endure, she still gave me everything she had. I was not prepared for the heat.

Melinda. The highlight of my day Friday was having several of my students earn placements and having good runs myself. On Saturday I handled the Gamblers run poorly and that, along with an anticipation at the start line in the regular class, led to a ragged run that took us out of the hunt. I was disappointed with my day. However, my friends reminded me of all the good things my dog and I do as a team. On Sunday, we had two good attempts, but they were blemished. I feel as if I let my dog down. I have always had difficulty putting that many runs together with stellar success. We did better than expected but not as well as I had hoped.

Lyle. I was pretty satisfied with Friday's runs. The cheering revs us up. My dog did very well. We did well on Saturday. The cheering from others is really starting to rev us up. On Sunday we wound up winning it all for our class. But there were still disappointments. Some of the top, experienced handlers were rude and inconsiderate. Many of the people I train with had already left by the awards ceremony. I was pretty much the only one left from our group when the awards were given out. The reaction of others helped, though.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that there are differences between "satisfied" and "non-satisfied" participants. This corresponds with Campbell's (1980) definition of satisfaction discussed earlier in this paper. Those who met their personal goals, and simultaneously dealt with stressful activities, were able to consider their experiences satisfying. In the case of this event, all the participants had equal exposure to extreme heat, competition, long hours, different course design strategies, and rules. Some, however, had greater familiarity with the general climate of the area. In essence, results suggest that what allowed people to confront these adverse conditions and still gain satisfaction from participation were successful and effective coping strategies. Rather than fight the situation, the satisfied individuals either modified their behavior and/or their expectations. Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1986) referred to such behavior as motivational matching. This occurs when individuals reduce cognitive dissonance by lessening the importance of some of their original motives and increasing others. In essence, this is why individual performance satisfaction, as recorded through the statistical analyses, appeared higher than satisfaction with the setting or event (indicated in the open-ended responses).

Dissatisfaction does not necessarily imply an inability to cope with adverse conditions. It simply means that there is a larger discrepancy between expectation and aspiration compared to reality of the experience. In one sense, the tough environmental conditions appeared to "up the ante." Competitors became survivalists. Because unknown factors keep outdoor competitions from being predictable, competitors are left to decide on their own what their limit will be before they decide to give up and bow out of the

competition. These same factors play a key role in disconfirmation of the expectancy theory. Desired outcomes and expectations do not always match actual outcomes. However, this does not necessarily imply that fulfillment will not occur. It is easier to change attitudes and beliefs than actual outcomes. Likewise, the strength of motivational factors does not automatically lead to satisfaction with one's leisure experience. The results of this paper indicate that it was not purely winning or doing well in competition, but also the use of coping strategies and the survivalist attitude that affected the degree to which competitors considered their experiences satisfying.

The other differentiating variable that surfaced across two measurement periods was satisfaction with one's performance on the first day of competition. There was clearly a difference along this variable between satisfied and non-satisfied participants relative to how well they felt they performed, based on their preparation. The same can be said about perspectives on overall competitive performance. While the first day of the competition was the longest day (due to a three-and-one-half hour break during the heat of the day), the events held on the second day were identical (except the break was limited to one-and-one-half hours). Satisfaction with Saturday's performance, however, had no significant statistical impact at all on satisfaction measured during any stage of the experience.

There are two possible explanations for the strong and lasting effect of satisfaction with Friday's performance. A "Pollyanna" effect may have occurred which was personality-driven. In other words, some participants developed a self-fulfilling prophecy where one was expected to have a good and satisfying experience because this was the Nationals. Thus, their joy in triumphing over the first grueling day carried over the three days of the event.

The second explanation relates to motive fulfillment, which is the degree to which the environment allowed planned and actual behavior to coincide. Stewart (1989) indicated that the operational construct of motive fulfillment is one's reaction to, and satisfaction with, relevant characteristics in the environment. Because participants come to compete, and not merely spectate, the fact that the setting and conditions became annoying provided a greater degree of motivation to "gut out" the tough conditions. Thus, the triumphs over Friday's conditions (environmental and programmatic) actually provided additional motivation for many of the competitors to carry them through the remainder of the competition, albeit with altered or changed expectations.

While the results of the measure 'accomplished what was planned' proved to be relatively weak in relation to classifying subjects into the correct group (refer back to Table 7), it is worth noting the role that "having disappointments on Sunday" played. Disappointments encountered near event completion played a role in perceptions measured during the recollection phase. Those who faced Sunday disappointments appeared to be in the "satisfied" group. Perhaps being able to conquer late event disappointments factored into satisfaction.

Relative to the remarks that people gave, everyone experienced some disappointments. This is not uncommon among competitive sporting events, and certainly to be expected over multi-day events. It appears that some people thought differences in the format of this national competition, compared to what they were used to in local and regional competitions had a major impact on their satisfaction with the event.

Conclusions

Tinsley and Tinsley (1986) emphasized that mini-experiences make up one's leisure. In some ways, each day of this competitive event was like a separate experience. The results indicate, however, that the experiences of the first day had the most significant impact on one's perceptions of satisfaction with the three day event.

This study provides evidence to consider the influence of person and setting. In a competition, participants appear to separate satisfaction with the event from personal satisfaction with one's performance. The weather and programmatic changes were blamed for grouchy attitudes and uncomfortable conditions, but very few people indicated that these conditions were ultimately responsible for their overall performance. In fact, a number of participants noted how pleased and surprised they were with how well their dogs were able to handle the heat compared to how well they themselves handled it. This demonstrates the survivalist attitude that appears to accompany competitive events where adverse conditions are present or introduced.

The results of this study suggest that over the course of a multi-day event, despite facing daily disappointments, dealing with the impacts of extreme heat, and restructuring one's schedule and behavior as a result of programmatic changes, the majority of competitors found ways to attain satisfaction with their overall experience. Two primary variables differentiated "satisfied" from "non-satisfied" participants: satisfaction with the first day's performance, and familiarity with the climate of the greater Phoenix area. In addition, dealing with disappointments on the last day of competition affected satisfaction with overall performance, measured immediately after the event, on the trip home.

The opportunity to collect real time data contributed to understanding the on-site activity phase. Because the conditions under which participants had to compete were perceived as being so adverse, the daily diaries were filled out reflecting the emotions of the day. Had data been collected using recall methods exclusively, some of the richness of the responses would probably have been lost or altered.

The discriminant analyses were useful in identifying managerial implications from different measures of satisfaction assessed over a multi-day competitive leisure event. However, the numbers do not tell the whole story. While the purposive sample of this study does not allow generalizability of the results to other populations, there are still some valuable lessons learned that can apply to recreation and event programming. Satisfaction with one's

own performance is not necessarily tied to the physical conditions surrounding and/or impacting the event. There were many people who voiced concern over the adverse conditions, yet found personal satisfaction in their own, and their dog's performance over several stages of the event. They also found that the support of others contributed to their satisfaction. As programmers and producers of events, it is important to consider these aspects before making decisions about altering or canceling an event due to conditions that are out of the ordinary.

Following four competitors' experiences throughout the competition offered continuous insight across multiple stages of the leisure experience, rather than just cross-sectional slices. The four stories allow us to ground the quantitative results within the words of participants. While the discriminant analyses were able to statistically determine what elements contributed to a person's satisfaction, it was the personal stories and open-ended responses that gave fuller meanings to component appraisal satisfaction (Mannell, 1989). They offered insight to elements that detracted from the experience and focused on perceptions of quality of one's experience. For example, it appears as though Marty, Melinda, and Lyle's experiences during the competition were greatly enhanced by the support of others. Marty and Lyle contributed cheering and crowd recognition of their accomplishments as motivators for continued efforts despite the conditions. After Melinda had a couple of poor runs, she was thankful for the support of close friends to remind her of her many past successes. None of these individuals experienced the competition alone. All had the companionship of others as support and to influence their satisfaction.

All stories need endings. Here is what happened to the four competitors after the competition ended.

- Marty.* I relived my run and experiences throughout the ride home. I accomplished everything I planned to, and even if we hadn't done well, this was a very exciting, well run event. The enthusiastic crowd loved the action.
- Kathy.* On the way home I thought about what I would have done differently on my runs. Despite the heat, the trip really was fun. I'm already planning for next year.
- Melinda.* I was tired afterwards and satisfied that we went, but disappointed with a couple of course runs. I thought about how I could have done better and was glad that friends did well.
- Lyle.* I was very happy and relieved that it's over. The trip home was the trip from hell. My car broke down in the desert. It's a good war story.

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