

# The Roles of Quality and Intermediary Constructs in Determining Festival Attendees' Behavioral Intention

SO YON LEE, JAMES F. PETRICK, AND JOHN CROMPTON

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*This study is an examination of the relationships between visitors' perceived service quality, perceived service value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Respondents were visitors who attended the Cajun Catfish Festival in Conroe, Texas and were systematically selected. Findings revealed that: (a) a structural model operationalizing perceived service quality as a set of attributes predicted visitors' intention to visit the festival better than an alternative model that measured quality by using a visitor's judgment about a service's overall excellence or superiority; (b) among the constructs analyzed, perceived service value appeared to be the best predictor of behavioral intentions; and (c) of the four dimensions of service quality of a festival, generic features and comfort amenities had the most influence on determining perceived service quality.*

**Keywords:** *perceived service quality; perceived service value; satisfaction; behavioral intention; structural equation modeling*

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As competition increases, tourism businesses and organizations need to develop effective methods for being more responsive to peoples' needs. The focus of this study is on festivals. Like other leisure and tourism providers, festival organizers are likely to contend that their primary goal is to provide high quality, satisfying experiences that visitors perceive to be good value in order to increase the probability that the visitors will return in the future and/or recommend the festival to others in their social circle. It has been suggested that three constructs—perceived quality, perceived value, and satisfaction—should be measured to monitor a festival's performance and people's reactions to it (Baker and Crompton 2000; Parasuraman and Grewal 2000; Petrick and Backman 2002a). Enhanced understanding of the relationships among these constructs and their relative influence in determining intention to revisit is likely to equip festival providers with guidance on how to adjust their services and marketing efforts to enhance visitation (Baker and Crompton 2000; Getty and Thompson 1994; Petrick and Backman 2002a, 2002b; Tam 2000).

Both perceived quality and satisfaction have been shown to be good predictors of visitors' behavioral intentions (Baker and Crompton 2000; Tian-Cole, Crompton, and Willson 2002). Whereas perceived quality and perceived value are cognitive responses to a service offering, overall

satisfaction is an emotional response based on a holistic view of a phenomenon (Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000). An understanding of the relationships among these three constructs would enable tourism businesses and organizations to know which of these evaluation measures have the most impact on visitors' behavioral intentions. The constructs of perceived service quality, perceived service value, and satisfaction have all been shown to influence behavioral intention. This literature is briefly reviewed in the following section.

## LITERATURE

### Perceived Service Quality

Providers position themselves effectively when they deliver higher levels of service quality to their visitors (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1988; Brown and Swartz 1989). However, service quality is an elusive and abstract construct that is difficult to define and measure (Brown and Swartz 1989; Carman 1990; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1985, 1988). Further, Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1996) noted that it is more difficult for consumers of services, such as tourists, to evaluate quality than it is for consumers of tangible products because services are intangible, heterogeneous, and inseparable.

In the recreation and tourism field, perceived service quality has been viewed as the quality of opportunity, and is likely to be related to quality of experience (Crompton and Love 1995). Quality of opportunity consists of the attributes of a service that are controlled and manipulated by the service provider. Researchers have invested effort into measuring service quality using this definition (Crompton and MacKay

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1989; Fick and Ritchie 1991; MacKay and Crompton 1990). Recreation satisfaction is the realization of desired outcomes or benefits, but the production of these benefits has to begin with the availability of raw recreation resources (Brown 1988). These raw recreation resources are recreation opportunities provided by management, which constitute service quality.

Crompton and MacKay (1989) defined service quality as the quality of service attributes and investigated perceptions of the importance of service quality dimensions for participants engaged in four different types of recreation programs characterized as: (1) high staff intensive/high facility intensive, (2) high staff intensive/low facility intensive, (3) low staff intensive/high facility intensive, and (4) low staff intensive/low facility intensive. They found that in a low staff/high facility intensive activity, the ambiance of the facility and equipment (i.e., the tangibles) were likely to be of crucial importance to a high-quality outcome, whereas in a high staff/low facility intensive activity, the tangible elements were not likely to be crucial to high quality. They also found that the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately was a crucial and important dimension of service quality among those using recreation facilities. As per Crompton and Love (1995), attributes such as visual appearance, live entertainment, craft exhibits/vendors, information sources, and comfort amenities can be considered tangible attributes of a festival.

Service attributes are composed of elements of the opportunities that management provides for recreationists. They are controlled and manipulated by suppliers. Using this perspective, Crompton and Love (1995) renamed service quality in the tourism field as "quality of opportunity." Quality of opportunity consists of the attributes of a service that are controlled and manipulated by the service provider. Researchers have invested effort into measuring service quality using this definition (Baker and Crompton 2000; Crompton and MacKay 1989; Fick and Ritchie 1991; MacKay and Crompton 1990).

Perceived quality is defined as the visitors' judgment about a service's overall excellence or superiority (Zeithaml 1988). Numerous studies have examined service quality as either the quality of service attributes (Crompton and MacKay 1989; Crompton and Love 1995; Baker and Crompton 2000) or as overall excellence or superiority (Petrick 2004b; Petrick 2002; Zeithaml 1988). To the best of our knowledge, prior to this study, none have examined which of these two operationalizations of quality is better at predicting tourists' behavioral intentions.

The primary goal of this study is to understand the strength of the interrelationships among the constructs of perceived service quality, perceived service value and satisfaction, which should better equip tourism (festival) businesses and organizations to adjust their services and marketing efforts to enhance positive behavioral intention. While attributes of service quality can be more useful than the visitors' judgment about a service's overall excellence or superiority (as per Baker and Crompton 2000), the latter is generally much easier to measure, and has been argued to capture the entire essence of service quality (Zeithaml 1988). Thus, a secondary purpose of the study is determine which measure of quality (quality of service attributes or overall excellence) is a better predictor of behavioral intentions. Other purposes of the study include

the determination of the antecedents of both service quality, and perceived value, to assist festival management in ways to improve the marketing of their events. Since perceived value, satisfaction, and quality have all been found to predict behavioral intentions uniquely (Cronin, Brady and Hult 2000), it is believed that a better examination of these constructs could provide both theoretical and managerial implications.

## Perceived Service Value

Perceived service value has been recognized as one of the most salient determinants of purchase intention and repeat visitation (Chang and Wildt 1994; Bolton and Drew 1991; Jayanti and Ghosh, 1996) and has received increasing attention in the marketing literature (Caruna, Money, and Berthon 2000; Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000) and tourism literatures (Oh 1999; Petrick 2002; Tam 2000). Chang and Wildt (1994) found that purchase intention is strongly and positively influenced by perceived service value, while other studies (Grewal et al. 1998; Jayanti and Ghosh 1996; Oh 1999; Sweeney et al. 1997; Zeithaml 1988) have argued that perceived service value mediates the influence of perceived price and perceived service quality.

Zeithaml (1988) identified four definitions of consumer value: (1) value is low price; (2) value is whatever one wants in a product; (3) value is the quality one gets for the price paid; and (4) value is what you get for what you give. However, she contended that the four could be summed into a single definition "perceived value is the consumers' overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given" (Zeithaml 1988, p. 14).

For managers and researchers, perceived service value has received increasing interest (Parasuraman 1997). Parasuraman and Grewal (2000) supported that perceived service quality enhances perceived service value, which, in return, contributes to visitors' loyalty. They also noted that the perceived service value plays the key role as a determinant of customer loyalty. Petrick suggested that single-dimensional measures of perceived value are problematic because they assume a shared meaning of value among visitors. For this reason, he developed a 25-item multi-dimensional scale for measuring perceived service value in the context of tourism (Petrick 2002). The scale consists of five dimensions: quality, emotional response, monetary price, behavioral price, and reputation. Using two separate samples, the generated items were found to saliently load on their predicted factors. Further, all of the resultant standardized path coefficients were found to assist significantly in the prediction of their assigned factors ( $p < .01$ ). The current study utilized the Petrick (2002) scale to measure perceived value.

## Satisfaction

Oliver (1981) defined satisfaction as a "summary psychological state resulting when the emotion surrounding disconfirmed expectations is coupled with the consumer's prior feelings about the consumption experience" (p. 27). Oliver (1997) pointed out that satisfaction encompasses more than mere fulfillment. It describes a consumer's experiences, which are the end state of a psychological process.

It is important to understand that visitor satisfaction is not achieved exclusively through quality of service. However,

quality of service is likely to be the key medium for providing satisfaction. MacKay and Crompton (1990) stated "service quality relates to opportunities, that is, to the gestalt of the tangible and intangible attributes of the service, while level of satisfaction relates to the psychological outcome which emerges from experiencing the service" (p. 49). It is important to understand that visitor satisfaction may be increased through enhancing quality experiences by improving the quality of facilities and services.

Tian-Cole, Crompton, and Willson (2002) reported that when visitors perceive a leisure service's attributes to be high quality, they are likely to experience higher levels of overall satisfaction with the service. They further found that the stronger the psychological benefits that visitors obtained from their visits, the more likely they were to have a positive attitude toward overall service quality. The current study operationalized satisfaction by using five items (the items were: was wise, delivered high satisfaction, high expectations were met, did the right thing and satisfied with my decision) that were adapted from Oliver (1997), Westbrook and Oliver (1991), and Oh (2000).

### Perceived Service Quality and Satisfaction

Baker and Crompton (2000) used a festival context to investigate the relationship between quality and satisfaction. Quality was measured with four dimensions: generic features of the festival, specific entertainment features, information sources, and comfort amenities. Satisfaction was measured using a four-item scale. Baker and Crompton's maximum-likelihood equation estimates showed that quality had a significant effect on visitor satisfaction. Their study confirmed that satisfaction was enhanced by higher perceptions of performance quality and further found that high performance quality encouraged visitors to be more loyal, increased revisit, and provided positive word-of-mouth.

Service quality and satisfaction can be examined from both transaction-specific and global perspectives (Teas 1993; Tian-Cole et al. 2002). Previously, service quality researchers (e.g., Carman 1990; Parasuraman et al. 1988) believed that satisfaction was a transaction-specific assessment, whereas service quality was a global assessment. The transaction level refers to a visitor's specific encounter with a service, such as a particular visit to a specific festival. The global level refers to a visitor's overall experience with a service, and the cumulative experience that may be derived from multiple visits. Thus, service quality and satisfaction can occur both during a visit and collectively after the visit. Based on this distinction, service quality researchers posited that an accumulation of transaction-specific assessments leads to a global assessment (i.e., the direction of causality is from satisfaction to service quality) (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1994). Acknowledging other empirical studies that suggest that the opposite was more likely to be true, these researchers subsequently offered a model that "posits a customer's overall satisfaction with a transaction to be a function of his or her assessment of service quality, product quality and price. This conceptualization is consistent with the 'quality leads to satisfaction' school of thought" (Parasuraman et al. 1994, p. 121).

Satisfaction is a psychological outcome derived from the experience, whereas service quality is concerned with attributes of the service itself. Attributes of service quality can be controlled and manipulated by tourism providers, but level

of satisfaction is dependent not only on quality of service attributes but also on the status of a host of variables that may affect the visitor, such as the climate or the nature of the social group. Thus, a perceived high-quality service could result in a low level of satisfaction because of variables that are outside a supplier's control. Conversely, a high satisfaction outcome may occur in spite of low perception of service quality because the social group interactions are sufficiently positive to offset the low-quality service (Crompton and MacKay 1989).

In the context of tourism, Tian-Cole, Crompton, and Willson (2002) found that overall satisfaction and overall quality were not the same, and should be considered as different constructs. However, they found a significant correlation between the two constructs. The study reported that if visitors perceived high overall service quality they tended to have high levels of overall satisfaction. The study conceptualized service quality and visitor satisfaction as overall attitudes, and the authors contended that service quality and satisfaction exist at both the transaction and global levels, and concluded that service quality and satisfaction had independent effects on visitors' behavioral intentions. It contended that with high perceptions of overall service quality and satisfaction with the festival, visitors were more likely to revisit a festival again in the future or to encourage positive word-of-mouth.

### Perceived Service Value and Satisfaction

Bolton and Drew (1991) pointed out that perceived service value is a "richer measure of customers' overall evaluation of a service than perceived service quality" (p. 383). Perceived service value plays a key role linking the cognitive factors of perceived quality and perceived sacrifice with behavioral intention (Patterson, Johnson, and Spreng 1997). Perceived service quality and perceived service value are cognitive responses to a service experience, whereas satisfaction is an emotional response (Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000). It has further been found that cognitive responses precede emotional responses (Bagozzi 1992), thus suggesting that perceived service quality and perceived service value precede satisfaction.

The basic premise of the current study is that perceived service value is one of the key linkages between perceived service quality and behavioral intention. Previous studies have indicated that satisfaction is a reliable predictor of behavioral intention (Baker and Crompton 2000; Patterson 1993; Tam 2000), but the extent to which satisfaction has an effect on perceived value has been debated (see Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000). According to Bagozzi (1992), the initial service evaluation (i.e., appraisal) leads to an emotional reaction that, in turn, drives behavior. Perceptions of service quality and service value are cognitively oriented variables that have an effect on satisfaction (Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000). Some studies have found that perceived value has an effect on satisfaction (Bojanic 1996; Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000; Oh 1999; Tam 2000). Conversely, others have suggested that a high level of perceived service value may result from satisfied visitors, for if a visitor feels highly satisfied there may be a "halo effect" on his/her perception of value (Chang and Wildt 1994; Petrick and Backman 2002a).

For festival managers, it is important to establish what role, if any, perceived service value plays in determining



visitors' satisfaction. For example, if perceived service value can be directly related to visitors' satisfaction, then a model that considers only service quality will represent an incomplete picture of the drivers of visitors' satisfaction. There may be situations where visitors may be satisfied with "what" was delivered and "how" it was delivered, but may not have felt they got their "money's worth." If managers ignore the role of perceived value and focus only on perceived quality, then the effect on satisfaction may be weak. Establishing the role of perceived service value should improve the understanding of a predictability of visitors' satisfaction more effectively.

## Behavioral Intention

Behavioral intentions include desirable behaviors that visitors anticipate they will exhibit in the future. Zeithaml et al. (1996) developed a 13-item battery to gauge a wider range of behavioral intentions that had been suggested in previous literature. The battery included items such as: likelihood of paying a price premium and remaining loyal to a company even when its prices go up, intent to do more business with the firm in the future, and complaint intentions when service problems occur. The 13 items were grouped into 5 dimensions: loyalty to company, propensity to switch, willingness to pay more, external response to a problem, and internal response to a problem. Among these five dimensions, loyalty and willingness to pay more received the highest factor scores. Loyalty is defined as a biased behavior expressed over time by a visitor with respect to one or more alternatives and is a function of psychological processes (Jacoby and Kyner 1973). It has been argued to be a two-dimensional construct measured by both behavior and attitude (Baker and Crompton 2000).

Baker and Crompton (2000) operationalized behavioral intentions by using seven items derived from Zeithaml et al. (1996). The items were a priori assigned to the domains of loyalty (five items) and willingness-to-pay more (two items). The study used a perceptions-only measure because comparative studies of the predictive validity of alternative operationalizations of quality have consistently demonstrated higher levels of predictive validity for perceptions measures than for perceptions-minus-expectations measures (Crompton and Love 1995; Cronin and Taylor 1994). The goodness-of-fit for the perceptions-only measure of quality was strong and it had a significant direct effect on visitor satisfaction. Both quality and satisfaction had a significant direct effect on visitors' behavioral intentions. The goodness-of-fit for the disconfirmation measure of the quality was weaker. Although quality and satisfaction had significant direct effects on behavioral intention, the indirect effect of quality on behavioral intention was not significant. For the current study, the Baker and Crompton (2000) adaptation of Zeithaml et al.'s (1996) measure of behavioral intention was used.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

According to Oh (1999), research on perceived service quality, perceived service value, and satisfaction has dominated the service literature. Many studies have attempted to assess the "antecedent, mediating and consequent

relationships" among perceived service quality, perceived service value, and satisfaction constructs (Rust and Oliver 1994; Athanassopoulos 2000; Baker and Crompton 2000; Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000; Oh 1999; Petrick, Backman, and Bixler 1999; Zeithaml Berry, and Parasuraman 1996). Even though there seems to be a consensus that these constructs have an effect on behavioral intention, there is debate on the causal order and relative impact of these constructs (Cronin, Brady and Hult 2000).

The relationship among perceived service quality, perceived service value, satisfaction, and visitor behavioral intention is an important issue in tourism marketing. Ostrom and Iacobucci (1995) stated "it would be interesting to examine these visitors' judgments simultaneously in one study to compare their relative effects on subsequent consequential variables" (p. 18). Oh (1999) not only supported the practical significance of each construct, but also emphasized the importance of adopting a more holistic view of them.

Two models with different operationalizations of perceived service quality are tested in the current study. In model 1, perceived service quality is operationalized using Petrick's (2002) scale (i.e., quality was very reliable, quality was very dependable, and quality was very consistent). In model 2, the Baker and Crompton (2000) multidimensional scale is used to operationalize perceived service quality (i.e., generic features, specific features, information sources, and comfort amenities).

Thus, the first objective of the study is to determine the model that better predicts visitors' intention to visit the festival by operationalizing perceived service quality in two different ways. Since model 1 utilizes a global (more holistic) measure, it is hypothesized that model 1 will better predict visitors' intention to visit the festival than model 2.

The second objective of the study is to determine the best predictor of behavioral intentions among the constructs of perceived service quality, perceived service value, and satisfaction. Since previous studies (Baker and Crompton 2000; Getty and Thompson 1994; Petrick 2004a; Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman 1996) have found quality to be a better prediction of tourists' behavioral intention than satisfaction and perceived value, it is hypothesized that model 2 will result in perceived service quality being a better predictor of behavioral intention than either perceived service value or satisfaction.

The third objective of the study is to determine which dimensions of perceived value are best at predicting overall perceived value. Since Bolton and Drew (1991) and Zeithaml (1988) found perceived service quality to be the best prediction of perceived value, it is hypothesized that, in model 2, perceived service quality will be the best predictor of overall perceived value.

The fourth objective of the study is to determine which attributes of perceived service quality are best at predicting perceived service quality and behavioral intention. Berry and Parasuraman (1991) stated: "service quality is the foundation of services marketing" (p. 3). From a managerial perspective, perceived service quality and perceived service value should be viewed as the most important measures of a service (Tian-Cole, Crompton and Willson 2002) because tourism providers cannot control the psychological benefits that visitors received from a visit, but the attributes of service quality and service value can be controlled and manipulated. Thus, Baker and Crompton (2000) noted: "From a

managerial perspective, it might be useful in evaluations to try and minimize the impacts of participants' social psychological states and extraneous events, and focus their attention on the quality of performance elements that the tourism provider can most effectively control" (p. 800). In their research, they found a stronger relationship between the "generic features" and "specific entertainment features" to quality among the four domains (i.e., generic features, specific features, information sources and comfort amenities). Thus, it is hypothesized that, in model 2, perceived service quality attributes related to "generic features" and "specific entertainment features" will be better predictors of behavioral intention than other factors of quality.

## RESEARCH PROCEDURES

### Study Area

The study was conducted at the Cajun Catfish Festival in Conroe, Texas. The festival typically draws 30,000 to 40,000 people to hear its live music lineup, browse through the craft booths and exhibits, and eat a variety of Cajun-style food. The festival features include continuous live music on five stages, a midway carnival, food and craft booths, a golf tournament, catfish races, mechanical bull riding, and dancing. During the three-day festival, the area is fenced to control activities and to permit the charging of admission. Ticket prices were \$8 for the whole day and \$4 for Saturday afternoon. Children under 12 and seniors 65 and over were admitted free.

### Sample

The target population was visitors (18 years and older) to the festival. The plan was to systematically survey every fifth visitor who entered the gate. Visitors were approached and asked to participate in the survey. Once a visitor declined to participate, the next fifth person was asked to participate. After agreeing to participate, a questionnaire with a prepaid envelope and a cover letter explaining the purpose and the importance of the study was given to the visitor. Participants were requested to complete and return the questionnaire in the enclosed prepaid envelope after they had experienced the festival. They also were asked to write down their names and addresses so that the researchers were able to make subsequent contact with them. Fewer than 8% of the respondents were from more than 50 miles from the festival, revealing that the majority of visitors could be termed "locals."

### Data Collection

Data collection followed a modification of Dillman's (2000) method. In the first week after distributing the questionnaires, a reminder postcard was sent to all respondents. This expressed appreciation for their willingness to participate and reminded them to complete the survey and mail it back if the completed questionnaire had not yet been mailed. Two weeks after they were handed the initial questionnaire, a replacement questionnaire with a cover letter was sent to those who had not replied. The cover letter reiterated the importance of each returned questionnaire and encouraged respondents to mail the survey back.

A total of 1,158 visitors were approached and 427 visitors agreed to participate in the study. After postcard reminders were sent out to those visitors, 101 surveys were returned. After a replacement questionnaire with a cover letter was sent out, an additional 133 surveys were returned, so the total response rate of those that agreed to participate in the study was 54.8%. Of the 241 visitors who responded, seven survey questionnaires were incomplete which resulted in 234 usable surveys.

### Operationalization of Constructs

This study adopted service quality attributes that were operationalized in previous studies (Childress and Crompton 1997; Baker and Crompton 2000). The attributes consisted of four dimensions. They were: generic features (five items), specific entertainment features (four items), information sources (two items), and comfort amenities (five items). Rewording of some of the items was needed to make the scale specific to the Conroe Cajun Catfish Festival. Similar to Baker and Crompton (2000), the attributes were measured using a seven-point symmetrical Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (very poor) to 7 (very good). The attributes were presented using the rubric: "We would like to know your views about the quality of the following features of Cajun Catfish Festival 2003. Please circle the number which best reflects your opinion."

An analysis of the reliability of the 16 items measuring the 4 dimensions of perceived service quality suggested that some items should be deleted from the a priori assigned dimensions to improve the level of reliability. If the measure is considered to be reliable, the Cronbach alpha should be at least .60 (Nunnally 1967). The deletions consisted of two items (cleanliness of the festival site, and food and beverages) from the generic features dimension; one item (promptness of the music performance) from the specific entertainment features dimension; and three items (number of places to sit down, site's accessibility for those with special needs, and friendliness of people) from comfort amenities dimension. Deleting these items resulted in a higher level of internal consistency among the items in each dimension (the range of Cronbach alphas prior to dropping were from .50 to .61). The Cronbach alphas of remaining items in the domains ranged from .60 to .63. These are low but acceptable given the relatively small number of items in each dimension (Nunnally and Bernstein 1994).

Petrick (2002) developed a 25-item instrument to measure perceived service value in a tourism context. Five dimensions: quality, emotional response, monetary price, behavioral price, and reputation were measured. From the items in each domain, the three items that had the highest standardized path coefficient score from Petrick's (2002) study were selected for inclusion in this study. If two items appeared to share the same meaning, the item with the higher coefficient score was used. All items were measured on seven-point Likert-type scales anchored by 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree). The Cronbach alphas revealed there was an acceptable level of consistency among the items within each dimension (Cronbach alphas ranged from .61 to .81).

Overall perceived service value was measured on a seven-point Likert scale with a single item that asked respondents their perceptions of overall perceived value of

the festival. The anchors on the scale were, very low (1) and very high (7). Responses ranged from 3 to 7, but 85% were in the 5 to 7 range and the mean was 6.2.

This study adopted the definition of satisfaction as “primarily affective” (Oliver 1997) and operationalized the construct by using four items that were adapted from Oliver (1997) and Westbrook and Oliver (1991), and a further item that was developed based on the conceptualization of satisfaction, which relates performance to expectations. Among the four items, the first three items were the “evaluate” set of satisfaction measures. These items were measured using a seven-point symmetrical Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The items to which visitors were asked to respond were: “My choice to visit this festival was a wise one,” “I think that I did the right thing when I visited this festival,” and “I am satisfied with my decision to visit this festival.” The final item was operationalized, from Oh’s (2000) study, “high expectations were met.” Visitors also were asked to measure how well the festival delivered satisfaction using a seven-point symmetrical Likert-type scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The five satisfaction items revealed an acceptable level of internal consistency, with a Cronbach alpha of .71.

Behavior represents an inclination toward repeat behavior, however it has been found to be an inadequate measure if it is measured by itself (Baker and Crompton 1991). Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate attitudinal measures to better explain visitors’ future intentions (Baker and Crompton 2000). In the marketing field, behavioral intention has been operationalized with an adaptation of Zeithaml et al.’s (1996) 13-item scale. The original 13 items were grouped into 5 dimensions: loyalty to company, propensity to switch, willingness to pay more, external response to problem, and internal response to problem. Internal response was a single-item measure, which was subsequently deleted leaving a 12-item instrument (Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman 1996). Of these five dimensions, the loyalty and pay more dimensions were selected to measure visitors’ behavioral intention, since they showed consistent patterns of loadings across the four companies utilized in Zeithaml et al.’s (1996) study.

A modified version of this scale Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) has been used in previous studies in the

tourism field (Baker and Crompton 2000; Childress and Crompton 1997; Tian-Cole, Crompton, and Willson 2002). Of the seven items, five measured “loyalty” and two items measured “pay more.” The five items that measured “loyalty” were: say positive things to other people, attend the festival either next year or the year after, recommend to others, encourage friends and relatives to go the festival, and the first choice among festivals. The two items that measured “pay more” were: continue to attend the festival if the admission price is increased and pay a higher admission fee than at other festivals. The alpha scores for the five items on “loyalty” and the two items on “pay more” revealed different levels of scores. The reliability alpha of the five loyalty items was .81 and by deleting one item (the first choice among festivals) it increased the reliability score to .83. In contrast, the reliability alpha for the “pay more” dimension was .43. This suggested poor internal consistency between the items so it was decided not to enter this dimension in the hypothesized models. Similar to Baker and Crompton (2000), a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not at all likely) to 7 (extremely likely) was used to measure the items.

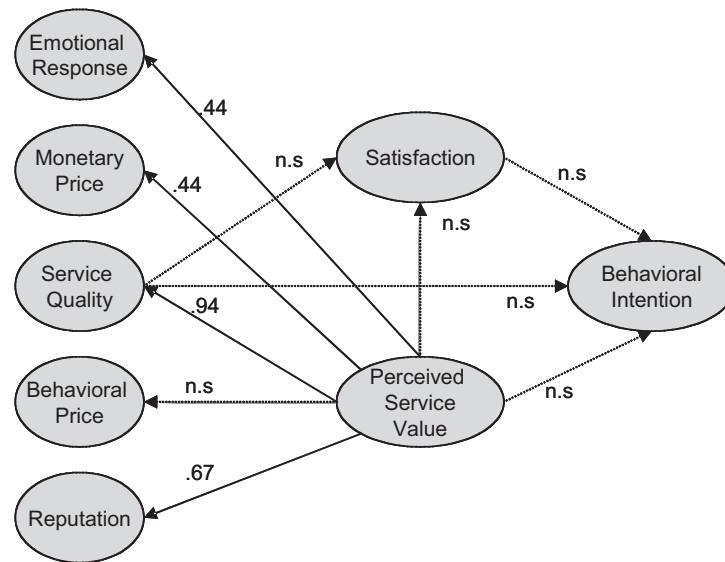
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The hypotheses proposed in the study were tested using a structural equation modeling (SEM) procedure. SEM is a procedure that can be used for the analysis of causal models with multiple indicators of latent variables or measurement errors (Bollen 1989). Byrne (1994) stated that SEM is a “statistical method that takes a confirmatory (i.e., hypothesis-testing) approach to the multivariate analysis of a structural theory bearing on some phenomenon” (p. 3). The constructs in this study: perceived service quality, perceived service value, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions are all unobservable concepts that are dependent on manifest indicators. The structural model specifies causal relationships between the latent variables themselves. It also provides an explicit estimation of measurement error. The SEM models with these latent variables provided evidence of whether each hypothesis was supported and suggested the relative strength of the relationships.

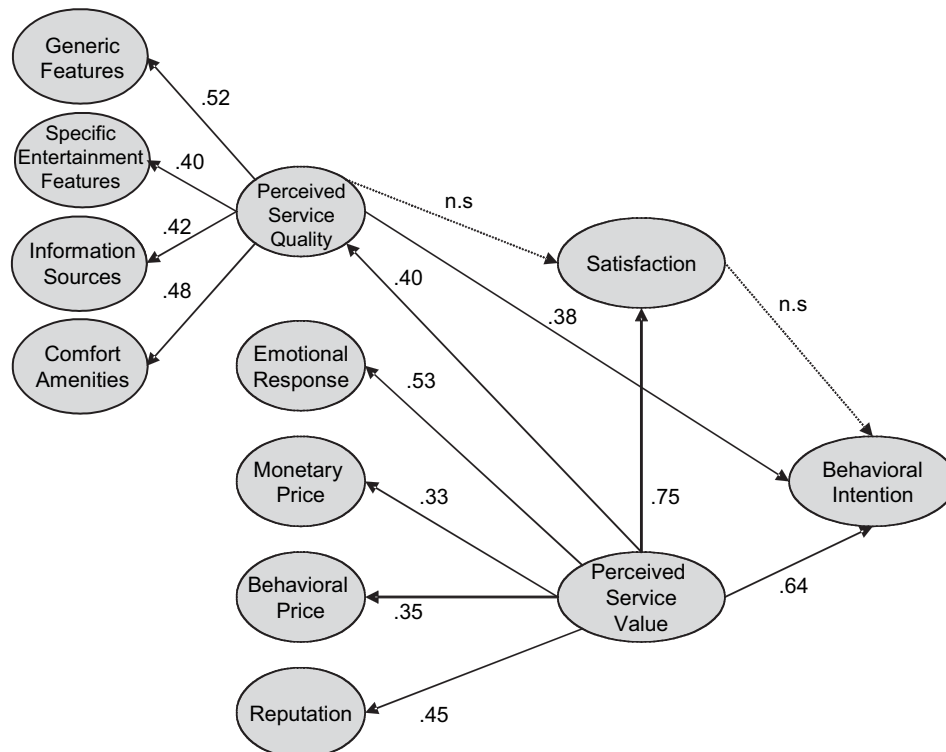
**TABLE 1**  
**RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS OF SCALES USED IN THE STUDY**

Variable	Dimensions and Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Perceived Service Quality	Generic Features (3)	.63
	Specific Entertainment Features (3)	.62
	Information Sources (2)	.61
	Comfort Amenities (2)	.60
Perceived Service Value	Perceived Monetary Price (3)	.81
	Emotional Response (3)	.81
	Behavioral Price (2)	.73
	Quality (3)	.61
	Reputation (3)	.68
Satisfaction	5 items	.71
Behavioral Intention	Loyalty (4)	.83
	Pay More (2)—omitted from the structural model	.43

**FIGURE 1**  
**PSQ OPERATIONALIZED WITH OVERALL PERCEPTION OF A SERVICE (MODEL 1)**



**FIGURE 2**  
**PSQ OPERATIONALIZED WITH AN ATTRIBUTE-BASED SCALE (MODEL 2)**



Two models with different operationalizations of perceived service quality were tested. In model 1, perceived service quality was measured with overall perception of a service (i.e., very reliable, very dependable, and very consistent) used by Petrick (2002). In model 2, perceived service quality was operationalized with an attribute-based (i.e., generic features,

specific features, information sources, and comfort amenities) scale used by Baker and Crompton (2000).

A broad range of age groups were represented, but more than two-thirds (72.2%) of the sample was aged 30 to 69. Of the 234 respondents, almost two-thirds (64.1%) were female. Visitors tended to be relatively highly educated with



**TABLE 2**  
**GOODNESS OF FIT INDICES: MODEL 1 AND MODEL 2**

Model	N	Chi-square	df	$\rho$	GFI	CFI	TLI	RMR
Model 1	234	254.79	271	<.001	.92	.97	.96	.04
Model 2	234	422.95	391	<.001	.90	.98	.97	.04

**TABLE 3**  
**STANDARDIZED PATH COEFFICIENTS OF MODEL 1 AND MODEL 2**

Variable	Model 1	Critical Ratio (t-value)	Model 2	Critical Ratio (t-value)
Perceived Service Quality Behavioral Intention	n.s	-1.02	.38	2.52
Perceived Service Value Behavioral Intention	n.s	1.30	.64	2.37
Satisfaction Behavioral Intention	n.s	0.62	n.s	-0.34
Perceived Service Quality Generic Features	NA	NA	.52	—
Perceived Service Quality Specific Entertainment Features	NA	NA	.40	3.23
Perceived Service Quality Information Sources	NA	NA	.42	2.77
Perceived Service Quality Comfort Amenities	NA	NA	.48	3.42
Perceived Service Value Emotional Response	.44	—	.53	—
Perceived Service Value Monetary Price	.44	3.32	.33	3.06
Perceived Service Value Behavioral Price	n.s	1.48	.35	2.41
Perceived Service Value Reputation	.67	2.27	.45	3.00
Perceived Service Value Perceived Service Quality	.94	4.17	.40	2.16

64.5% having at least some college education, and almost all respondents (98.4%) resided in Texas.

The results of the two models are reported in Tables 2 and 3. Even though fit indices of model 1 showed that the structural model adequately fit the data (indices > .90), parameter estimates in the model were not all significant at  $\alpha = .05$ . In model 2, fit indices showed that the structural model was a reasonably good fit of the data (indices > .90). All parameter estimates in the final revised model were significant at  $\alpha = .05$  and were positive, with the exceptions of the paths between perceived service quality and satisfaction, and satisfaction and behavioral intention.

In model 1, 41% of the variance in satisfaction and 79% of the variance in behavioral intentions were explained by their corresponding indicators. In model 2, 68% of the variance in satisfaction and 66% of the variance in behavioral intentions were explained by their corresponding indicators. Both models exhibited a reasonable level of explained variance, but most of the parameter estimates in model 1 (i.e., service quality and satisfaction; satisfaction and behavioral intention; perceived service value and satisfaction; perceived service value and behavioral intention; and service quality and behavioral intention) were not significant, suggesting the data were not a good fit with the model. Thus, model 2 was deemed to fit the data better than model 1.

The test results showed that when visitors' perceived service quality was measured using their judgments about a service's overall excellence or superiority, the relationships between the three constructs (perceived service quality, perceived service value, and satisfaction) and behavioral intention were not significant. However, when visitors' perceived service quality was operationalized as attributes of a service, the relationships between two of the constructs (perceived service quality and perceived service value) and behavioral intention were significant.

Operationalizing perceived service quality using attributes gives managers/suppliers specific direction through identifying the dimensions that indicate a strong (or weak) relationship to service quality, whereas measuring overall perception of quality offers no such useful guidance. Using the four dimensions of service quality attributes allows festival and event managers/providers to identify the dimension(s) of service quality that are perceived to perform well or poorly. Since attributes of service quality can be controlled and manipulated by managers (Crompton and MacKay 1989), this type of measure avails them the ability to adjust particular attributes to enhance visitors' experiences.

The second research hypothesis was that model 2 would result in perceived service quality being the best predictor of behavioral intention. This hypothesis is shown as the path



**TABLE 4**  
**DIRECT, INDIRECT AND TOTAL EFFECTS OF LATENT VARIABLES OF MODEL 1 AND MODEL 2**

	Direct	PSV Indirect	Total	Direct	SAT Indirect	Total	Direct	BI Indirect	Total
MODEL 1									
SQ	.94	—	.94			ns			ns
PSV		—				ns			ns
SAT		ns			—				ns
MODEL 2									
PSQ	.40	—	.40	ns	—	ns	.38	.26	.64
PSV				.75		.75	.64	.15	.79
SAT		ns			—			ns	ns

from perceived service quality to behavioral intention in Figure 2. The standardized coefficient of this path was .38. The *t* value was 2.52, which was significant at  $\alpha = .001$ . The *t*-tests for the path coefficients within the model were significant except the paths between perceived service quality and satisfaction (*t* value of 1.05) and satisfaction and behavioral intention (*t* value of  $-0.34$ ) (Table 3). Table 4 illustrates the direct, indirect, and total effect of the latent variables in model 1 and model 2. It was found that perceived service value was the best predictor of behavioral intention. It had a stronger effect on behavioral intention (.79) than the other two variables (perceived service quality = .64 and satisfaction = not significant).

The third research hypothesis was that perceived service quality would be the best predictor of perceived value. The *t*-tests for the path coefficients between the constructs perceived service quality, emotional response, monetary price, behavioral price, reputation and perceived service value were significant (*t* value of 2.16, —, 3.06, 2.41, and 3.00) (Table 3). Results revealed that quality of service (.40), emotional response (.53), and reputation (.45) were better predictors of perceived value than monetary price (.33), and behavioral price (.35). This implies that tourism providers/suppliers should focus on maximizing the perceptions of service quality and those dimensions (reputation and emotional response) that have a stronger relationship with perceived service value, rather than emphasizing costs, such as behavioral costs and monetary costs, which had a weaker relationship with perceived service value.

The fourth research hypothesis was that the perceived service quality attributes related to “generic features” and “specific entertainment features” would be the best predictors of behavioral intention. The *t*-test for the path coefficient among these constructs and perceived service quality was significant at  $\alpha = .001$ . The *t* value between these constructs (generic features, specific entertainment features, information sources, and comfort amenities) and perceived service quality was —, 3.23, 2.77, and 3.42 (Table 3). The test results indicated that the service quality domains of generic features (.52) (i.e., visual appearance, live entertainment, and feeling of safety) and comfort amenities (.48) (i.e., cleanliness of the portable restrooms and availability of restrooms) had stronger relationships with overall quality than those of information sources (.42) and specific entertainment features (.40). Given the strong relationship between perceived service quality and behavioral intention,

it is likely that ensuring high quality of generic features and offering clean and plentiful comfort amenities would strengthen visitors’ behavioral intentions.

Dimensions that were rated lowest in terms of relationships to quality (information sources and specific entertainment features) were still rated significantly ( $p < .05$ ) and positively, indicating that they were important. Thus, enhancing information sources (i.e., printed information and onsite signs) and specific entertainment features (craft exhibits/vendors, children’s area, and Kachunga and alligator show) may also increase overall perceptions of service quality. However in relation to the others, these latter two domains were relatively less influential in determining positive behavioral intention.

## CONCLUSIONS

The current study examined the strength of the interrelationships among the constructs of perceived service quality, perceived service value, satisfaction, and the behavioral intentions of festival visitors. Results suggested that: (a) a structural model operationalizing perceived service quality as attributes predicted visitors’ intention to visit the festival better than an alternative model that measured quality by using a visitors’ judgments about a service’s overall excellence or superiority; (b) among the constructs, analyzed perceived service value appeared to be the best predictor of behavioral intentions; and (c) of the four dimensions of service quality of a festival (generic features, specific entertainment features, information sources, and comfort amenities), generic features and comfort amenities had the most influence on determining perceived service quality.

The results have both theoretical and managerial implications. Theoretically, the results provided support for the findings of previous studies that perceived service value is likely to be the best determinant of visitors’ behavioral intentions (Chang and Wildt 1994; Jayanti and Ghosh 1996; Petrick 2002). Also similar to past results (Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000; Petrick 2004a) it was found that perceived service quality not only had a direct significant effect on visitors’ behavioral intentions, but also that it was a better predictor of perceived service value than the four other dimensions of perceived service value (i.e. emotional response, monetary price, behavioral price and reputation). Besides the direct effects, the indirect effects of perceived service quality and perceived service value on visitors’ behavioral intentions indicated that

there were complex relationships with the other constructs, which would not have emerged if the study had investigated only direct relationships among the constructs. The study findings also supported the theoretical conceptualization that enhanced performance of quality attributes leads to stronger positive behavioral intentions (Baker and Crompton 2000).

These findings generally confirm the predictive power of perceived service quality and perceived service value on visitors' future behavioral intentions that has been reported by others (Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000; Petrick 2004a). However, in this study, the influence of perceived service quality on behavioral intentions was found to be weaker than that of perceived service value.

The results also showed that all five dimensions of perceived value were positively related to overall perceived service value. Among the five dimensions, those of perceived service quality, emotional response, and reputation exhibited strong relationships, whereas monetary and behavioral price showed weak relationships with overall perceived service value. This finding suggests that unlike cruise travel (Petrick 2002), which is much more expensive than visiting a festival, price may not have a strong effect on perceptions of service value. Petrick's (2002) instrument conceptualized perceived service value as a multidimensional construct: quality, emotional response, monetary price, behavioral price, and reputation. It was found to be valid and reliable. His five dimensions of perceived service value were operationalized in model 1 and model 2 in this study. With cruise travel, visitors are likely to spend more time searching for travel information on the Internet or calling a travel agency to ask questions. Visiting a festival is much cheaper and takes only a few hours to visit, so dimensions such as monetary and behavioral price may not have as strong of a relationship with overall perceived service value. These results suggest the most effective way to enhance perceptions of service value among festival visitors is to focus on the perceived service quality, emotional response, and reputation dimensions. Even though perceived service quality did not show the strongest significant relationship to visitors' behavioral intention, it was the strongest predictor of perceived service value.

Perceived service value showed the strongest significant relationship to visitors' behavioral intention, which suggests that managers of the festival should focus on the dimensions that showed the strongest effect on perceived service value (i.e., service quality, emotional response, and reputation). Generic features (i.e., visual appearance, live entertainment, and a feeling of safety) and comfort amenities (i.e., cleanliness of the portable restrooms and availability of restroom), which were found to have the strongest relationships with perceived service quality, could motivate visitors to return and eventually provide a greater potential for increasing their perceptions of service value with the festival since perceived service quality was found to have a strong influence on perceived service value. Reputation was operationalized by how much visitors respected and how well they thought of this festival. Associating a well-known charity with the name of the festival may be a way of enhancing reputation and also be an effective way to promote the festival.

Generally, a mediator has relationship between independent and dependent variables. In order to be considered as a mediator, Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure suggests researchers should conduct three tests: the effect of independent variable on mediator, the effect of independent variable

on dependent variable, and the effect of independent variable and mediator on the dependent variable.

A role of mediator can be considered as a complete mediation if the effect of variable becomes insignificant and a partial mediation if the effect of variable is reduced significantly (Baron and Kenny 1986). The current study found that the service quality had a positive effect on behavioral intention in the absence of perceived service value and satisfaction. Also, the study found that perceived service quality had a positive effect on perceived value and the effect of service quality on visitors' behavioral intention was significantly reduced in the presence of perceived value.

The mediated effect of perceived service quality perceived value and satisfaction to behavioral intention suggests that providers should put more efforts into delivering better service value and satisfaction by focusing on the dimension(s) that visitors tend to view as being most important. Once a visitor receives good service quality, then the perception of service value is likely to increase, which eventually is likely to generate future visitation.

The nonsignificant relationships of satisfaction with service quality in both models may reflect the different nature of the satisfaction construct, in that it is a psychological outcome involving interaction not only with the attributes provided by a tourism supplier, but also with attributes not controlled by managers, such as climate or chemistry within the social group (Crompton and Love 1995). The nonsignificant relationship between service quality and satisfaction in the study does not mean there is no relationship between these two constructs. Rather, it suggests that other factors such as needs, mood, climate, or social group interaction that were brought by visitors might have had a negative effect on satisfaction that was strong enough to offset any positive perceptions of service quality. This supported the observation that visitors' satisfaction does not always lead to positive behavioral intentions (Jones and Sasser 1995; Mittal and Kamakura 2001), and supported previous findings (Baker and Crompton 2000; Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000) that perceptions of service quality had a stronger effect on behavioral intentions than satisfaction.

This suggests that having a satisfying experience is desirable but it is more important to develop strong perceptions of service quality and service value for visitors. It emphasizes the importance of visual appeal of the festival atmosphere to make a good first and lasting impression on the visitors. Perhaps those who were most likely to visit in the future were more aware of individual service quality attributes and perceptions of service value because these features were more pertinent to them than the satisfaction, which is based on a holistic view of a phenomenon (Cronin, Brady, and Hult 2000).

The study contributes to the tourism marketing literature in that it examined the relationships among perceived service quality, perceived service value, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions in a manner that had not been reported previously. The model had a theoretical foundation and was empirically verified. However, the study does have limitations.

The primary limitation is its generalizability. It focused on one particular festival setting. While the results obtained are likely to be useful to the Conroe Cajun Catfish Festival, they may not be directly applicable to other festival settings since festivals are inherently diverse and characterized by having many different themes. The general nature of the findings needs to be confirmed in other service contexts. The limited number of respondents prevented conclusive answers

to the research hypotheses being drawn. Although relationships among constructs were identified, the study did not verify that they were causal relationships as is the case with all structural models. Yet, by examining alternative models and the causal order among the variables, the study enhanced conceptual understanding of the constructs and the relative impact of perceived service quality, perceived service value, and satisfaction on behavioral intentions in a tourism context.

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