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Sport tourism : an exploration of the motivations and tourism experiences of Australian Football League interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia

Grace Rinaldi
Edith Cowan University

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**Sport Tourism: An Exploration of the Motivations and
Tourism Experiences of Australian Football League
Interstate Sport Tourists Travelling to
Western Australia.**

This thesis is presented in partial fulfilment
of the award of an honours degree.

Grace Rinaldi

Bachelor of Tourism Management (Honours)

School of Marketing, Tourism and Leisure

Faculty of Business and Law, Edith Cowan University

Supervisors Dr Dale Sanders & Dr Ruth Sibson

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Edith Cowan University

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Abstract

Sport tourism is a growing sector within both the tourism and sport industries. The majority of research into sport tourism has focussed on definitions, the benefits and impacts associated with hosting a sport event and exploring who these sport tourists are. The motivations behind these sport tourists have been considered, however the associated tourism experience tourists have while at a destination has not been widely explored. There is also a lack of research into the motivations and tourists activities of fans who travel interstate to support a team in a professional national sport league like the Australian Football League (AFL).

This research examines the motivating factors behind the decision to travel and the associated tourism experiences of interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia to attend an AFL game. A self-completed survey questionnaire was distributed to AFL interstate sport tourists at Patersons Stadium in Perth during the 2011 AFL season. Data collected from the 76 participants was then statistically analysed using SPSS version 18.

The results indicated that demographic background provided participants with the means to travel interstate but did not significantly influence their decision to do so. The main motivating factor behind AFL interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia was ‘achievement’ or the associated feeling they have when their team wins. The associated tourism experiences of the participants revealed that they could be classified into one of two groups, hard sport tourism or hard tourism sport. This classification may have implications that sport tourism destinations should consider, as it affects the time that participants tend to stay at the destination. Participants involved in hard sport tourism, whose primary reason for travel was to attend an AFL game, tended to stay four or less days whilst those involved in hard tourism sport, who travelled for other reasons, tended to stay five or more days. The findings suggest it is important to understand the AFL interstate sport tourists so that it is possible to market the important motivating factors and the tourism experiences to them.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This thesis reports on an investigation of sport tourism associated with the Australian Football League (AFL). In particular this project sets out to examine the travel motivations and associated tourism experiences of AFL interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia. Numerous research projects have developed definitions of sport tourism, examined the benefits and impacts associated with hosting a sport event, and explored who sport tourists are (Duran, 2005; Gibson, 1998a; Groote, 2005; Standeven & De Knop, 1999; Turco, Riley, & Swart, 2002). However, the associated tourism experiences undertaken by sport tourists while visiting a destination have not been widely considered. Nor has much of the research focused on sport tourism been connected with the AFL. Investigating these aspects will assist in enhancing the benefits associated with tourists activities for the destination and the tourism industry, as well as informing the AFL and clubs who these sport tourists are and what motivates their interstate travel to attend games.

1.1 Background Information

Sport tourism is a growing sector within both the tourism and sport industries. In Western Australia there is substantial information about major sport events; however, little is known about the contributions of professional national sport leagues with regular home and away fixtures played throughout a season. A major sporting event which contributes significantly to the Australian and more specifically to the Western Australia economy, is the Hopman Cup. The Hopman Cup is a popular, mixed teams tennis tournament played every year and 2011 saw a new attendance record set of more than 75,000 spectators (Tourism WA, 2011b). In 2006 the Hopman Cup was reported to have media and economic impacts which were estimated at \$7.3 million, which is a return of \$11.40 for each \$1 invested (Tourism WA, 2007, p. 7) . Similarly, the Red Bull Air Race, which was held in Western Australia from 2005 – 2010, attracted over 300,000 spectators to the Swan River foreshores each year it was held (Tourism WA, 2008). The economic benefit of this event in 2008 was over \$12 million in visitor spending (Lawson, 2010). Whilst these major sport events contribute to the economy, professional national sport leagues also make important

contributions. Australia has professional national sport leagues for numerous sports including several codes of football. The premier football code, with the largest professional national sport league is the Australian Football League.

Western Australia has two AFL teams; the West Coast Eagles and the Fremantle Dockers. Both play home games in Western Australia, at Patersons Stadium in the inner city suburb of Subiaco and travel interstate for other fixtures. The West Coast Eagles entered the competition in 1986 (West Coast Eagles, 2011), while the Fremantle Dockers entered in 1995 (Fremantle Dockers, 2011). Both teams are well supported; in 2010 the West Coast Eagles club had 46,153 members while the Fremantle Dockers club had 40,069 members (Cordingley, 2011). Patersons Stadium, formally known as Subiaco Oval, has a seating capacity of only 43,083, and is one of the smaller grounds used in the AFL (Australian Football League, 2009b).

In an AFL season (March to October) twenty games are played in Western Australia with different interstate teams travelling each week. Some teams may travel to Western Australia twice within a season. With a small seating capacity and two home teams with large membership, the majority of tickets are allocated to the West Coast Eagles or Fremantle Docker members with a limited number available to the visiting interstate team supporters. In an newspaper article related to seating allocations for interstate AFL fans at Patersons Stadium, Hawthorn Hawks Football Club President Jeff Kennett said that “the State had failed to turn its love of football into a tourism drawcard” (Thomas, 2010). However, some fans do have the opportunity to travel and understanding more about who these fans are and why they choose to travel to these games will benefit the tourism industry of Western Australia and the AFL clubs.

1.2 Research Problem

Understanding why people travel is important as it enables stakeholders to tailor and target the promotion of their destination or event to specific markets. Sport tourism is a growing sector within the tourism industry; however, knowledge of what motivates sport tourists to travel has only recently been gaining more attention. Research in this area has mostly been related to the impact of the sport event on the motivations to travel, rather than broader motivations and the tourists’ experiences of the destination’s other attractions. The majority of research has been conducted in the

USA (Funk, Filo, Beaton, & Pritchard, 2009; Gibson, Attie, & Yiannakis, 1998; Robinson & Trail, 2005). An exception is an Australian study conducted by Hoye and Lillis (2008) which researched the travel motivations of fans from one of the AFL clubs (Geelong Cats). Hoye and Lillis (2008, p. 13) argued that, in Australia,

one aspect of sport fan behaviour that has not attracted significant research attention has been the travel motives of established fans of professional sport teams or clubs who make significant investments to travel interstate or even overseas to support their team.

In Australia there are various professional national sport leagues which encourage fans to travel interstate, with the AFL being one of the most significant.

AFL is one of the most popular sports in Australia with high participation and supporter numbers. In 2010, AFL games attracted attendances of 6,495,824 fans which is the second highest total on record for the AFL (Australian Football League, 2010b, p. 53). Some of these fans travel interstate to watch games but little is known about these fans or their itineraries. This research will examine the motivations of sport tourists who travel to watch an AFL game. Specifically, it will focus on AFL interstate sport tourists who travel to Perth, Western Australia to support their team, and will include an examination of their motivations and engagement with the tourism products at the host destination. The results from this study will provide recommendations to both the AFL and the local tourism industry.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the motivations and associated tourism experiences of AFL interstate sport tourists who travel to Western Australia to watch their AFL team.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions of this study explore the motivations and tourism experiences of AFL interstate sport tourists who travel to Western Australia. They are outlined below:

1. What are the demographics of AFL interstate sport tourists who travel to Western Australia to watch their team?
2. What are the associated tourism activities of these people?
3. Why do people travel interstate to watch their AFL team?
4. Are there any differences in the motivations of AFL interstate sport tourists from different AFL clubs?

1.5 Significance of the study

Both the tourism and sport industries contribute many benefits to a destination, including increased spending, infrastructure development and job creation (Duran, 2005; Rappaport & Wilkerson, 2001; Walo, Bull, & Breen, 1996). With the growth of sport tourism in Australia it is important to further investigate these and other benefits. Understanding why tourists travel to watch sporting events and their tourism experiences whilst visiting a destination will enable the development of marketing strategies to not only entice tourists to the destination, but also to encourage them to extend their holiday and thereby inject further funds into the economy. This study will build on relevant research which has examined sport tourists' motivations and make recommendations that can help with development of the benefits from sport tourism to a destination. It will benefit the tourism industry as it provides insight into the tourism activities and local destinations visited by AFL interstate sport tourists. This research will also benefit the AFL as it provides both the AFL and the clubs more knowledge/information on why fans travel interstate to attend games.

1.6 Definition of Terms

In establishing consistency throughout the thesis, the following definitions are used.

Tourism is the temporary travel of non-residents, who employ various forms of transport to and from a destination where different impacts and benefits are involved for the destination (Hall, 2007).

A **domestic tourist** is a person who travels at least 40 km from their home and spends at least one night away from their home (Weaver & Lawton, 2006)

Sport is defined as any physical activity which is undertaken at a competitive or social level, where a high level of physical skill is used with internal and external rewards being the driving forces (Coakley, 2007).

Sport tourism is when an individual and/or groups of people who actively or passively participate in competitive or recreational sport, whilst travelling to and/or staying in places outside their usual environment (Gammon & Robinson, 2003).

A **professional national sport league** is a sport competition which is played nationwide with professional players who entertain the large crowd numbers at games and through media coverage, an example is the Australian Football League (AFL) (Hoye, Smith, Westerbeek, Stewart, & Nicholson, 2006; Shilbury, Deane, & Kellett, 2006).

Motivations are the driving forces behind a decision made during a person's life (Pearce, 1982).

Mega events are international events which have an effect on whole economies and reverberate in the global media due to the size of the event, for example the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup (Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2008).

A **major event** is capable of attracting significant visitor numbers, contributing both economic benefits and media coverage to a large audience, for example the Australian Formula One, Hopman Cup and Telstra Rally Australia (Allen, et al., 2008).

Local or community events are targeted at local audiences, hosted by the community with fun, social and entertainment values being the reasons for staging the event, for example, Henley-On-Todd Dry River Boat Regatta and Birdsville Races (Allen, et al., 2008).

1.7 Expected Outcomes

There will be a number of key outcomes associated with the successful completion of this research. These are:

- An improved understanding of the motivations behind interstate AFL interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia.
- Increased knowledge of the associated tourism experience these AFL interstate sport tourists participate in, if any, during their trip.
- An understanding of any differences between these AFL interstate sport tourists in regards to their main reason for travelling.
- The development of recommendations to key stakeholders for enhancing sport tourists' experiences in Western Australia.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is an important component of a research project to develop. As Veal (2006, p. 54) states "a conceptual framework involves concepts involved in a study and the hypothesised relationship between them". The literature review (see Chapter 2) revealed several concepts which have been incorporated into the Conceptual Framework for this research (see Figure 1.1). This framework identifies the relationships between the significant concepts in understanding why interstate AFL sport tourists travel to Western Australia.

The framework indicates that there is a co-dependent relationship between the demographics of individuals (such as gender, age, income, employment status and club) and the sport tourism motivation factors which have been identified from previous studies. The seven sport tourism motivation factors used by Trail and James (2001) are separated into push and pull factors; each making a different contribution to a person's decision to travel; these factors are currently in alphabetical order ('achievement', 'acquisition of knowledge', 'drama', 'escape', 'family', 'physical attractiveness of players' and 'social interaction'). The pull factors are those associated with the destination which 'pull' tourists to that destination (such as attractions and safety), while the push factors are associated with the economic and social forces of a tourist to 'push' them away from their normal routine (Richardson & Fluker, 2004). The literature on sport tourism motivation indicates that the push/ pull factors combined with the

demographic background may impact on a sport tourist's decision to travel to attend AFL games in Western Australia. Once the decision to travel has been made by a sport tourist it is important to understand if the sport element or the tourism elements were the main purpose of their trip. If the prime motive for their trip is sport with additional tourism elements they can be classified as being involved in hard sport tourism while if tourism is the main reason with additional sport aspects on the trip, they can be categorised as participating in hard tourism sport (Gammon & Robinson, 2003).

It is then hypothesised that this categorisation into hard sport tourism or hard tourism sport may then have an impact on the duration of their stay and the types of activities undertaken while visiting Western Australia. Developing this conceptual framework through appropriate research provides a better understanding of the AFL interstate sport tourists and how to identify AFL interstate sport tourists markets using their underlying motivations to travel as a key starting point. The conceptual framework will also help the tourism industry, the AFL and its clubs understand the driving forces behind AFL interstate sport tourists who travel to attend games so that they can develop targeted ways to market to these tourists.

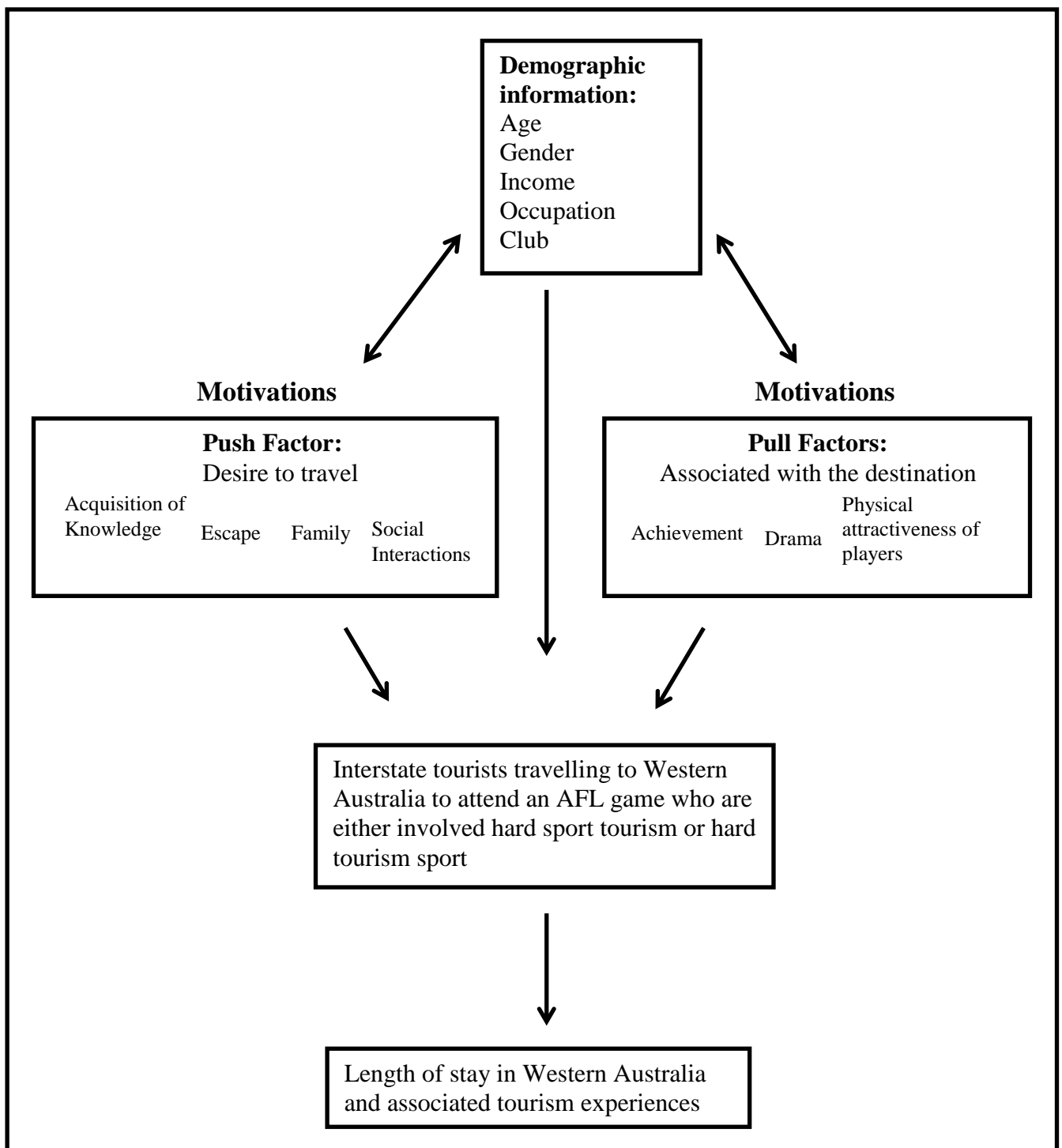


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework of this study.

1.9 Structure of the study

The overall structure of the thesis involves a review and discussion of relevant literature for different aspects of sport tourism in Chapter 2. Within Chapter 3 an outline of the research process and methods used is presented. Chapter 4 contains an in depth analysis of the results in association with the research questions. This is followed by a discussion of these results in Chapter 5. In concluding the research, the recommendations developed from the study are discussed in Chapter 6.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Research into sport tourism is expanding, particularly in relation to the impacts of sport events on the host country or city and the characterisation of sport tourists (Funk, Mahony, Nakazawa, & Hirakawa, 2001; Hoye & Lillis, 2008; Kirkup & Major, 2006; Kurtzman, 2005; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). This literature review will concentrate on explaining what sport tourism is, what motivates tourists and sport tourists to travel, and the benefits of hosting a sporting event. It will also emphasise Australian sport tourism research.

2.2 Sport Tourism

Researchers have provided various definitions of sport tourism. This section will discuss what sport tourism is, and focus on the characteristics of sport tourists and the benefits of sport tourism for a destination.

2.2.1 What is Sport Tourism?

Sport tourism does not have an absolute definition; however, various research projects have developed definitions that incorporate its different components (Gibson, 1998b; Standeven & De Knop, 1999; Turco, et al., 2002). These definitions enable the distinction between everyday tourists and sport tourists.

A comprehensive definition of sport tourism provided by Standeven and De Knop (1999, p. 12) is “all forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organized way for non-commercial or business/commercial reasons, that necessitate travel away from home and work locality”. Their definition encompasses all necessary components and has been used by many researchers. They state that the sport activity can range from a mega event (such as the Olympic Games) to a local or community event. The sport activity involves travelling away from the usual place of residence or work to attend the event.

Turco et al. (2002, p. 3) provide a simple concise definition that “includes travel to and participation in or attendance at a predetermined sport activity”. The sport activity as defined by Turco et al. (2002) can be either competitive, entertainment, educational and recreational. Various authors agree that sport tourists are either actively participating in,

or watching, sporting activities (Gibson, 1998a, Standeven & De Knop, 1999; Turco et al., 2002).

One further definition by Gibson (1998b) depicts sport tourism as being leisure-based travel where an individual travels away from their home community to either play or watch sporting activities. Her definition includes the associated attractions within sport, such as visiting halls of fame, sport museums or famous sporting arenas. This definition provides a different understanding of sport tourism by focusing on sport tourism being a leisure based activity only.

Explanations of sport tourism commonly mention the types of activities these niche tourists participate in. Specifically, researchers have attempted to characterise active and passive sport tourism (Gibson, 1998a; Gibson et al., 1998; Ritchie & Adair, 2002) so that stakeholders can target the experiences tourists seek while on holidays.

Active sport tourism is when a tourist participates in a sporting activity while on holidays. These include activities such as golf, tennis, skiing, fishing, scuba diving and mountain biking (Gibson, 1998a). Gibson et al. (1998) conducted research to assess the patterns of active sport tourists throughout their lives. The research found that as people aged they were less likely to be involved in active sport tourism. Realising this relationship between active sport tourists and age enables marketers to recognise who their target market is.

Passive sport tourism encompasses spectating at an event or visiting sport museums, sport facilities, halls of fame, sport theme parks or stadiums (Ritchie & Adair, 2002). Passive sport tourists might travel to a particular destination specifically to experience sport but it may also be that they have travelled to experience broader tourism products with the inclusion of some sport activities. This may simply be an additional part of their tourism activities while at a destination. In this research project, the participants are passive sport tourists spectating at an AFL game.

The type of events or activities and whether they are primarily linked to the tourism or sport experience can be used as criteria for further dividing sport tourism. Gammon and Robinson's (2003) study examined this concept by using the categories of hard and soft sport tourism and hard and soft tourism sport (see Figure 2.1). Their framework asserts that "if, for example the prime motivation is in sport, then the touristic element would act as a secondary reinforcement, and vice versa if tourism was the main point of interest" (Gammon & Robinson, 2003, p. 22). Thus, hard sport tourism is travelling to a mega or major sporting event where the tourists are either actively or passively involved in the event. The classification of soft sport tourism is used when recreational sport activities are the main reasons for travel, for example hiking, canoeing or caving, and are actively participated in.

Hard tourism sport involves tourists being passively or actively involved in a sport activity as a secondary element to the tourism experience, such as attending a health and fitness clubs/farms or sport cruises during their holiday. Soft tourism sport is when a participant is either actively or passively involved in recreational sporting activity. For example playing or watching mini golf, or bowls while on holiday. The importance of Gammon and Robinson's (2003) framework for this research is that it will facilitate the examination of which category AFL interstate sport tourists fall into. Thus, this research project will use the definition developed by Gammon and Robinson (2003) as it provides a more comprehensive definition which distinguishes sport tourism from tourism sport.

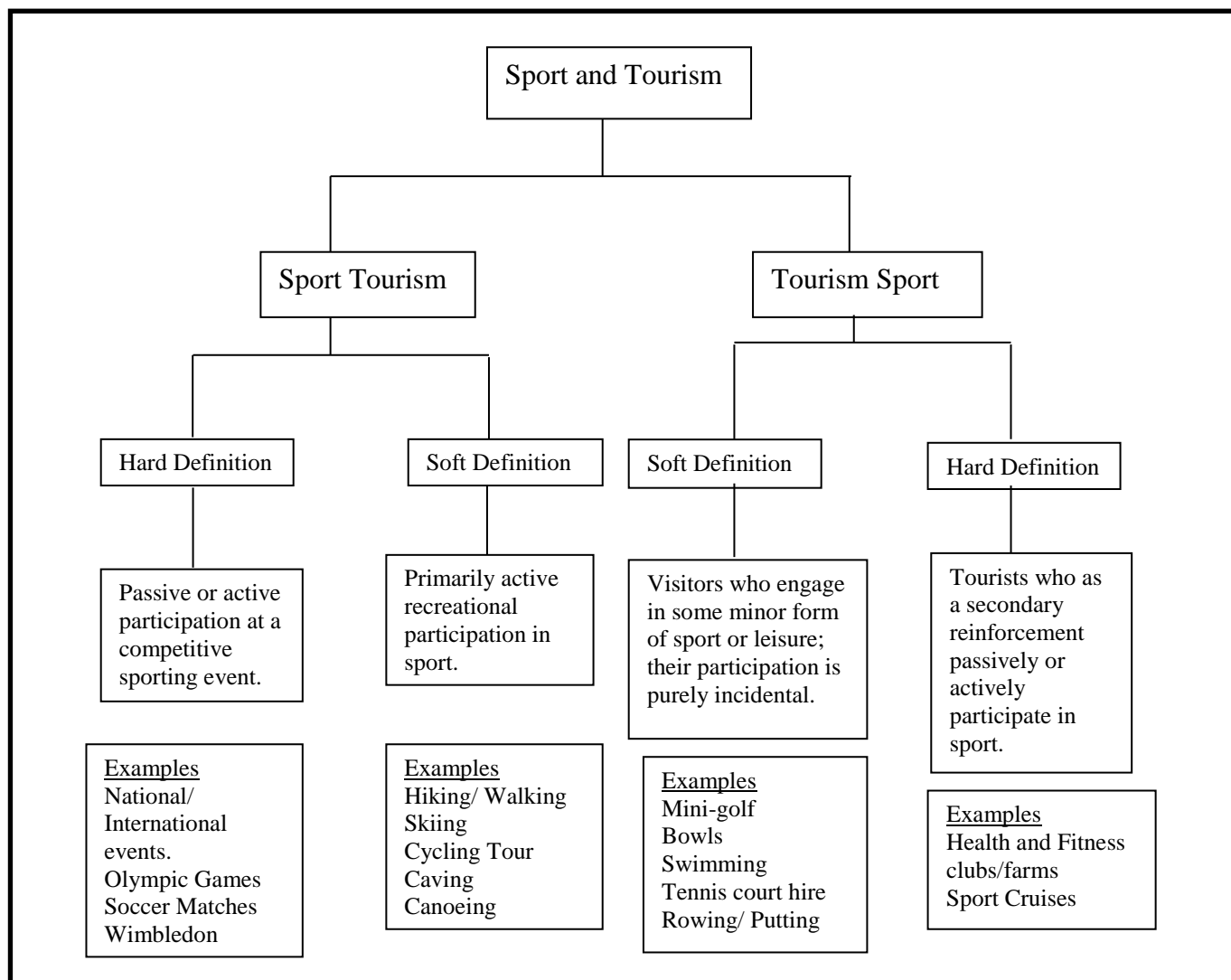


Figure 2.1. Gammon and Robinson's diagram 'A consumer classification of sport and tourism'. (Source: Gammon and Robinson, 2003, p. 23)

2.2.2 Benefits of Sport Tourism for a Destination

Sport tourism not only showcases the sporting abilities of athletes, but can also highlight the tourism experiences of a destination. Research into the benefits and impacts is considered below, as it relates to the lasting effects of sport tourism.

Hosting a sporting event allows the host country or community to showcase their cultural, tourism and sporting offerings. The right to host the Olympic Games is sought after by many countries because of the benefits associated with this mega event (Duran, 2005; Groote, 2005; Karpareliotis, Panopoulos, & Panigyrakis, 2010; Kirkup & Major, 2006; Morse, 2001; Standeven, 1998). The benefits from hosting mega events include the improvement of infrastructure, increasing the destinations' capacity for tourists, promotion and marketing of the destination and economic benefits.

A sport event that was recently announced to be held in Western Australia in 2013 is a major new international aquatic event where Australia's national swimming team and water polo team compete against the Chinese and South African national teams (Tourism WA, 2011c). The benefits associated with this event include the possible increase in tourists from China and South Africa to support their national teams. This event will also be televised nationally and internationally to not only showcase the sporting abilities of the three nations but also Perth and Western Australia to the international viewers which provides valuable marketing exposure (Tourism WA, 2011c). However, it is not just mega events that provide sport tourism opportunities, as there may also be flow-on benefits from professional national sport leagues (Rappaport & Wilkerson, 2001; Walo, et al., 1996).

For example, research in the USA based on the professional national sport leagues (e.g. National Football League (NFL), National Basketball Association (NBA), National Hockey League (NHL) and Major League Baseball (MLB)) highlighted many benefits (Rappaport & Wilkerson, 2001). These leagues are played within most US States and the development of a new franchise benefits the local community, with construction of new stadiums. New jobs are not only connected to the team and stadium but also businesses nearby, such as restaurants, parking lots, souvenir shops and nightclubs benefiting from the new franchise (Rappaport & Wilkerson, 2001). The introduction of new jobs associated with a franchise enables the community to build on their economic benefits.

The economic benefits associated with sport tourists and their travel has been examined by Gibson, Willming and Holdnak (2003) and Ritchie, Mosedale and King (2002) with sport tourists attending different sport fixtures. Within these studies the sport tourists were separated into different groups due to their involvement with the team they were following. In Ritchie, et al. (2002) research they indicated that avid fans would spend \$308.40 (AUS), followed by frequent fans who would spend \$321.80 (AUS) and the casual fans who spent \$388.32 (AUS) when travelling interstate to attend a game. These results were consistent with Gibson, et al. (2003) research which found that the sport excursionists spent on average \$114.82 (USD) while the sport tourists spent an average of \$293.38 (USD) when travelling to support the team. These results indicate that the sport tourists who have a longer length of stay at the destination where the sport event/fixture is being held may inject more funds back into the economy. Within

Western Australia the economic benefits of interstate sport tourists has not been widely researched.

The host city has the opportunity to market their destination, not only to attract tourists to the event but beyond the conclusion of the sport event/fixture (Faulkner et al., 2001). In a study conducted by Ritchie et al. (2002) into profiling sport tourists who travel to Canberra to attend a Super 12 Rugby Union game, their results indicated that even though sport was the main reason for their trip a greater proportion stayed longer in Canberra. Sport events or fixtures are scheduled for a certain period of time which maybe the main reason that sport tourists travel, however they may extend their stay to experience the tourism elements the destination has to offer.

2.4 Western Australia Tourism

Western Australia provides a tourist with a variety of tourism products to experience while visiting the state. These range from the wildlife in the ocean to the flora of the outback. Perth is sometimes referred to as the most isolated city in the world due to the distance between Perth and the other state capitals (Choong, 1996). It is also the largest state in Australia and is "...three times the size of Texas" (Fransworth, 1997). With such a large area for tourists to explore, Tourism WA has developed five tourism regions to showcase the different experiences available in the various areas. The regions are Experience Perth (1), Australia's Coral Coast (2), Australia's Golden Outback (3), Australia's South West (4) and Australia's North West (5) (Western Australia Tourism, 2010). The regions are identified in Figure 2.2.



Figure 2.2. The five tourism regions Western Australia is divided into.
(Source: Touristaustralia, 2011)

The region of Experience Perth centres on Perth as the capital of Western Australia, promoting the tourism attractions in and around the city centre (Western Australia Tourism, 2010). It also includes the port city of Fremantle, and towns from Lancelin in the North to Mandurah in the South and the flora and fauna is unlike any other state in Australia. Patersons Stadium is located in the suburb of Subiaco which is situated within the Experience Perth region.

Of the five tourism regions, Experience Perth tends to have the largest visitation numbers. In the year to March 2011, the Experience Perth region had 2.5 million domestic visitors who spent an average length of stay of 4 days (Tourism Australia, 2011). Compared to the Australian South West region that had 1.5 million domestic tourists and the Australian North West which had 455 000 (Tourism Australia, 2011). The domestic tourists numbers have increased since the year ended 31st March 2010. The total number of domestic tourists who visited Western Australia increased from 4.9 million to 5.1 million to March 2011 with these domestic tourists visiting the various regions of Western Australia (Tourism Australia, 2010, 2011).

The expenditure of domestic tourists travelling to Western Australia is regularly researched to discover its impact on the local economy. The expenditure from domestic interstate tourists has decreased by \$100 million from March 2010-2011 (Tourism Council WA, 2011). This decrease of spending can be seen in the per night expenditure of domestic interstate tourists which in the year ending March 2010 was \$133 per night while in the year ending March 2011 was \$123 per night (Tourism Australia, 2010, 2011). With this decrease in domestic interstate tourists spending it may become important to market the destination to different types of tourists' including sport tourists to entice them to extend their stay within Western Australia and inject additional funds into the economy.

Western Australia has had the chance to host a number of major sporting events and this is set to continue with recent additions to the sporting calendar. The majority of the sport events Western Australia host are within Perth which only showcases the areas within close proximity. Recently a plan to take top sport events to country towns of Western Australia has been suggested (Parker, 2011). The plan involves getting a number of Western Australia sport teams involved in either having skills clinics or international games held within the regions (Parker, 2011). An example is Cable Beach Invitational basketball tournament that was held in Broome in September 2011. The event met the benchmark associated with international television coverage providing the Kimberly region of Western Australia the opportunity to showcase what they have to offer tourists (Parker, 2011). The AFL pre-season fixtures have a game scheduled in the country for the Western Australian teams to play and the teams also hold community camps within a country region where they participate in various activities within the community. The possibility that more of these sport events will be held throughout Western Australia will help to showcase the rest of the state, and move sport tourists dollars to the regions.

2.4 Australian Football League

Australia is a country that is known for its sporting ability in international, national and local competitions. It is argued that the nation's sporting capability has been fostered by the construction of quality facilities to train athletes (Shilbury, et al., 2006; Stoddart, 1986). Australia has hosted major sporting events including the Olympic Games, the Commonwealth Games, the Rugby World Cup, the Cricket World Cup and various other international events. Australia also has professional national sport leagues in the

sports of basketball, netball, soccer, hockey, baseball and several codes of football. The Australian Football League (AFL) is the country's national Australian Football League, a sport originating from, and largely played in, Australia.

When the AFL first began it was known as the Victorian Football League (VFL) as only clubs from Victoria were involved. The VFL was established in 1896 with the first game played in 1897 (Andrews, 2000). The league started with eight Victorian clubs and over the years expanded as more teams entered the competition (Australian Football League, 2010a). Nationalisation of the league did not occur till after over 100 years of a purely Victorian based competition (Wilson, 1990). Alterations to the AFL competition did not occur until an increase in the number of games scheduled in Sydney beginning in 1979. However, according to Andrew's (2000, p. 239) "the league was not content with scheduling fixtures outside of Victoria and in 1982 it embarked on the more ambitious goal of relocating the South Melbourne Swans to Sydney on a permanent basis."

The league further expanded in 1986 when two non-Victorian teams entered the competition, namely the West Coast Eagles in Western Australian and the Brisbane Bears in Queensland (Australian Football League, 2010a). At the beginning of the 1990s the VFL acknowledged this expansion, with the league becoming known as the Australian Football League (AFL) (Australian Football League, 2010a). In the next few years three more non-Victorian clubs entered the competition: the Adelaide Crows, Fremantle Dockers and Port Adelaide. During this time a merger occurred between the Brisbane Bears and Fitzroy, to yield the Brisbane Lions (Australian Football League, 2010a).

After the alteration to the league through the addition of these clubs, the league included a total of sixteen clubs by 1997. The sixteen teams in the AFL were Adelaide Crows, Brisbane Lions, Carlton Blues, Collingwood Magpies, Essendon Bombers, Fremantle Dockers, Geelong Cats, Hawthorn Hawks, Melbourne Demons, North Melbourne, Port Adelaide, Richmond Tigers, St Kilda, Sydney Swans, West Coast Eagles, and the Western Bulldogs (Australian Football League, 2010a). The teams are based in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales. The 2011 AFL season saw the introduction of the seventeenth team in the AFL, the Gold Coast Suns based in Queensland (Australian Football League, 2010a). Further expansion will occur

in the 2012 season with the inclusion of another Sydney based team, Greater Western Sydney, the eighteenth team of the league.

AFL games are not only played in the capital cities of the clubs but also in Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory (Australian Football League, 2010a). Even though the AFL originated in Australia, in recent years the game has expanded internationally, with participant numbers reaching 60,000 in other countries in 2010 (Australian Football League, 2010b). The growth saw an exhibition match and the development of an AFL community program in China in 2010 (Australian Football League, 2009a). The exhibition match in China attracted more than 7,000 people to the match and the game streamed live in English and Mandarin with 300,000 viewers (Australian Football League, 2010b). With the teams spread throughout Australia, some spectators travel to support their team when they are playing away from home, but the question remains: What are the driving forces behind these fans' travel plans and what other tourism activities do they participate in?

2.5 Motivations

Tourists travel for a range of reasons, and understanding the motivations behind their travel enables strategies to be developed and implemented to attract such tourists. Sport tourists are involved in sport related activities, but what additional factors contribute to this decision? The literature that provides an insight into the motivations of tourists and sport tourists is briefly reviewed below.

2.5.1 Tourist Motivations

The motivations behind tourists' decisions vary, as do the factors which impact on their decisions. These factors have been incorporated into various theories which explain tourist motivations (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977, 1981; Jang & Cai, 2002; Kim & Jogaratnam, 2003; Maslow, 1970; Pearce, 1982).

A theory related to motivations that has been applied within various industries including tourism, is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1970). The theory recognises that a need might range from the most pressing to the least pressing at any one point in time (see Figure 2.3). For example, when applied to tourism, a traveller might consider if the destination is secure from any major threat, with safety being the most important need to be satisfied.

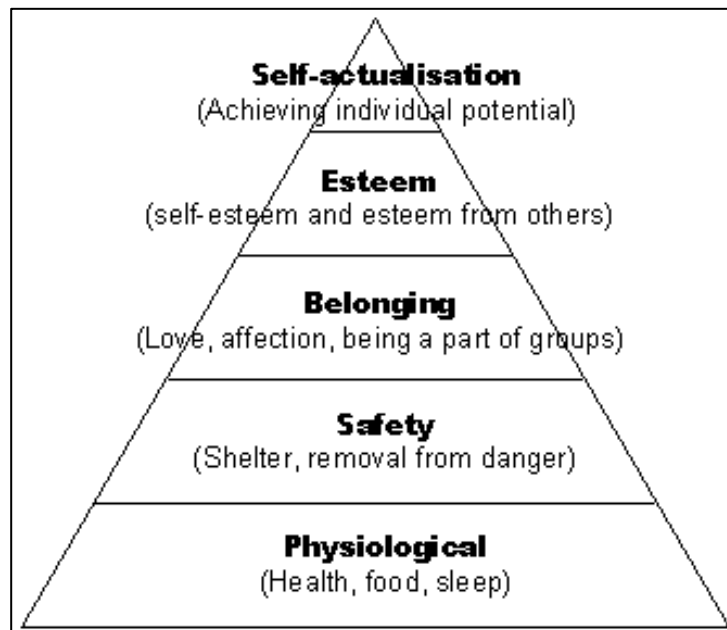


Figure 2.3. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory.
(Source: "Maslow's hierarchy ", 2011)

The Hierarchy of Needs Theory was adapted by Pearce (1982) into the Travel Career Ladder (see Figure 2.4). Pearce used Maslow's (1970) theory as it is based on a hierarchical framework of human needs. Pearce (1982, p. 53) chose Maslow's theory because "the concept of self-actualisation contains an inherent notion of individual choice and self-determination". He also divided each need into self-directed or other-directed. As tourists' experiences are met within each level they ascend the ladder and another need becomes important.

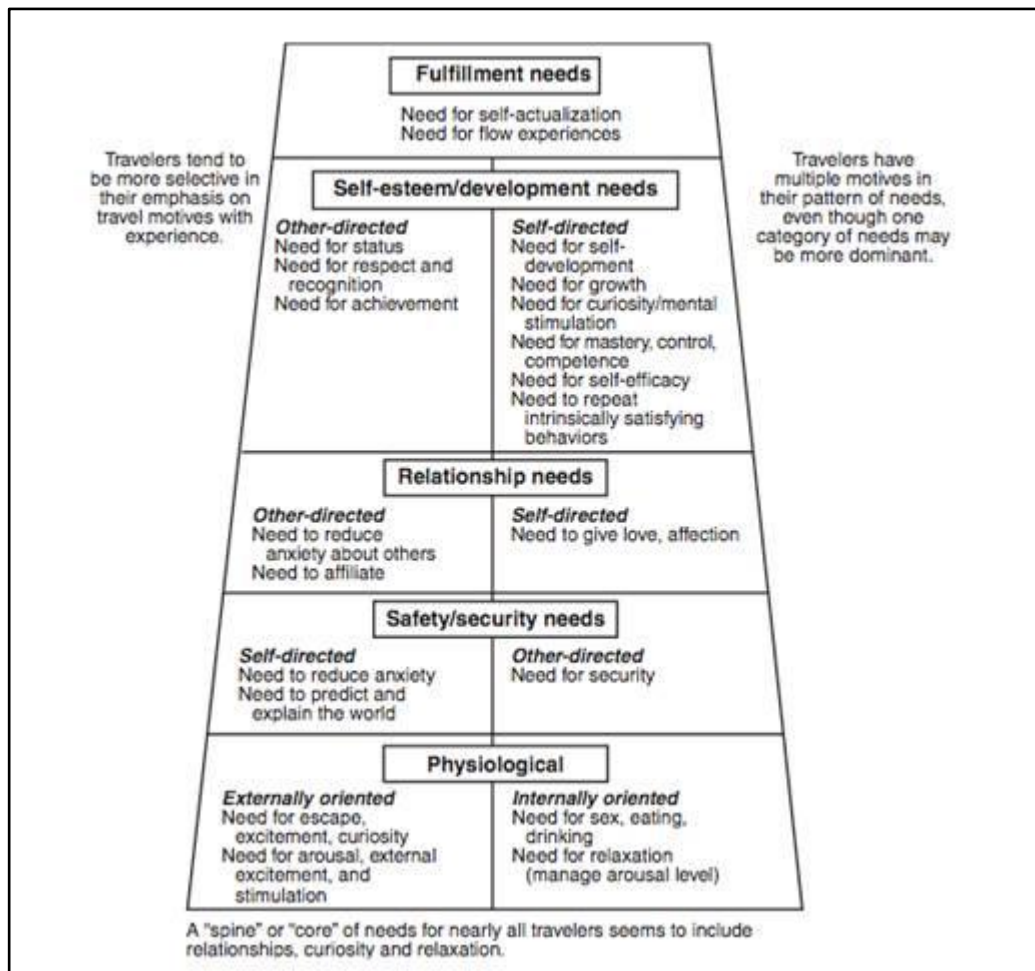


Figure 2.4. Pearce's Travel Career Ladder (Source: UNESCO-NIGERIA, 2011)

Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs theory and Pearce's (1982) travel career ladder have contributed significantly to the understanding of tourists' motivations. In addition, the concepts of push and pull factors have also provided important insight into tourists' decisions to travel (Dann 1977, 1981). Dann (1977) first researched the push factors of anomie and ego-enhancement. Specifically, he found that anomie (the escape from everyday routine of a person's life), and ego-enhancement (the psychological boost of real or fantasies), do impact on tourists' decisions to travel to a destination. The pull factors Dann (1981) addressed relate to a resort's attributes that lured tourists to travel including sunshine, a relaxed tempo and friendly natives. Overall, Dann (1981) concluded that the pull factors reinforced the push factors in motivating tourists to travel.

Crompton (1979) researched the motivations behind a pleasure vacation, which is a segment of the travel market that attracts tourists to different destinations through different needs. Many participants responded that a major motive for the vacation was

to have a break from their routine. The socio-psychological motives for pleasure vacations could include escape from a mundane environment, evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, and social interaction (Crompton, 1979). In comparison, the cultural motives were the novelty and educational aspects connected to a destination. Crompton (1979, p. 14) stated that “motives should not be considered mutually exclusive, nor should any single tension state be selected as the determinant of behaviour”. It is important to understand the motives behind decisions to travel so that they can be used to attract tourists.

Jang and Cai (2002) argued that there were six push factors and five pull factors influencing peoples’/ tourists’ decisions to travel. The six push factors were novel experiences, escape, knowledge seeking, fun and excitement, rest and relaxation, and family and friends togetherness. The five pull factors were natural and historical environments, cleanliness and safety, easy to access, outdoor activities, and sunny and exotic atmosphere (Jang & Cai, 2002, p. 124). One push factor that is similar to Maslow’s (1970) theory is travelling with family and friends to be together (Jang & Cai, 2002). Being able to enjoy the trip with friend and family ensures that a person feels like they belong. The results reported by Jang and Cai (2002) reinforced Dann’s (1981) findings that push and pull factors are a better marketing strategy for a destination when utilised together to reinforce one another.

Kim and Jogaratnam (2003) conducted research to discover the travel motivations of college students during their spring break. The research used seven potential factors; knowledge, sport, entertainment, relaxation, leisure, travel bragging, and family (Kim & Jogaratnam, 2003, p. 12). Their results showed that knowledge was a major contributor to travel decisions as students wanted to learn about the destination (Kim & Jogaratnam, 2003). Knowledge was also one of the push factors recognised by Jang and Cai (2002); the knowledge a tourist gains while on holiday enhanced their experiences. All of these studies have shown that similar factors will impact on a person’s decision to travel but different factors can be the main driving force behind the decision. Understanding the main factors behind a tourist’s decision enables marketers or destination managers to target these tourists; however, marketing to sport tourists may involve different factors and strategies from everyday tourists.

2.5.2 Sport Tourists' Motivations

Several scales and models have been developed to understand motivations behind sport tourists as a subsector of the broader travelling population (Funk, et al., 2001; Robinson, Trail, Dick, & Gillentine, 2005; Wann, 1995; Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999). These scales use various factors to understand the motives behind sport fans attending an event. The research conducted by Wann (1995) has been adapted by Trail and James (2001) to better suit the sport tourists they were researching, and these studies will be discussed below.

The Sport Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS) produced by Wann (1995) was used to investigate the motivations of sport fans attending local university games. Within Wann's (1995) research two studies were conducted to ensure that the SFMS was a valid measuring scale for sport fans. The reasoning behind the research was to evaluate the inclusion of eight factors and their quality. The results confirmed the importance of including all eight factors and that the SFMS was a valid scale. The eight factors tested were eustress, self-esteem, escape, entertainment, economic, aesthetic, group affiliation, and family (Wann, 1995). Wann et al. (1999) then expanded his research on the SFMS by conducting three different studies using the scale, further confirming its reliability. The SFMS has been adapted by researchers to develop other scales related to sport tourists' motivations.

Milne and McDonald (1999) developed the Motivations of Sport Consumers scale to address questions not considered by other marketing research. The questions researched related to psychological needs which are satisfied by consumption of a sport product, what motivations divert consumers away from other entertainment towards sport, how are motivations for sport participants and sport spectatorship similar or different and what factors can be used to explain and predict consumption decision and behaviours (Milne & McDonald, 1999). Within Milne and McDonald's scale (1999) there are thirteen broad sport motivations, which are physical fitness, risk taking, stress reduction, aggression, affiliation, social facilitation, self-esteem, competition, achievement, skill mastery, aesthetics, value development and self-actualization. The results of this research provided four typologies for both sport participants and sport spectating with each motivation being separated into the typologies. The Motivations of Sport Consumer scale used Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory to build the theory related

to a sport activity (Milne & McDonald, 1999). This research has provided an understanding of both sport participants and sport spectators to be able to market sport activities to them.

The Sport Interest Inventory (SII) was developed by Funk et al. (2001) as a scale to measure the motivations of sport consumers unique to team sport events. They developed it to measure the interest spectators had in a particular sport event, the 1999 FIFA Women's World Cup. The SII has ten factors which are sport interest, vicarious achievement, excitement, team interest, supporting women's opportunity in sport, aesthetics, socialization, national pride, drama, and player interest. The study showed that aesthetics, excitement, interest in soccer, and supporting women's opportunities were the important motives for the respondents (Funk et al. 2001). From these results marketers were able to form advertising campaigns and marketing strategies to attract spectators to the next FIFA Women's World Cup and other team sporting events.

Due to the weaknesses of previous such as psychometric limitations and scale content validity concerns, Trail and James (2001) developed the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC) and evaluated the accuracy and appropriateness of the scale for measuring the motivation of sport tourists. The factors in the MSSC are achievement, acquisition of knowledge, aesthetics, drama/eustress, escape, family, physical attractiveness of participants, quality of the physical skills of participants and social interaction (Trail & James, 2001). The MSSC is a reliable scale because it encompasses various factors from two other scales; Wann's (1995) SFMS and Milne and McDonald's (1999) Motivations of the Sport Consumer scale. The MSSC has been developed to incorporate the new factors of acquisition of knowledge and physical attraction of participants. The MSSC differs from previous scales as it measures the psychological motivations of the sport fans' consumption.

The reliability of the MSSC has improved with its use within various research studies related to the motivations of different sport spectators. Projects in which the MSSC has been used consider: (1) the motivational differences between fans and spectators attending college games (Robinson, et al., 2005); (2) the relationship between the motives and team identification of fans (Fink, Trail, & Anderson, 2002); (3) the differences and similarities in relation to female and males fans of specific teams (James & Ridinger, 2002), and (4) the different motivations for fans attending different college

sport games (James & Ross, 2004). The MSSC has also been used in research projects on AFL fans' attendance patterns and specifically on motivations and attitudinal loyalty as they affect attending home games (Neale & Funk, 2006), and on motivations for travelling to interstate games (Hoye & Lillis, 2008).

In using Trail and James' (2001) MSSC for sport tourism motivations, the factors can be divided into push and pull categories which have different influences on a fan's decision to travel. The factors of 'achievement', 'drama' and 'physical attractiveness of players' are pull factors while the 'acquisition of knowledge', 'escape', 'family' and 'social interaction', fall into the push category (see Figure 1.1). The studies which used the MSSC have reinforced the possible influences these factors have on a fan's decision to travel to support a team.

2.5.3 Australian Sport Tourist's Motivations

State and national level sports are played at venues located throughout Australia which encourages fans to travel to support their teams or individuals when playing. Various research projects have been undertaken on Australian sports, however, in relation to Australian sport tourism there has been minimal research. Ritchie, et al.'s (2002) research into Super 12 Rugby Union profiled sport tourists attending games in the Australian Capital Territory. There have also been a couple of research projects which focus on the motivations of AFL fans to travel to games (Neale & Funk, 2006; Hoye & Lillis, 2008). However, as discussed below, these particular studies did not address the tourism experiences of these tourists, the comparison between clubs, or interstate travel to Western Australia.

Hoye and Lillis (2008) used the MSSC scale to examine the travel motivations of Geelong Football Club fans travelling to any of its four to six interstate games a season. The research identified that the social interaction which occurs on trips between fans of this club was a significant motivational factor for the frequency of travel (Hoye & Lillis, 2008). In regard to the other motivating factors Hoye and Lillis (2008) concluded that these factors did not have an influence on high investment travel but should be regarded as generic influences associated with the attraction to the actual sport. A limitation of this study was that it only focussed on one club; this enhances the importance of the

current research project as it will investigate motivations more broadly using data from AFL interstate sport tourists of several clubs.

Neale and Funk (2006) undertook research into the motivations, attitudinal loyalty and attendance behaviour of Fremantle Football Club fans when attending a home game using the SII scale. Team interest was a major drawcard to attend the games, while interest in a specific player was the least important motivation (Neale & Funk, 2006). The results of Neale and Funk's (2006) research indicated that some factors were suited to attracting fans to game such as vicarious achievement, social interaction and drama. Again this study only analysed one team within the AFL competition and related only to the home team's fans. These two research projects did not consider interstate AFL sport tourists travelling to Western Australia, a factor that will be considered by this study.

2.6 Summary

Sport tourism is a developing sector, with travel by sport tourists providing host cities and regions with many benefits. Whilst relevant research focusing on key aspects has provided further insights into sport tourism, to date no singular definition of sport tourism has emerged. In relation to this study, Gammon and Robinson's (2003) definition will be used as it provides a complete description of the vital components of sport tourism. Within this definition, the concepts of passive and active sport tourists are identified as they both provide different aspects of the tourist's experience of the sport event or fixtures. The travel motivations of every tourist are different as there are various factors which impact on their decision; this is not only the case with everyday tourists but also sport tourists. Various scales have been developed to measure sport tourists motivations. The scale to be used in this research is the MSSC developed by Trail and James (2001). The scale has been used in several research projects, in particular one AFL study.

Throughout the literature there have been several concepts which have been used to produce the conceptual framework for this study (see Figure 1.1). Previous research has indicated that demographics and push/pull sport tourism motivations impact on sport tourists' decisions to travel to games or events, whether they are involved in sport tourism or tourism sport. For this research, tourists will either be involved in hard sport

tourism or hard tourism sport. The final emphasis is on tourists extending their stay and the associated tourism experiences participated in while in Western Australia.

Chapter 3

Research Methods

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the particular research methods used are discussed. It begins with the research design followed by the rationale behind using these methods, the pilot study and study population. The research instrument, data collection, data analysis, limitations and ethical considerations are also discussed within this chapter.

3.2 Research design

The focus of this research is to understand the main motivating factors and the associated tourism experiences of interstate AFL sport tourists travelling to Western Australia to attend a game. The specific research questions associated with this research are,

1. What are the demographics of AFL interstate sport tourists who travel to WA to watch their team?
2. What are the associated tourism activities of these people?
3. Why do people travel interstate to watch their AFL team?
4. Are there any differences in the motivations of AFL interstate sport tourists from different AFL clubs?

The research design of this study was based on descriptive research, because as Veal (2006, p.3) states, "...it seeks to discover, describe or map patterns of behaviour in areas or activities." Explanatory research provides a deeper understanding of the underlying causes, while descriptive research seeks to accurately describe a phenomenon (Neuman, 2006). Within this research, the aim is to explore what is occurring and it concentrates on the relationships within the phenomenon. With each research design it is important to choose the right methodology so that the approach extracts the relevant information. Descriptive research can involve quantitative or qualitative methodology and for this study a quantitative methodology was used in the form of a survey questionnaire. According to Jennings (2001, p. 232), a quantitative

descriptive survey enables researchers to describe the 'who' (demographic characteristics of tourists and visitors), 'what' (activities and destination preferences) and 'how' (social and economic status) of the study population.

As mentioned above, the research questions address who the AFL interstate sport tourists are, what their motivating factors and associated tourism activities, and how they travelled interstate. This makes the combination of descriptive research and a quantitative approach appropriate for this research. As Jennings (2001, p. 229) states,

descriptive surveys gather data on gender, age, educational background, occupations or income level, type of travel group, destination, type of transport used, length of stay, type of accommodation used and purpose of trip.

This study collected this data in addition to information on sport tourists' motivations and associated tourism experiences to discover and describe what is occurring within interstate AFL sport tourists' trips to Western Australia.

3.3 Research Method Rationale

As Mitra and Lankford (1999, p. 47) state the "relevance, accuracy and reliability of findings are established through reliability and validity procedures". This includes the use of a survey instrument with procedures implemented to ensure the right participants are reached to provide accurate findings. A quantitative approach provides a cross-disciplinary dimension which is commonly used in tourism related studies (Veal, 2006). Quantitative research generates statistical data that allows the testing of relationships between variables (Jennings, 2001), for example the relationship between the motivations and supporters of various AFL clubs. In this project a self-completed survey questionnaire was systematically developed and distributed to interstate AFL sport tourists. This research used a survey questionnaire, as the aim was to discover as much information as possible in a short time frame, in a form amenable to statistical comparison. The questionnaire included a number of closed-ended and open-ended questions which could be completed within a limited time frame (Neuman, 2006). The majority of the data collection occurred at AFL games as this was the most successful method used. This approach minimised the time away from participation in the sport tourism experience and provided the answers in the required form for statistical analysis.

3.4 Pilot Study

A pilot study is a small-scale experiment which test logistics before a major research project is undertaken to enhance its efficiency and quality (Altman et al., 2006). A pilot study for this project was conducted in the final three rounds of the regular AFL season in 2010 and involved 16 interstate AFL sport tourists travelling to Western Australia to attend one of these three AFL matches. The pilot study was used to test the survey and research procedure. The results of the pilot study indicated that alterations were needed to both the survey and the research procedure.

Within the survey there were noticeable problems and gaps. The pilot study survey contained numerous 1 to 7 scales, however for the ‘passion’ they have for their team question, a scale of 1 to 10 was used. This was subsequently changed to a 1 to 7 scale to provide consistency throughout the survey. For several of the questions, participants were given the opportunity to tick “other” and provide an answer that was not initially included. These answers were subsequently reviewed and where appropriate incorporated into the survey questions which related to employment, tourism destination and tourism activities in the final survey. The pilot study also showed gaps in the information retrieved which resulted in the inclusion of two new questions. The first question asked participants to identify the main reason for their trip, while the second question related to when the decision to travel was made.

From the pilot study alterations to the recruitment process were also implemented. The first change was to approach the clubs as soon as possible to see if they are able to help access the fans who travel interstate. Another alteration was to recruit some research assistants to help with data collection. These were the significant findings from conducting the pilot study and the alterations were incorporated into the research procedure of the main study.

3.5 The Study Population and Sampling Procedure

Sampling is a valuable strategy as the cost and logistics of a large survey of an entire population are impractical. According to Godfrey and Clarke (2000) a survey should, ideally, involve sampling as it provides a representative sample of the total population of tourists at a particular destination. The population of this project includes the interstate sport tourists who travelled to Western Australia and were attending an AFL game at Patersons Stadium.

The participants were chosen using a non-probability sampling method, specifically convenience sampling. Jennings (2001, p. 138) refers to convenience sampling as “the selection of participants for a study based on proximity to the researcher and the ease with which the researcher can access the participants”. While convenience sampling does not provide a representative sample of the population, it was considered appropriate in this project due to key limitations including the time constraints of the study being one year, and the limited direct access the researcher had to participants because the clubs advised they were unaware of AFL interstate sport tourists who travel interstate. The research was conducted at Patersons Stadium, which is the home ground for the two Western Australian-based AFL teams.

3.6 Research Instrument

As Neuman (2006) suggests, a quantitative survey is about the information collected, not the participants’ reactions when asked a question. The information gathered from this survey was related to the background, behaviours and attitudes or beliefs of the participants (Neuman, 2006).

Before a survey was handed out, two screening questions were asked to determine the person’s suitability for the research. The questions were: Was the person over the age of 18 and had they travelled interstate to attend the game? If the person answered yes to both questions and agreed to participate they were provided with a paper-based questionnaire which took approximately 10 minutes to complete. The questionnaire was divided into three sections (see Appendix A).

The first section focused on the motivations of interstate AFL sport tourists travelling to Western Australia and consisted of 21 statements related to the seven motivating factors (with three statements per factor) of the MSSC discussed in Chapter 2. In the original MSSC scale developed by Trail and James (2001), 27 statements relating to nine motivating factors were used. However, for this research the factors of ‘aesthetics’ and ‘physical skills of players’ were excluded from the survey on the recommendations of a later study by Hoye and Lillis (2008). In their study on AFL fans they concluded that,

as the sample for the study was existing fans of an AFL club it was assumed that the aesthetics of the game and the physical skills displayed by players were part of the motivation for being an AFL fan (Hoye & Lillis, 2008, p. 16).

Thus these two factors were excluded from the present study. The statements for each of the remaining seven motivating factors and the rating scale were the same as used in Trail and James' (2001) study and that by Hoye and Lillis (2008). Participants were asked to rate each of the statement using a Likert scale of 1 to 7 with, 1 being 'strongly disagree' to 7 being 'strongly agree'. The Likert scale enables the three statements to be summed up instead of treating them each separately which provides an overall score for each factor for each participants reaction related to a certain topic (Long, 2007).

The second section of the survey examined the tourism experiences the AFL interstate sport tourists participated in while in Western Australia. The questions related to the number of home and interstate games participants would be attending during the season. There were also questions on their travel plans, such as length of trip, transport, main reason for the trip, when the decision to travel was made, transport to the game, the convenience of using transport to the game, average costs of spending, travel group size, tourism destinations visited, and tourism activities participated in.

In section three, the participants demographic information was requested including age, gender, income, the state they live in, employment, education level, the AFL club they support, whether they have club membership, the 'passion' they had for their team and if they travelled with a supporters group. The questions within these sections included open-ended questions asking for detailed answers and close-ended questions where participants were given options to choose from. The Likert scale of 1 to 7 was also utilised in two other questions relating to the convenience of using transport to attend the game and the 'passion' they have for their team.

3.7 Data Collection

Three approaches were used to reach AFL interstate sport tourists in this research project as the pilot study had identified difficulties associated in obtaining participants. The details of the specific AFL games and the methods used to reach the particular AFL interstate sport tourists are indicated in Table 3.1, and discussed below.

Table 3.1. The details of the specific AFL games attended to reach participants

Round	Dates	WA Team	Interstate Team	Game Start	Method
1	Sat 27 th March	West Coast Eagles	North Melbourne	4.10pm	B
2	Sat 2 nd April	Fremantle Dockers	Geelong Cats	5.40pm	C
3	Sat 9 th April	West Coast Eagles	Sydney Swans	5.40pm	C
4	Sun 17 th April	Fremantle Dockers	North Melbourne	2.40pm	C
5	Mon 25 th April	Fremantle Dockers	Western Bulldogs	6.40pm	C
6	Thurs 28 th April	West Coast Eagles	Melbourne Demons	6.40pm	C
9	Sun 22 nd May	West Coast Eagles	Western Bulldogs	2.40pm	C
10	Sat 28 th May	Fremantle Dockers	St Kilda	1.10pm	C
11	Sun 4 th June	West Coast Eagles	Gold Coast Suns	1.10pm	C
12	Sun 12 th June	Fremantle Dockers	Essendon Bombers	2.40pm	C
13	Sun 19 th June	West Coast Eagles	Port Adelaide	2.40pm	A
14	Sat 25 th June	Fremantle Dockers	Brisbane Lions	5.40pm	C

Method A, which was only successfully utilised for one club, involved sending a letter to the marketing managers and the cheer squad of the AFL clubs who had a game scheduled in Perth at the beginning of the 2011 season. The letter asked if the club was able to help or direct the researcher to the necessary people to contact to reach the AFL interstate sport tourists (see Appendix B). The letter to the clubs included the purpose of the research, the topics of the survey and the method. The letter also stated that if the clubs would like a copy of the research report once it is completed, one would be provided. The club was also informed that the participant's involvement was voluntary and their responses would be anonymous. The letter was sent several weeks before the teams travelled to Western Australia. The letter was sent before North Melbourne, Geelong Cats, Sydney Swans, Western Bulldogs and Melbourne Demons who were due to play games in the first five rounds and Port Adelaide who played in round 13. The responses from the first five clubs were that they were unable to provide assistance due to three common reasons; respect for the privacy of their members, their limited knowledge on which fans travel interstate, and the fact that the majority of allocated tickets were sold to their Western Australian-based fans.

The letter sent to Port Adelaide Football club was not only sent to the marketing manager but also the cheer squad organiser who is in charge of interstate travel to see if they were able to assist. The response from Port Adelaide came from the organiser of the cheer squad, who indicated that they knew of people travelling for this game and that they would be willing to help reach these people. With this positive response, surveys were sent to the organiser of the group to distribute.

Method B involved an industry contact at Patersons Stadium, who the researcher was liaising with in relation to the access to the stadium. This person knew of several people travelling interstate to attend the round one game of the season. The researcher provided a copy of the survey to distribute to the people travelling interstate to complete the survey, and these were then returned after the game.

Method C was the most commonly used procedure for reaching participants. It involved attending specific games at Patersons Stadium and handing out surveys to AFL interstate sport tourists at these games. The particular games that were attended were from Round 2 to Round 14 of the AFL season; however there was a two week break from the data collection between round 6 and 9 as both Western Australian teams played interstate and the teams played each other in the local derby during these weeks. When attending the games the researcher along with two research assistants arrived 90 minutes before the game began. Surveying was conducted from the time of arrival inside the stadium until ten minutes before the game started to reduce the impact on the participants' experiences of the game. The method used to identify the participants was that the researcher was aware that the interstate club fans sit at one end of the ground behind the goal posts so surveying was conducted within this area. The participants were approached as they were wearing the away teams' colours or normal clothing and asked if they were willing to participate; if they declined to participate they were thanked for their time and the researcher or research assistant moved on.

3.8 Data analysis

Before the data was collected the survey was coded and a database was set up to provide easy entry of the completed survey data. The data analysis was conducted on the participants' responses to the questionnaire; once these were entered into the software SPSS version 18.0 which was used to analyse the responses. This statistical software has been widely used by social scientists and related professionals (Coakes, Steed, & Ong, 2009). The tests that were used in this research were frequency distribution, t-tests, chi-square test and One-way ANOVA. Coakes, et al. (2009, p.66) describe that a t-test "is used to determine whether there is a significant difference between two sets of scores." The t-test and/or ANOVA enabled comparisons between the AFL interstate sport tourists of different states to discover if there were differences in their motivations and the comparison of various variables in regards to the main reason for travelling to Western Australia. The SPSS software is the appropriate software to be used for this

research as it allows the necessary analytical tests to be conducted and for appropriate results to be produced.

3.9 Limitations

Within a research project there are various limitations which may impact on the research. First, within this research project, was the time frame of the honours degree as it is a one year full-time course. The time limit associated with this impacted on the process of data collection due to a limited collection period. Another limitation is that a first time researcher was conducting this study.

In addition, it is currently unknown how many interstate AFL fans travel to Western Australia. This impacted on the available survey sample as it was challenging to reach these fans. A further limitation, connected to not knowing the number of interstate fans travelling to the AFL games, is the capacity of Patersons Stadium. In comparison to other grounds, such as the Melbourne Cricket Ground (100,000 seating capacity), Etihad Stadium in Melbourne (53, 355 seating capacity) and AAMI Stadium in Adelaide (51, 515 seating capacity), Patersons Stadium is one of the smaller stadiums used for AFL games (Australian Football League, 2009b). With a small capacity stadium and two clubs with large memberships it is not possible to allocate seats to every AFL interstate sport tourists who wants to attend a game. This means that AFL interstate sport tourists may not travel to Western Australia if tickets are not available, thus restricting the potential survey population.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Researchers have an ethical responsibility to ensure the protection of the rights of the participants involved in the research study (Jennings, 2001). Before the commencement of the research, ethics approval was obtained from the Edith Cowan University Research Ethics Committee. The main ethical consideration for this study was ensuring that individuals were not subjected to direct or indirect physical, psychological or legal harm. As such, the participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and their permission to participate was requested. Participants also had the right to refuse to answer any of the questions if they did wish to do so. All participants indicated that they were over the age of 18 and an information letter (see Appendix C) was provided before the research commenced.

The ethical considerations also relate to the reporting methods and the analysis of the data collected. It is important to be honest when reporting the findings as it is inappropriate to tamper with results to better suit the researcher (Ryan, 1995). The researcher has a duty of care to the user, reader and respondents when they are reporting their results so adjusting the results is considered ethically incorrect.

3.11 Summary

The research design of this project is descriptive research using a quantitative methodology. An anonymous questionnaire survey was used to identify the demographic, associated tourism experiences and main motivating factors of interstate AFL sport tourists travelling. A pilot study was conducted to validate the survey and research methods/procedures, and subsequent alterations were made before the data collection for the major project. Convenience sampling of AFL interstate sport tourists was used. Data was collected by both approaching the clubs before their game in Western Australia and handing out surveys at Patersons Stadium to AFL interstate sport tourists to complete before a game. Responses to the questionnaires were analysed using frequency distribution, t-test, chi-square test and One-way ANOVA. Ethics approval was also obtained from the Edith Cowan University Research Ethics Committee to ensure the research was conducted in a responsible manner.

Chapter 4

Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of this research which explores the motivations and tourism experiences of AFL interstate sport tourists who travel to Western Australia. The results have been divided into five sections, including study sample, demographics, tourism experiences and motivations. The tourism experiences will provide insight into the travel itineraries whilst motivations will explore the main driving forces behind these AFL interstate sport tourists decision to attend an AFL game in Perth. In the final section a comparison of the two categories these AFL interstate sport tourists are involved in will also be presented.

4.2 Study Sample

The breakdown of responses from the people asked to participate is indicated in Table 4.1. A total of 397 people were asked to complete the survey during the 12 week data collection period. Of these 195 were not eligible because they were not interstate visitors, 126 declined to participate and the remaining 76 people agreed to complete the survey. This was a response rate of 37.6%.

Table 4.1. The total number of people asked and the breakdown of the specific answers.

Week	Interstate Teams	WA Teams	Number of People Asked	Completed	Declined to complete	Not eligible to complete
1	North Melbourne	West Coast Eagles	10	10	0	0
2	Geelong Cats	Fremantle Dockers	62	3	19	40
3	Sydney Swans	West Coast Eagles	57	12	18	27
4	North Melbourne	Fremantle Dockers	44	4	19	21
5	Western Bulldogs	Fremantle Dockers	51	11	20	20
6	Melbourne Demons	West Coast Eagles	22	7	7	8
7	Western Bulldogs	West Coast Eagles	17	6	5	6
8	St Kilda	Fremantle Dockers	41	2	16	23
9	Gold Coast Suns	West Coast Eagles	11	4	2	5
10	Essendon Bombers	Fremantle Dockers	41	9	8	24
11	Port Adelaide	West Coast Eagles	2	2	0	0
12	Brisbane Lions	Fremantle Dockers	39	6	12	21
Totals			397	76	126	195

4.3 Demographics

The demographic results provide a profile of the participants who have travelled to Western Australia and attended an AFL game. The demographic data collected was gender, age, employment, income, education, state of origin, club supported by participants, memberships, supporter groups and passion levels.

The majority of participants were female (54.7%), as compared to male participants (45.3%). The largest cohorts of participants were aged between 25-34 and 45-64 with 25.3 percent for both age groups as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. The age groups of AFL interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia.

Age Group	Frequency	Valid Percent
18 – 24	2	2.7
25 – 34	19	25.3
35 – 44	10	13.3
45 – 54	19	25.3
55 – 64	16	21.3
65 and Over	9	12.0
Total	75	100

The employment status of the majority of participants was full-time employment at 61.3 percent, with the spread of employment status indicated in Table 4.3. Full time employment was followed by part-time/casual employment (16%), retired (16%), other (5.3%) and not employed (1.3%). The other category included participants who indicated they were self-employed, a student and a volunteer.

Table 4.3. Employment status of interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia.

Employment Status	Frequency	Valid Percent
Employed part-time/ Casual	12	16.0
Employed Full time	46	61.3
Not Employed	1	1.3
Retired	12	16.0
Others	4	5.3
Total	75	100

The income levels of participants are displayed in Table 4.4. The results show that there was spread through the income brackets with the highest percentage being in the \$60,001 - \$80,000 (28.8%).

Table 4.4. Income levels of interstate sport tourists.

Income Levels	Frequency	Valid Percent
Under \$20,000	10	15.2
\$20,001 - \$40,000	7	10.6
\$40,001 - \$60,000	12	18.2
\$60,001 - \$80,000	19	28.8
\$80,001 - \$100,000	6	9.1
\$101,000 and Over	12	18.2
Total	66	100

In regards to the education level of respondents, a significant proportion (31.5%) indicated they had a secondary education, while nearly 70 percent has a tertiary level qualification as 26 percent of participants had completed a Bachelor Degree, 23.3 percent had completed a diploma or certificate (TAFE), 17.8 percent had finished a postgraduate degree and one participant indicated they were currently studying their Bachelor Degree.

Participants travelled from the different states which currently field teams in the AFL. These states include Victoria (64%), New South Wales (21.3%), Queensland (10.7%) and South Australia (4%). The AFL clubs supported by participants are indicated in Figure 4.1. The club with the most participants was the Western Bulldogs (14 participants), followed by North Melbourne (13 participants), Sydney Swans (12 participants), Essendon (9 participants) and Melbourne with 8 participants, while the other clubs had 6 or less participants. The majority of the participants supported Victorian based clubs with a total of 46 out of 76 (60.5%). Of the thirteen clubs represented in this research there was one team, the Adelaide Crows, which did not play a game in Western Australia during the data collection period and two participants supported the home teams having travelled interstate to attend the games.

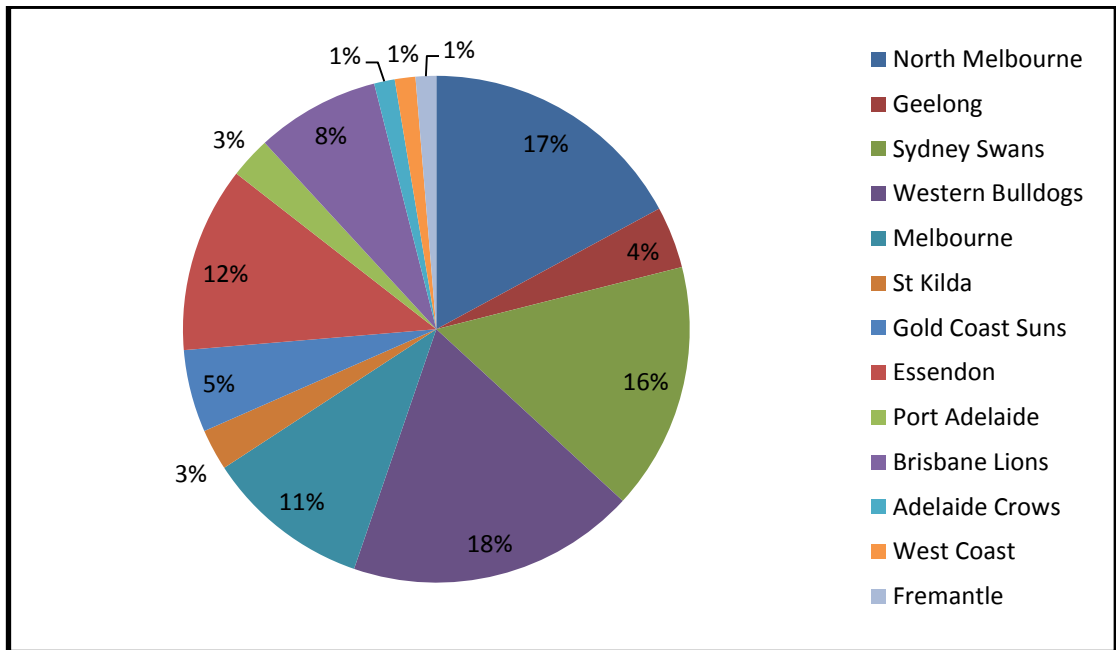


Figure 4.1. The clubs which were supported by AFL interstate sport tourists.

When asked if they were a member of the club they support the majority of respondents answered yes at 76.3% compared to non-members at 23.7%. Being a member of a club enables fans to become involved in the supporter groups of a club and to travel with other members. There were thirteen respondents out of the 75 participants (17.3%) who had travelled as part of a supporter group.

The passion levels each fan has for their teams is different. Passion for their team was rated on a Likert scale of 1 to 7 with 'not passionate at all' to 'very passionate'. The mean score was 6.46 (sd 0.886) which indicates that participants are very passionate about the team they support.

4.4 Tourism Experiences

This section provides an insight into the participant's AFL game attendances, and their travel itineraries and associated tourism experiences. The data collected was the main reason for trip, length of stay, the number of home and interstate games attended, when the decision to travel to these games was made, transport to Western Australia, mode of transport to the game, convenience in getting to the game, travel group size, tourism destinations and attractions, and per day spending.

Understanding the main reasons why these participants travel interstate provides insight into the driving forces behind their trip. In this question, participants were given the opportunity to choose more than one main reason for their current trip to Western Australia which resulted in a total of 95 responses. Of the 76 participants who completed this question 46 participants (60.5%) indicated that one of their main reasons for this trip was to attend the football. Accordingly, 30 people (39.5%) travelled to Western Australia for non-football reasons; their main reasons were leisure and recreation with 19.7%, visiting family and friends 17.1% and business with 2.7%. These results will be utilised to make comparisons of these two groups of interstate sport tourists across a range of variables in section 4.6.

Within an AFL season a club plays 22 home and away games, however some AFL interstate sport tourists attend games in which their team does not participate. For all participants, the average number of games attended throughout the season was 13 games, with games attended ranging from one to twenty four games. Clubs travel interstate to play a number of games giving their fans the opportunity to travel to support the club. The number of times respondents indicated they would travel interstate to attend games during the 2011 season is shown in Figure 4.2. For many of the respondents, the game that they were attending in Western Australia was their first and only interstate game (40.5%) while one respondent travelled interstate eight times to attend games during the current season.

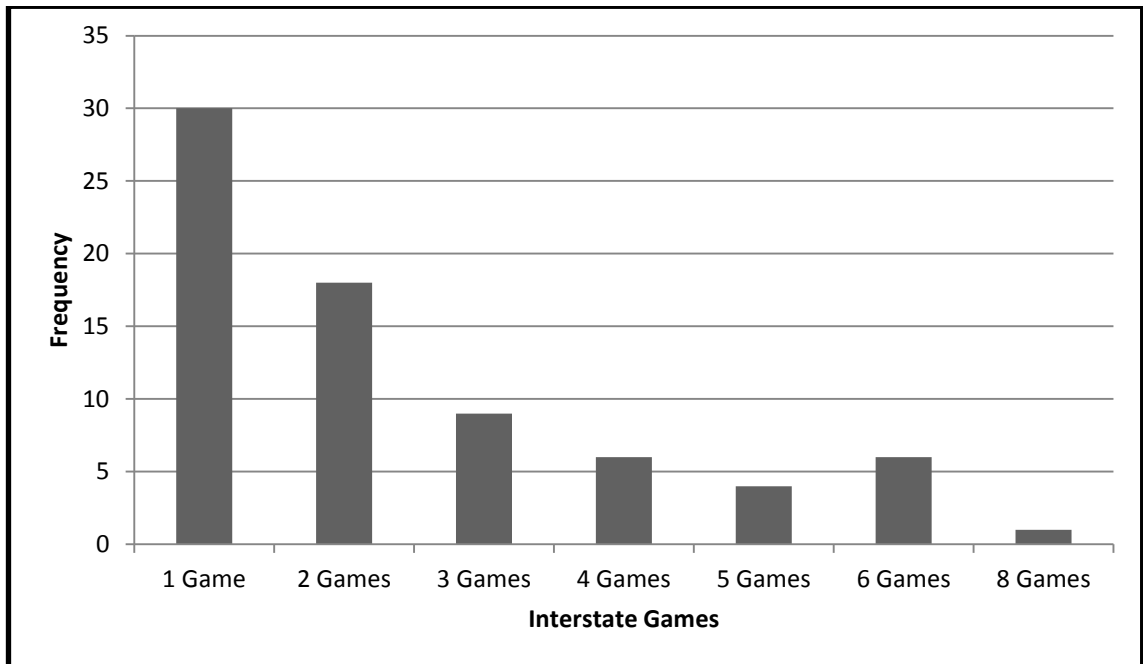


Figure 4.2. The number of interstate games attended by participants in the 2011 AFL season.

Travelling to Western Australia to attend an AFL game is a long distance from the eastern states, it is often a 4 hour plane journey or 3,000 Kilometre. The majority of respondents travelled to Western Australia on an airplane (86.8%), followed by car (7.9%), train (3.9%) and bus (1.3%). The length of stay in Western Australia is identified in Figure 4.3. After travelling such distances the largest cohort of respondents stayed between 3-4 days (26.7%) while there were five participants who had travelled for only one day (6.7%).

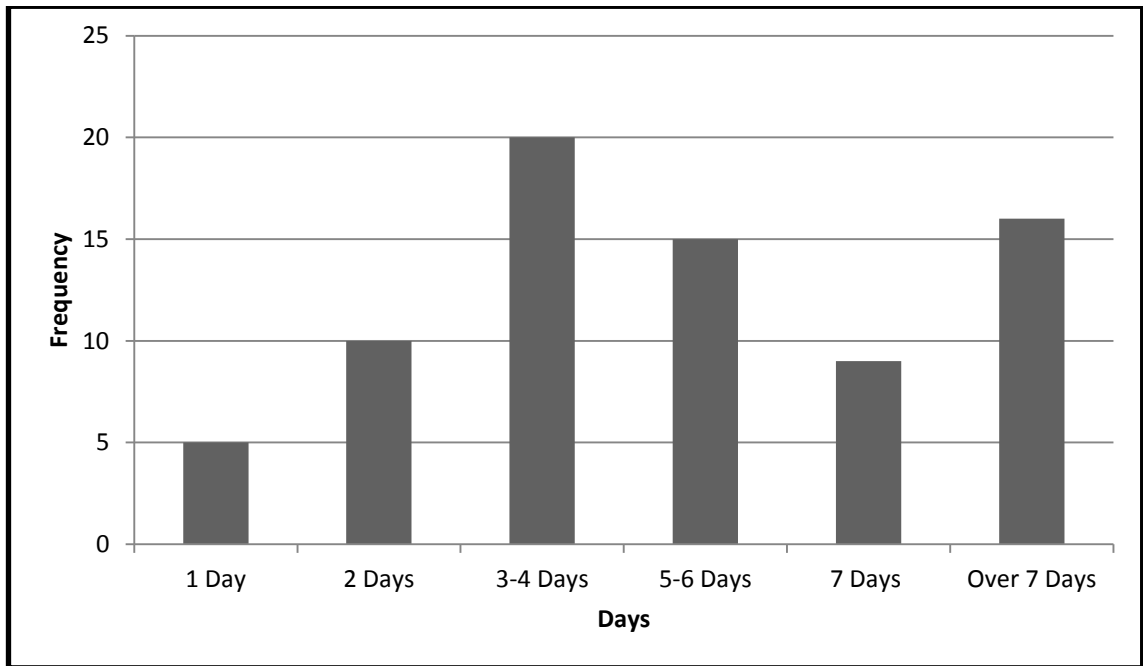


Figure 4.3. Length of stay for interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia.

Identifying when participants made the decision to travel to attend the games in Western Australia is shown in Table 4.5. The majority of respondents made the decision when the fixtures become available to the public (50%). This was followed by between the start of the season and the week of the game (15.8%), the start of the season (14.5%) and the week of the game (9.2%). Other (10.5%) reasons were identified as the realisation it was a player's milestone game, family visit, first time to a game, 4 weeks before the game, day before the game, when they arrived in Western Australia and it not being applicable to football.

Table 4.5. When participants made the decision to travel to attend these games in Western Australia.

Decision to Travel to Game	Frequency	Valid Percent
When fixtures become available to the Public	38	50.0
Start of the Season	11	14.5
Between the start of the season and the week of the game	12	15.8
Week of the Game	7	9.2
Others	8	10.5
Total	76	100

The mode of transport used to attend the game once in Western Australia is important information on how participants accessed the stadium. As shown in Figure 4.4, the most utilised form of transport was the train (45%), followed by private car (20%), taxi (15%), hire car (11%), with bus and walk both with 5%. The convenience of using one of these forms of transport to reach the game may also affect the experiences of the fan. On a Likert scale of 1 to 7 with 1 being very ‘inconvenient’ to 7 being ‘very convenient’, the mean score was 6.34 (sd 1.341), which indicated that respondents found using these forms of transport very convenient.

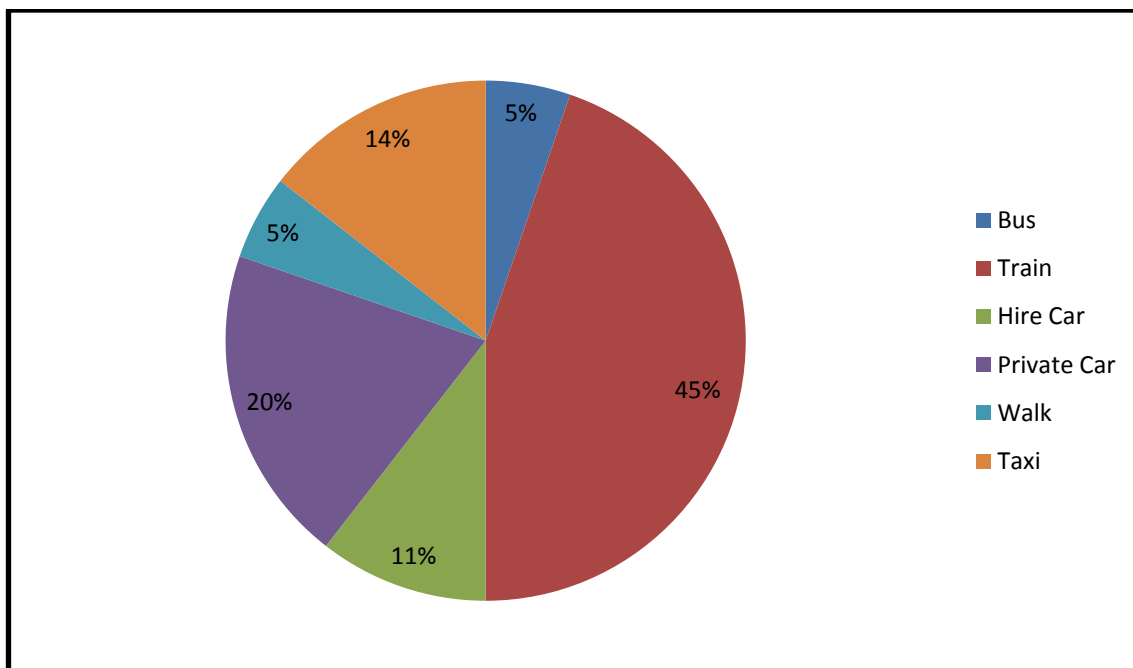


Figure 4.4. Mode of transport used to attend an AFL game at Paterson Stadium in 2011.

Within their immediate travel group the majority of participants travelled to Western Australia with family, or their spouse or partner (59.5%), followed by friends (36.5%) and 4.1 percent travelled alone. Sizes of the immediate travel groups varied from 1 to 14 people as shown in Table 4.6. The most common group size was two people (40%), with the largest group size being one group of fourteen people.

Table 4.6. The size of the immediate travelling groups of participants travelling to Western Australia.

Size of Travel Groups	Frequency	Valid Percent
1 Person	4	6.7
2 People	24	40.0
3 People	10	16.7
4 People	11	18.3
5 People	2	3.3
6 People	1	1.7
7 People	2	3.3
8 People	1	1.7
9 People	1	1.7
12 People	2	3.3
14 People	1	1.7
Total	76	100

Even if the main purpose of the participant's trip was to attend a football game, most also visited other destinations and attractions during their stay in Western Australia. When answering questions on the tourism destinations and attractions visited, respondents were able to choose more than one answer. There were a number of destinations the participants visited while staying in Western Australia, these are identified in Table 4.7. The most popular destination was Fremantle (24.8%), with other destinations including Kings Park (13.6%), Swan River (11.7%), Hillary's Boat Harbour (10.4%), Mandurah (9.0%), Margaret River (6.3%), Rottnest Island (5.9%), Northbridge (4.9%), Swan Valley (4.9%) and South Western Region (3.6%). The other category had a percentage of 4.9 percent with participants visiting destinations such as Subiaco, Newman, Monkey Mia, Cottesloe and the Pinnacles at the Nambung National Park.

Table 4.7. The tourism destinations visited by interstate sport tourists while in Western Australia.

Tourism Destination	Frequency	Valid Percent
Fremantle	55	24.8
Kings Park	30	13.6
Swan River	26	11.7
Hillary's Boat Harbour	23	10.4
Mandurah	20	9.0
Margaret River	14	6.3
Rottne Island	13	5.9
Swan Valley	11	4.9
Northbridge	11	4.9
Other	11	4.9
South Western Region	8	3.6
	222	100%

The tourism activities undertaken while on trips is another element of the tourism experience, as identified in Table 4.8. The most popular tourism activity was dining out (28%), followed by shopping (21.8%), going to the beach (16.1%), wineries (11.8%), casino (10.9%), nightclubs/pubs (6.6%) and playing golf (2%). The other category had a percentage of 2.8 percent, with the activities being nominated as attending supporter functions, and visiting an art gallery and their family.

Table 4.8. The tourism activities participated in by interstate sport tourists during their Western Australia trip.

Tourism Activities	Frequency	Valid Percent
Dining Out	59	28.0
Shopping	46	21.8
Going to Beach	34	16.1
Wineries	25	11.8
Casino	23	10.9
Nightclubs/Pubs	14	6.6
Other	6	2.8
Playing Golf	4	2.0
	211	100%

The benefits tourism has for the economy are significant. Participants were asked to provide details on their average per day spending. The five categories were accommodation, transport, food, entertainment and shopping, with the results shown in Table 4.9. The average amount spent for each of the categories was accommodation (\$155.37), transport (\$114.86), food (\$87.84), entertainment (\$84.76) and shopping (\$117.69). There were varying amounts given in relation to each of the spending areas, with the lowest of \$5 for both shopping and transport, followed by entertainment (\$10), food (\$20) and accommodation (\$33). The highest of the amount was \$800 on transport, \$600 on accommodation, \$500 on shopping and \$300 on food and entertainment.

Table 4.9. The average of spending and highest and lowest amount of costs per day for the five categories while in Western Australia.

Categories	Averages	Lowest Amount	Highest Amount
Accommodation	\$155.37	\$33	\$600
Transport	\$114.86	\$5	\$800
Food	\$87.84	\$20	\$300
Entertainment	\$84.76	\$10	\$300
Shopping	\$117.69	\$5	\$500

4.5 Motivations

The motivations behind sport tourists travelling interstate to attend a national sporting event are often different for each spectator. In relation to the motivations for interstate AFL fans travelling to Western Australia participants were asked to rate their motivations on seven factors based on Trial and James's (2001) research. Participants were asked to rate a statement related to each factor on a Likert scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being 'strongly disagree' to 7 being 'strongly agree'. The seven factors were analysed as singular statements, and within groups of three similar statements relating to one factor, for all participants. The final analysis was a comparison between clubs to indicate if there were any differences.

The singular statements were analysed in regard to the means and standard deviations of each statement, as shown in Table 4.10. The statements with the four highest means were "I feel proud when the team plays well" (6.09), "I feel like I have won when the team wins" (5.99), "I enjoy the 'drama' of a 'close' game" (5.52) and "Games are a great change of pace from what I regularly do" (5.40). While the statements with the

four lowest means were “An individual player’s ‘sex appeal’ is a big reason why I watch” (2.79), “The main reason that I watch is that I find the players attractive” (3.09), “I enjoy watching players who are physically attractive (3.28), and “I regularly track the statistics of specific players” (3.71). While these statements had the four lowest means, they had some of the highest standard deviations which indicate the high variances of responses, as the answers to these statements were spread over the Likert scale. Conversely, the statements with the higher means tended to have a smaller standard deviation.

Table 4.10. The means of the statements associated with each of the factors.

Factors	Mean	SD
<u>Achievement</u>		
I feel like I have won when the team wins	5.99	1.571
I feel a personal sense of achievement when the team does well	5.36	1.589
I feel proud when the team plays well	6.09	1.535
<u>Escape</u>		
Games represent an escape for me from my day-to-day activities	5.23	1.787
I look forward to the games because they are something different to do in winter	5.07	1.761
Games are a great change of pace from what I regularly do	5.41	1.498
<u>Social Interaction</u>		
Games are opportunities to socialize with other people	5.26	1.544
Interacting with other fans is a very important part of being at games	4.96	1.724
I like to talk to other people sitting near me during the game	5.08	1.663
<u>Family</u>		
I like going to games with my children	4.95	2.163
I like going to games with my family	5.33	2.048
I like going to games with my spouse	5.04	2.434
<u>Drama</u>		
A game is more enjoyable to me when the outcome is not decided until the very end	4.89	1.886
I enjoy the ‘drama’ of a ‘close’ game	5.52	1.639
I prefer a ‘close’ game rather than a ‘one-sided’ game	5.15	1.876
<u>Acquisition of Knowledge</u>		
I read the team statistics regularly	4.17	1.975
I regularly track the statistics of specific players	3.71	2.129
I usually know the team win/loss record	5.24	2.072
<u>Physical Attractiveness of Players</u>		
The main reason that I watch is that I find the players attractive	3.09	2.168
An individual player’s ‘sex appeal’ is a big reason why I watch	2.79	2.131
I enjoy watching players who are physically attractive	3.28	2.257

When the three statements are joined together the means provide a picture of the major motivating factors behind interstate sport tourists. The means and standard deviations of the seven factors are indicated in Table 4.11. When combining the three statements the

factors are arranged in the following order of the highest to lowest mean score: 'achievement' (5.78), 'escape' (5.18), 'social interaction' (5.10), 'drama' (5.07), 'family' (4.60), 'acquisition of knowledge' (4.31) and 'physical attractiveness of players' (3.03). As mentioned the standard deviation shows variances of responses. This shows some factors had a wider spread of answers than other factors with the factors with the lower means generally having a higher standard deviation.

Table 4.11. The overall means and standard deviations of each of the motivating factors after combining the three statements.

Motivating Factors	Means	SD
Achievement	5.78	1.388
Escape	5.18	1.338
Social Interaction	5.10	1.337
Drama	5.07	1.615
Family	4.60	1.833
Acquisition of Knowledge	4.31	1.724
Physical Attractiveness of Players	3.03	1.993

Comparing the motivation of the AFL interstate sport tourists from the different clubs provides insight into the different AFL interstate sport tourists and what their motivating factors are for attending AFL games interstate. Due to the relatively low number of participants, the different AFL clubs from within the same state were grouped together to see if there were any differences between the fans and the supporters of the Western Australian clubs were excluded from the state analysis. The statements for each motivating factor were separated into the appropriate states (Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia) and then joined together to provide an overall analysis across the different states. The comparisons of the clubs grouped in their states in relation to the motivating factors are identified in Table 4.12. These results indicate there were no significant differences between the fans from the different states in Australia.

Table 4.12. The comparison of the clubs in relation to the means and standard deviations of the motivating factors.

Factors	<u>Victorian</u>			<u>NSW</u>			<u>QLD</u>			<u>SA</u>			F Value	Sig.
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Achievement	49	5.94	1.16	12	4.97	2.40	10	5.83	0.72	3	6.22	0.69	1.7	0.18
Drama	49	5.01	1.47	12	4.97	2.23	10	5.50	1.67	3	4.33	1.45	0.49	0.71
Family	49	4.35	1.92	12	4.64	1.94	10	5.20	1.23	3	5.66	1.53	0.98	0.40
Escape	49	5.34	1.23	12	4.36	1.82	10	5.43	1.14	3	5.44	0.77	1.92	0.13
Knowledge	49	4.37	1.73	12	3.86	1.86	10	5.26	1.16	3	3.00	2.00	1.93	0.13
Social	49	5.05	1.34	12	4.97	1.43	10	5.23	1.34	3	5.55	0.96	0.19	0.89
Attractiveness	48	2.78	1.87	12	3.72	2.46	10	3.60	1.83	3	2.11	1.92	1.24	0.30

$p \leq 0.05$

4.6 Comparison of Interstate Sport Tourists by Main Reason for Travel: Sport or Tourism

As previously mentioned 46 participants (60.5%) indicated that a main reason for their travel was the football game, while 30 participants (39.5%) travelled for reasons other than football. All the questions from each section of the survey then were analysed to discover if there were any significant difference between these two groups. The results from this analysis which uncovered significant differences of AFL interstate sport tourist will be discussed below.

Firstly, the demographic information was compared and the two questions which showed significant differences were members of a club and the passion levels of fans. The membership numbers showed that of the participants travelling for the football 93.5% had memberships to the club they supported. While 50% of those who travelled for reasons other than football had memberships. Comparing the passion levels of AFL interstate sport tourists using the One-way ANOVA indicated a statistically significant difference between those who travelled for the football and those who travelled for reason other than football at a 5% level of significances ($p = .008$). As those travelling for the football had a mean of 6.67 while the mean those travelling for reasons other than the football was 6.13.

The tourism experience of these AFL interstate sport tourists was also different for those who travelled for football versus those who did not. Comparison of all the variables discovered that there were significant differences between some of the results. The One-way ANOVA test showed a significant difference between the number of games attended during the season in relation to the main reason for this trip. The significance for the number of games attended during the season was at a 5% level of significances ($p < .001$). The difference between the results was that those who travelled for the football would on average attend 17 games while those travelling for reasons other than football only going to an average of 6 games during the season. The interstate games attended also had an interesting result as those who travelled for the football would travel interstate at least 3 times while those who travelled for reasons other than the football would only travel once during the season. The t-test indicated a significant difference between those with a main reason of attending the football and those with a main reason of travelling for reasons other than the football at a 5% level of significance ($p = 0.001$).

The length of stay within Western Australia also showed the differences between the two groups travel patterns as indicated in Table 4.13. Of those who indicated that one of their main reasons for their visit to Western Australia was to attend the football 65.2% stayed 4 days or less versus those who travelled for reasons other than football, 82.7% staying 5 days or more.

Table 4.13. The comparison of the length of stays between the main reasons for travelling.

Days	<u>Football</u>		<u>Tourism</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
1 Day	4	8.6	1	3.4
2 Days	9	19.6	1	3.4
3 – 4 Days	17	37.0	3	10.3
5 – 6 Days	10	21.7	5	17.2
7 Days	5	10.9	4	13.8
Over 7 Days	1	2.2	15	51.7
	46	100	29	100

The frequency of the different tourism destinations visited by these two groups of sport tourists are indicated in Table 4.14. When comparing the different groups against the tourism destinations visited there were two destinations which had results of a significant difference, these were Kings Park and Margaret River. The result for Kings Park was a significant difference at a 5% level of significance ($p = 0.001$), the difference was 11 participants (36.7%) who travelled for the football did go to Kings Park while 19 participants (63.3%) who had travelled for other reason visited Kings Park. Margaret River had a significant difference at a 5% level of significance ($p = 0.013$), as 10 participants who travelled for reasons other than football visited Margaret River compared to 4 participants who's main reason was football.

Table 4.14. The comparison of the tourism destinations visited by the participants.

Destination	Football	Valid Percent	Tourism	Valid Percent
	Frequency		Frequency	
Fremantle	32	29.3	23	20.4
Kings Park	11	10.1	19	16.8
Swan River	12	11.0	14	12.4
Hillary's Boat Harbour	11	10.1	12	10.6
Mandurah	9	8.3	11	9.7
Margaret River	4	3.7	10	8.8
Rottne Island	5	4.6	8	7.1
Swan Valley	6	5.5	5	4.4
Northbridge	8	7.3	3	2.6
Other	7	6.4	4	3.6
South Western Region	4	3.7	4	3.6
	109	100	113	100

Finally, the motivating factors were compared between travelling for the football versus reasons other than the football and the means and standard deviations are shown in Table 4.15. These results show that some of the motivating factors were heightened for the AFL interstate sport tourists as they showed significant differences. There were four factors which indicated that there were differences between the results. The One-way ANOVA indicated a statistically significant difference between those who travelled for the football and those who travelled for reason other than the football for four of the motivating factors. At a 5% level of significance these factors were 'achievement' ($p = 0.001$), 'escape' ($p = 0.015$), 'acquisition of knowledge' ($p = 0.005$) and 'social interaction' ($p < 0.001$).

Table 4.15. The means and standard deviation of the comparison of the main reason for travelling to Western Australia.

Factors	N	Football	SD	N	Tourism	SD	F Value	Sig.
		Mean			Mean			
Achievement	46	6.18	1.07	30	5.16	1.59	11.164	0.001
Drama	46	4.97	1.66	30	5.23	1.54	0.476	0.493
Family	46	4.50	1.94	30	4.75	1.66	0.350	0.556
Escape	46	5.48	1.30	30	4.73	1.27	6.130	0.016
Knowledge	46	4.76	1.55	30	3.63	1.77	8.541	0.005
Social	46	5.52	1.16	30	4.45	1.34	13.447	0.000
Attractiveness	46	3.09	2.02	30	2.95	1.97	0.087	0.769

4.7 Conclusion

The results of this research have provided insight into the AFL interstate sport tourists who travel interstate to Western Australia to attend games. The demographic information provides a profile of the tourists with a slight majority being female, between the ages of 25-34 and 45-54 who are employed full time with a tertiary education. The travel itineraries of these AFL interstate sport tourists included travel with families, or spouse or partner, staying between 3 to 4 days. The main reasons for travel is for the football and while in Western Australia they went to Fremantle and enjoyed dining out. The major motivating factor was 'achievement', a push factor which is the associated feeling fans have in regards to the team's performances, and 'escape' which is a pull factor. While 'acquisition of knowledge', a pull factor and 'physical attractiveness of players', a push factor, were considered the least two important motivating factors. The comparison of participants from different states has shown that in this study there were no significant differences. Comparison between the main reasons for these interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia indicated that there were some significant differences between the demographic, tourism experiences and motivations of these two groups.

Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the results in relation to the relevant literature as outlined in Chapter 2. First the demographics of the Australian Football League (AFL) interstate sport tourists are examined to identify the different aspects that can provide people with the means and interest to travel. The itineraries, associated tourism experiences, and motivating factors will also be discussed to provide a detailed understanding of these AFL interstate sport tourists. Finally, this chapter will conclude with details of the revised conceptual framework which has been developed from the discussion below.

5.2 Demographics

The demographic aspects considered in this study were age, gender, income level, state of origin, club membership, and passion levels. Age and gender contribute to an understanding of these AFL interstate sport tourists. The majority of the AFL interstate sport tourists who had travelled to Western Australia were in the age brackets of 25 – 34 and 45 – 54. This finding is consistent with Hoyer and Lillis' (2008) research that identified an average age of 47 for participants travelling to an AFL game. Research into sport tourism attending various college sporting events conducted by James and Ross (2004) showed the majority of participants (43%) were aged between 20 and 34 years old which is similar to the lower age bracket of 25 – 34 in this study. Another sport tourists' study showed that the fans attending the 1999 FIFA Women's World Cup had an average age of 34 years (Funk, et al., 2001). The ages of sport tourists may differ because different sports attract different age groups.

In this research the majority of interstate sport tourists (54.7%) were female, which contrasts with Hoyer and Lillis (2008) and Neale and Funk (2006) in which the majority of participants (67% and 55% of participants respectively) were male. The results of this study may indicate the changing role of women within the AFL. AFL has traditionally been a game dominated by men. The role of women in the 1960s was limited to being a fan or to being involved in a social committee. However, in today's competition the role of women has changed with two female representatives on the AFL commission

and a total of fifteen women members on AFL club boards (Schwab, 2011). McCauley (2008, p.30) researched the changing role of women in the AFL and found that women are being given more opportunities in the league, as he says women are allowed:

to enter male dressing rooms, take up positions as members of football clubs boards, trainers, boundary umpires and goal umpires, pursue careers as football media commentators and journalists and make major inroads and major decisions with regards to the future of Australia Rules Football.

The growth of women's direct involvement is also indicated with more than 73,000 female players in various AFL competitions (Australian Football League, 2010b). The AFL's CEO, Andrew Demetriou, believes that providing females with more opportunities within the league will attract them to the games (McCauley, 2008). The acknowledged changing role of women in football may be one reason why the majority of participants in this study were female.

The annual income level of participants in this study varied quite considerably. The most frequent response, \$60,001 - \$80,000 (28.8%), is consistent with the average wage in Australia of \$66,594 reported in the final quarter of 2010 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). The level of income of participants is also associated with their employment status, which was full time for the majority (61.3%) of respondents. Full time employment within Australia is increasing with 8,082,100 people employed full time in June 2011 which is an increase of 59,000 people since June 2010 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). This increase in full time employment in the workforce has helped stabilise the unemployment rate at around 4.9 per cent (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). This income may also provide people with the financial means to travel interstate to attend these games. Most participants (64%) were from Victoria which is the state of origin of the AFL. Victoria is the state with the most clubs in the AFL with a total of ten out of the seventeen clubs (Australian Football League, 2010a). Of the thirteen clubs represented in this study, six were from Victoria.

Supporters of a particular team within the AFL competition have the opportunity to become a club member, and 77.3% participants in this study were members of the club they support. Members are entitled to tickets to either home or away games and club

merchandise. The membership numbers of the clubs vary between clubs and over time. In 2010, AFL membership was at a record high for the 10th consecutive year (Australian Football League, 2010b, p. 54). The record membership number in 2010 was 614,251 members which was an increase of 4.7% on the previous 2009 record of 586,748 members (Australian Football League, 2010b, p. 54). Being a member of your favourite AFL club gives fans an opportunity to attend interstate games as they are given first preference for tickets. Being a member also enables fans to become a part of supporter groups or cheer squads and travel to games with these groups.

The 'passion' fans have for their team differs. Long term supporter's may be very passionate about their team, whereas others may simply enjoy the game. Overall, the participants in this study were highly passionate which may explain their decision to travel interstate to a game involving their team. Klugman (2009, p. 27) found that "a number of [AFL] fans describe their love as 'unconditional'" which shows how dedicated fans can be. AFL fans with high passion levels can also be categorised as 'one-eyed', 'footy-mad', 'footy-obsessed' and 'football-crazy' (Klugman, 2009, p. 22). Research conducted on small scale sport tourism in regards to college fans travelling to support different teams found that attending these games and being a fan played a major role in participants' lives, as one participant said,

I come personally to most every Gator basketball game. I might miss you know a Gator basketball game, if it's not a conference game or somethingor if my work load, ahh, can't get out of it or something like that, but my sons will be with me too unless it's a game, a weekday when they go to school (Gibson et al. 2003, p. 186).

Supporting a particular sporting team can see fans become very passionate about their team. AFL fans are not only passionate for their team, they may experience emotional distress associated with the club's performance (Klugman, 2009, p. 22). With high levels of passion, these AFL interstate sport tourists are more likely to commit to interstate travel and be involved in hard sport tourism.

5.3 Tourism Experiences

The tourism experiences of this research enhance the understanding of the itineraries of AFL interstate sport tourists. It discusses the number of games, including interstate games, attended during the season, the destinations visited and the tourism activities experienced by these AFL interstate sport tourists while in Western Australia.

The 2011 AFL season had 24 rounds with each team playing 22 games and having two byes. Some fans of AFL teams may attend games that their team does not participate in. Teams travel interstate at various stages to ensure they play each team at least once and that not every one of their games is played at their home venue. For the majority of participants in this study, the game they were attending in Western Australia was their first and only interstate game for the 2011 season. However, for one participant, this game was one of eight interstate games they would be attending during the season. The result from the number of interstate games attended is consistent with Hoyer and Lillis (2008) research as 47.8 percent of their participants travelled to one interstate game during the season. The decision to travel was made by half of the participants in this study when the fixtures were released to the public.

For the majority of participants (60.5%), football was one of the main reasons for travelling to Western Australia, while another 39.5 percent had travelled to Western Australia for different reasons but had decided to attend an AFL game while there. Research by Tourism Australia (2011) provides details on domestic tourists travelling within Australia. Their results indicate that the main reason for domestic tourists travelling to Western Australia in the year to March 2011 was for business (39.8%), followed by leisure and recreation (32.2%) and visiting friends and family (23.5%) while only 3.1 percent travelled for other reasons, which is the section travelling for sport falls into.

Discovering the main reason for travel has revealed whether these participants were involved in hard sport tourism or hard tourism sport. In hard sport tourism, sport is the prime motive with the tourism elements being an additional experience whereas in hard tourism sport, tourism is the prime motive with sport as the additional element

(Gammon & Robinson, 2003). With 60.5 percent of participants reporting their main reason for travelling being the football, this majority are involved in hard sport tourism. The other 30.5 percent were participating in hard tourism sport. This result is similar to that of Ritchie et al. (2002) whose research into Super 12 Rugby revealed that 62.8 percent of participants had travelled primarily for the rugby and were therefore involved in hard sport tourism. Identifying the two categories and how AFL interstate sport tourists can be separated will help marketers target these niche tourism segments more effectively. As the comparison of variables indicated that there were some significant differences between the two categories in regards to their travel itineraries, this will help the AFL attract fans to games and specific tourists to a destination.

When interstate sport tourists travel to a game in Western Australia, they travel thousands of kilometres usually by aeroplane to attend the game. Due to the distances between Western Australia and the other states, Perth is “sometimes regarded the most isolated city in the world” (Choong, 1996). For example, Jakarta, Indonesia is closer to Perth than Sydney (Fransworth, 1997). As previously mentioned, fans of interstate clubs are able to receive tickets to away games through the clubs, however they have to organise their own transport to the destination (Fairley, 2009). Fairley (2009) conducted research into the travel of AFL fans to support their team, and she stated that “for travelling fans, the time spent on actual travel can sometimes outweigh the time spent at the destination” (p. 208). The distance between Perth and the eastern states may involve a return flight duration of eight hours for AFL interstate sport tourists, which for some participants may be longer than their length of stay in Perth. The impact of the distanced travelled is identified in research conducted into tourists travelling to Michigan, where the long distance travellers stayed for 12 days while those who travelled short distances only stayed for 4 days (Xu, Yuan, Gomez, & Fridgen, 1998). It can be argued that all AFL interstate sport tourists, travelling to Western Australia, are long distances travellers.

The participants of this research had varied lengths of stay in Western Australia. The majority (26.7%) spent between three to four days, but there were five participants who spent only one day. The average length of stay is consistent with research conducted by Tourism Australia, who also found that the average length of stay in Western Australia for domestic tourists was four days in the year ended 31st of March 2011 (Tourism Australia, 2011). In her study on AFL sport fan travel groups, Fairley (2009) concluded

that AFL fans undertook both express trips and regular trips to interstate games. The distinction between these trips as Fairley (2009, p. 213) states is that,

the express trip consists of travel to the game, game attendances, and return travel straight after the game. There is no accommodation involved in these trips, and there is only limited amount of time spent at a destination, thus limiting the cost of the trip, and the time spent away from home. The regular trip is more time consuming and more expensive. There is increased time spent at the destination, as well as accommodation at the destination (usually one overnight stay).

In the present study the majority of participants were on these types of regular trips, while five participants were on express trips, however, the cost of an express trip to Western Australia may still be expensive due to the distance travelled and high transport costs involved. Of the five participants on express trips, four participants were involved in hard sport tourism and one participant was involved in hard tourism sport. Express trips usually involve one sole purpose leaving no time for additional activities, whilst regular trips may provide more opportunity to participate in tourism related activities at the destination.

Being able to incorporate tourism products into a sport tourist's itinerary is important as it showcases other aspects the region has to offer. The main tourism destination in Western Australia that 24.8 percent of respondents visited was Fremantle, followed by Kings Park and the Swan River. Fremantle provides tourists with a different experience of Western Australia compared to Perth's city centre as the port city has many cafés, markets and various heritage attractions. While Fremantle is not situated close to Perth city centre it is easily accessible by train, car and bus. Kings Park and the Swan River are close to Perth city centre and showcase the flora and the best views of the city (Western Australia Visitor Centre, 2011). These three destinations are part of Tourism WA's Experience Perth Region (Tourism WA, 2011a). In the year to March 2011 there were 8.5 million domestic day visitors to the various destinations of the Experience Perth Region which centre around the Perth city centre (Tourism Australia, 2011). The easy access to these destinations and close proximity to the city centre may be the reasons behind AFL interstate sport tourists visiting these destinations while on a regular trip.

The mode of local transport used to attend the game provides information on access to Patersons Stadium. The results showed that the public train was the most utilised form of transport to attend the game. There are two train stations fans can use, both being a few hundred metres from the oval. The Perth Public Transport Authority has used various strategies to promote the use of public transport to attend football games. One strategy is that the “ticket to the football includes travel on all Transport services for 3hrs before, during and 3hrs after the event” (Transperth, 2011). The participants found that it was very convenient to use public transport. Understanding the mode of transport used to attend games helps planning for the flow of traffic to and from the ground, before and after the game.

The economic benefits associated with tourism can be significant for a destination. The specific categories of spending researched in this study were accommodation, transport, food, entertainment, and shopping. The average amount spent per day by these interstate sport tourists was \$111.45 which is slightly lower than the per night expenditure results collected by Tourism Australia in their national visitor survey. For domestic tourists who travelled to Western Australia in the year ended the 31st of March 2011 it was \$123 per night (Tourism Australia, 2011, p. 33). The small difference may be accounted for by the different lengths of trips undertaken by sport tourists and all other domestic tourists.

5.4 Motivations

Understanding the motivations of sport tourists travelling to Western Australia provides an insight into the reasons behind their travel. The results of the seven MSSC factors including ‘achievement’, ‘escape’, ‘social interaction’, ‘drama’, ‘family’, ‘acquisition of knowledge’ and ‘physical attractiveness of players’, are discussed below.

After comparing the means of all seven relevant motivating statements it was clear that the ‘achievement’ factor was the main motivating factor of these AFL interstate sport tourists attending a game in Western Australia. Participants tended to agree or strongly agree with the ‘achievement’ statements which gave the highest mean (5.78) and one of the lowest standard deviations. ‘Achievement’ is the personal feeling of achievement fans experience when their team is successful (Funk, et al., 2001; Smith & Stewart, 2007). According to Funk et al. (2001) when a team wins fans increase their association,

however, when they lose, fans decrease their connection. Within the AFL, fans tend to wear their team's merchandise proudly when their team wins. Klugman (2009, p. 21) conducted a study into the love and passion of AFL fans and one participant stated about their favourite team,

there's no jumping off the black and white bandwagon.

They drive me mad. They can embarrass me, they have broken my heart every time they lose a grand final, or just an ordinary game. And sometimes I even want to disown them- at times like that last, woeful game at Victoria Park, where they seemed to barely care – or understand exactly what they were playing for. But I'll love them to the day I die.

Therefore as Funk et al. (2001) indicated, a fan's association with the team can decrease when the team is unsuccessful, however due to the passion levels they have for their team, they continue to support the team during the unsuccessful times (Smith & Stewart, 2007). In the Neale and Funk (2006) study, vicarious achievement was one of the factors in the SII scale used. However, it was not the main motivating factor; this was team interest which is not similar to any of the MSSC factors.

The other factors in the MSSC were also shown to influence AFL interstate sport tourists' decisions to attend an interstate AFL game. The motivating factor of 'escape' had a mean of 5.18 and is not only associated with sport tourists, but also everyday tourists. The 'escape' factor has been researched in the context of both forms of tourists as Dann (1977) researched the push factor of anomie, (the escape from everyday routine of a person's life) and identified that it does have an impact on tourists' decisions to travel. Attending sport games or events provides fans the chance to 'escape' from their everyday routine and the sport enables them to be entertained by a spectator sporting contest (Hoye and Lillis, 2008). Being able to enter into this world provides fans the chance to temporarily forget problems within their home life and work while concentrating on the game (Wann, Melnick, Russell, & Pease, 2001). Escaping into the world of sport can also provide fans with a world of passion, spontaneity and uncertainty, all of which an AFL game can offer (Smith & Stewart, 2007) while supporting their team.

‘Social interaction’ occurs within a person’s day to day routine and sport provides an opportunity for fans to socialise with their friends when attending games (Fullerton, 2007). The ‘social interaction’ factor may not only affect fans attending games but also other events organised by the team (Fullerton, 2007). Attending sport events provides fans the opportunity to socialise with other fans that support the same team and may have the same passion levels for the team. This may cement a feeling of belonging, similar to one of Maslow’s (1970) needs of belonging (Smith & Stewart, 2007). At AFL games, fans from the same teams often sit together, giving them a chance to socialise. Another chance for ‘social interaction’ for AFL fans occurs when they become involved in the supporters group or cheer squad who attend the games and some fans may even travel to interstate games within this group. In contrast to Hoye and Lillis’ (2008), ‘social interaction’ with a mean of 5.10 it was the third ranked factor. In their study, Hoye and Lillis (2008, p. 18) stated “fans are more likely to travel if they perceive they will be part of a group experience that differs from the normal match day experience at their home venue or other stadia.”

Sport differs from other types of entertainment in that some form of ‘drama’ will occur (Funk, et al., 2001). This can be a drawcard to attend sport events as fans are able to watch an engaging contest and be a part of the dramatic experiences leading to an unknown outcome to the event (Smith and Stewart, 2007). As Funk et al. (2001, p. 294) describe, the “drama tends to be highest when the game is close, stressful, and the outcome is not decided until the end.” In AFL a game can change in an instant and alter the result. An example is the 2010 AFL Grand Final when the game ended in a draw for the third time in the history of the competition (Australian Football League, 2010b). In its closing stages the scores were level and when the siren went, the realisation set in that there would be a rematch played the following week (Australian Football League, 2010b). The ‘drama’ factor was not found to be the main motivating factor for fans in this study. However, the fans did agree with the statements on the ‘drama’ of the game being a drawcard with a mean score of 5.07 which makes it the fourth ranked factor.

Attending sport events not only provides fans with the opportunity to socialise with other fans, it can also provide the chance to spend time with ‘family’; it is an opportunity to do something the whole family enjoys (Fink, et al., 2002; Wann, et al., 2001). Smith and Stewart (2007) agree that sport events give families the chance to spend time together. They also said that “a sport experience is a vehicle for fulfilling

family needs in much the same way as a vacation or weekend outing” (p. 161). The game of AFL enables fans to spend time with their families as clubs offer tickets to people of all ages. It also provides the opportunity for children to be participants through the AFL Auskick program (Australian Football League, 2009a). The AFL Auskick program provides some children (and their parents as umpires and helpers) with the opportunity to participate in Auskick games during the half time break of an AFL match. ‘Family’ was the fifth ranked factor with a mean of 4.60; however this factor had a fairly high standard deviation. This is to be expected as not all AFL interstate sport tourists participating in this research were travelling with family.

The ‘acquisition of knowledge’ factor involves the aspect of learning more about the team or a specific player through media and interactive consumption (Fink, et al., 2002). It was first used in a sport tourist’s motivation scale by Trail and James (2001) in the MSSC. Fans develop knowledge and statistics about the team and specific players (Trail & James, 2001). An AFL fan can access various statistics about a team or player to enhance their knowledge of the game. This may include the win/loss record and the team’s position on the ladder. Overall competition statistics can be associated with the team or a specific player such as kicks, handballs, disposals, contested possessions, marks, hit outs, centre clearances, goals, behinds and total games played (Australian Football League, 2011). The knowledge on these statistics can be for one game, a season or a player’s entire career. In relation to this research the ‘acquisition of knowledge’ was the second least important factor with a mean score of 4.31.

The ‘physical attractiveness of the players’ within the AFL can relate to an individual or a group of players (Fink, et al., 2002). In common with other studies, it was the least motivating factor for the interstate sport tourists in this research. Neale and Funk (2006) indicated that interest in a player can only be a drawcard if the player becomes an effective team member and contributes to the team’s success. The results from Hoyer and Lillis’ (2008) study were similar, with the ‘physical attractiveness of players’ not being a major motivating factor. According to Hoyer and Lillis, the less important factors should not be considered in high investment travel but as generic motivations associated with sport or an event. While the attractiveness of the players may be a drawcard when they first arrive at a club, if their contributions on the field are not significant their appearance may become irrelevant to the fans (Neale and Funk, 2006).

The motivating factors of the MSSC can be separated into push and pull factors to discover which one has the main influence. Pull factors are associated with the destination or activity, while push factors relate to the persons' desire or need to travel (Hemmatinezhad, Nia, & Kaiar, 2010). The pull factors are 'achievement', 'drama' and 'physical attractiveness of players' while the push factors are 'acquisition of knowledge', 'social interaction', 'escape' and 'family'. The results of this research showed that the main motivating factor was a push factor ('achievement'), followed by two pull factors ('escape' and 'social interaction'), and the least important was a push factor ('physical attractiveness of player'). When marketing sport events and destinations the best strategy is to combine both types of factors to attract tourists (Dann, 1977; Hemmatinezhad, et al., 2010; Jang & Cai, 2002).

As previously mentioned, the separation of these AFL interstate sport tourists into two categories, based on the main reason for travel, has revealed various differences in the motivating factors and in the push, pull factors. For both categories 'achievement' was one of the top two main motivating factors, however the following factors were different and were the main indicators of which aspects of an AFL game attracts various AFL interstate sport tourists to travel. Those involved in hard sport tourism were influenced by aspects associated with the desire to travel to an AFL game as the push factors were more influential with 'achievement' followed by 'social interaction' and 'escape'. For those participants involved in hard tourism sport, the pull factors had more influence as 'drama' was followed by 'achievement' and 'family'. The aspects of an AFL game such as the associated winning feeling and the drama of the game should be marketed to AFL interstate sport tourists to attract those whose main reason for travel is tourism elements. Conversely, the social interaction and escape from their everyday routine that fans can experience at a game should be marketed to AFL interstate sport tourists whose main reason for travel would be to attend the football.

5.5 Revised Conceptual Framework

At the completion of this research, following the analysis of the data and discussion of the results, alterations were required to the Conceptual Framework presented in Chapter 1 (see Figure 1.1). The modifications to the Conceptual Framework include changes to several relationships such as the influence that demographic information and motivation factors have on an AFL interstate sport tourists' decision to travel. The revised conceptual framework (Figure 5.1) also includes the two categories of hard sport tourism and hard tourism sport, and consequently, their different lengths of stay.

The results from the study also necessitated alterations to the relationships between the demographic information and the motivation factors. After completing this research it was discovered that the demographic information provides AFL interstate sport tourists with the means to travel instead of being a direct influence on the decision. The co-dependent relationship still exists between the demographic information and the motivating factors, however the relationship between the demographic information and an AFL interstate sport tourists decision to travel has been removed. The demographic information has been expanded as membership and supporters group are also influential.

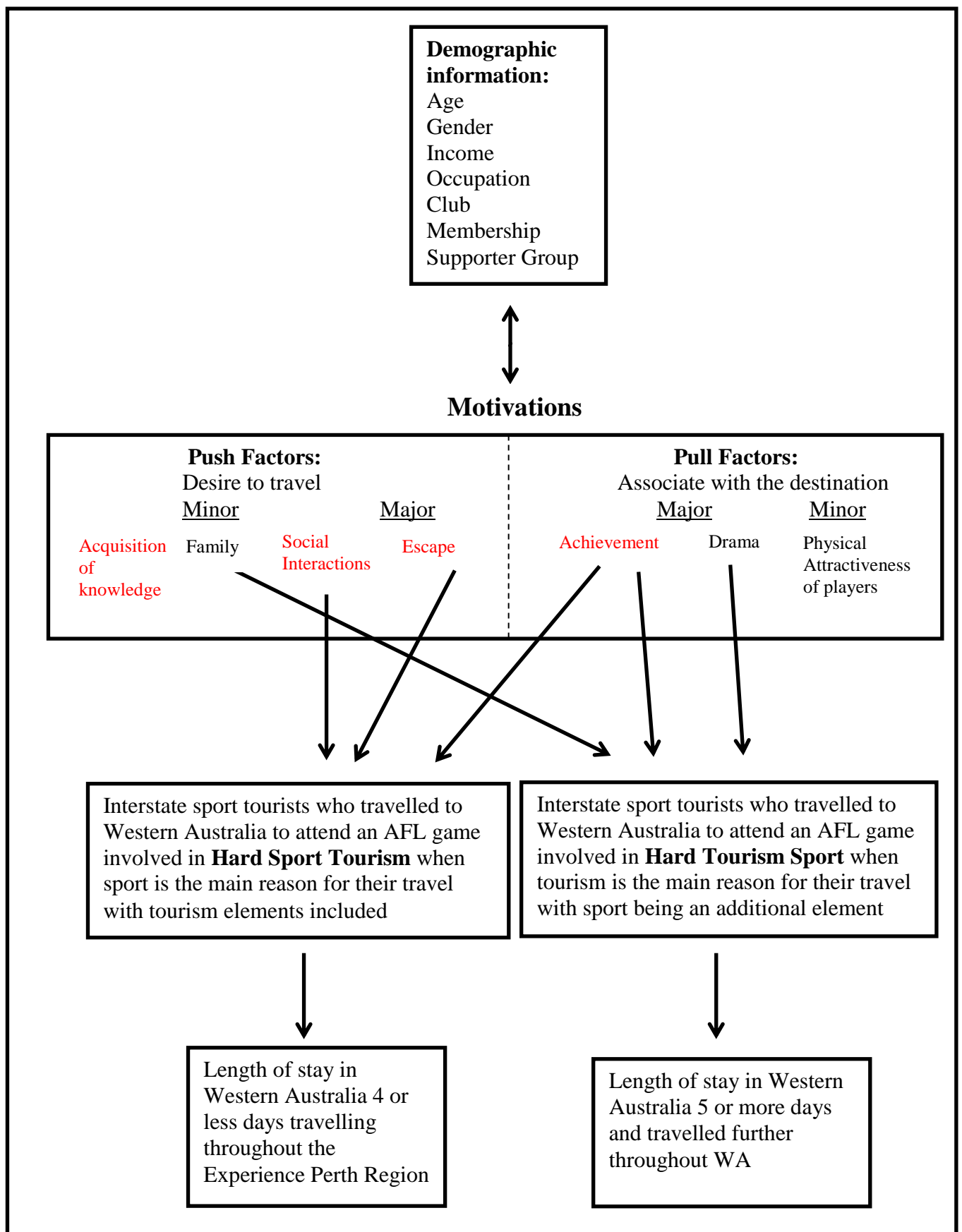


Figure 5.1. Revised Conceptual Framework.

In this study motivating factors could be divided into major and minor factors, leading to a hierarchy of the factors. Overall, the pull factors had more influence on all participants' decision to travel to Western Australia to attend an AFL game. However, the motivating factors, that were significantly different when the comparison is made between those involved in hard sport tourism and those who were involved in hard tourism sport, are highlighted in red. The highest ranked factors for those involved in hard sport tourism, were 'achievement', 'escape', 'social interaction' with the desire to travel being the main influence. However, participants involved in hard tourism sport, indicated that they were motivated by particular aspects of an AFL game. The main motivating factor was 'drama'; however this was followed by 'achievement' and 'family' which highlights the differing motivations of the participants involved in hard tourism sport. The different motivating factors become important when marketing AFL games to target the specific AFL interstate sport tourists as their relationship to the tourism experience is different.

In the original framework the relationships of hard sport tourism or hard tourism sport were situated with the broader group of interstate tourists travelling to Western Australia to attend an AFL game. However, after the completion of the research it was identified that these categories each have distinct motivational relationships as well as with different relationships in regards to length of stay within Western Australia and the distances travelled to experience tourism products within the state. Those involved in hard sport tourism would stay for 4 days or less and travel throughout the Experience Perth Region while those involved in hard tourism sport would extend their stay in Western Australia for 5 or more days and travel further throughout Western Australia.

5.6 Summary

The discussion of the results, in association with relevant studies related to sport tourism, has shown that various factors influence AFL interstate sport tourists. The demographic aspects provide interstate sport tourists with the means to travel; however this information also indicates who these tourists are, their membership and passion for their team. The additional tourism experiences that sport tourists may participate in, while at a destination, have not previously been widely researched. Understanding the travel itinerary of these tourists helps to provide insight to the different components of their travel which the host destination can use to build strategies to attract sport tourists. The seven factors of the MSSC scale each had a different influence on AFL interstate sport tourists and provide a different perspective on attending a sport event or game in terms of attracting interstate sport tourists. This discussion has indicated that understanding sport tourists requires analysis of many different aspects and has helped to refine the Conceptual Framework for this research.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Conclusion

This research examined the travel motivations and tourism experiences of Australian Football League (AFL) interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia. Whilst Western Australia has hosted a number of major sporting events which have made significant documented contributions to the economy, little is known about the impact of professional national sport leagues, such as the AFL. The teams which make up this unique Australian sport league are situated throughout the country making it necessary for teams to travel interstate to play each other. This in turn encourages fans to travel interstate to support their club. The two AFL clubs located in Western Australia, the West Coast Eagles and the Fremantle Dockers host twenty home games in Western Australia throughout the season from March to October. This research sought to provide knowledge on who the AFL interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia are, what their associated tourism experiences are, what the main motivating factors behind their decision to travel are and if there are differences between the AFL interstate sport tourists of the various states in relation to the motivating factors.

The literature related to sport tourism identifies different aspects of sport tourists and sport tourism, including what sport tourism is, who sport tourists are, the benefits and impacts of hosting a sport event, and the motivations of sport tourists. To provide knowledge on the main motivating factors behind sport tourists' decisions to travel, various scales have been developed with different factors to analyse. The scale used in this research project was the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC) developed by Trail and James (2001), and further examined by Hoye and Lillis (2008). There are nine factors in the MSSC, of which only seven were investigated in this research. They included 'achievement', 'acquisition of knowledge', 'drama', 'escape', 'family', 'physical attractiveness of players' and 'social interaction'.

The research method utilised to investigate the motivating factors of AFL interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia was descriptive research as the objective of this research was to examine what was occurring. The method of descriptive research was combined with a quantitative methodology. A quantitative descriptive survey was developed to investigate the research questions and minimise time away from

participating in the sport tourism experience. The survey questionnaire was divided into three sections; demographics, tourism experiences and motivations. During the data collection process three approaches were used to reach participants as conducting a pilot study indicated that reaching participants would be difficult. The combination of approaches contributed to the final sample size of 76 participants.

The demographic results indicated who these AFL interstate sport tourists are, with the majority being female, aged between 25-34 and 45-54 who were employed full time and were very passionate about the club they support. The average length of stay in Western Australia was 4 days, the majority travelled by aeroplane and the main reason for their trip was the football. In regard to the tourism destinations visited and the tourism activities participated in, the majority of participants visited Fremantle and dined out. The main motivating factor was 'achievement' which is the associated feeling fans have in regard to the club's performance, while the least important motivating factor was 'physical attractiveness of players'. In the comparison of the motivating factors of fans from different states, there were no significant differences between the states.

In conducting this research it was identified that there were two different categories to target in regards to AFL interstate sport tourists travelling to Western Australia. These categories each had different associated tourism experiences while in Western Australia. The two groups are hard sport tourism or hard tourism sport. If the football was the main reason for travel they were involved in hard sport tourism while if there was another main reason for this trip they were participating in the hard tourism sport category. In comparing the results associated with these different categories it was discovered that some of the motivating factors were heightened in their importance to the AFL interstate sport tourists involved in hard sport tourism. Thus, marketing incorporating the motivating factors of 'achievement', 'social interaction', and 'escape' may entice more AFL interstate sport tourists involved in hard sport tourism to travel to interstate games. Alternatively the factors of 'drama', 'achievement' and 'family' would be more appropriate to attract AFL interstate sport tourists associated with hard tourism sport. The AFL interstate sport tourists who were involved in hard sport tourism tended to stay 4 or less days compared to those involved in hard tourism sport who extended their stay for 5 or more days and travelled further throughout Western Australia.

6.2 Recommendations

This study has identified specific areas that can be developed for future research projects of sport tourism, as well as research into AFL fans as interstate sport tourists. It also provides recommendations for both the tourism and sport industries to consider.

Future research into sport tourism should not only concentrate on the motivations behind a sport tourist's decision to travel to attend the event or game, but also investigate the tourism experiences associated with these sport tourists. The recommendations for future research in sport tourists are:

- Further research into sport tourists associated with a broader range of sports to identify the main motivating factors using the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption.
- A broader study on AFL interstate sport tourists with a larger number of participants to obtain a more comprehensive insight into their travel motives.
- Further research should be conducted on the tourism experiences of travelling AFL interstate sport tourists. In particular a more detailed investigation into what factors would encourage AFL interstate sport tourists to extend their stay in Western Australia.

The recommendations from this research for the tourism and sport industries are:

- To use the motivating factors associated with the sport to entice sport tourists to travel interstate, for example marketing the drama of an unknown outcome to an AFL game to attract interstate sport tourists.
- When marketing to the different categories of hard sport tourism and hard tourism sport it is important to utilise the motivating factors which were important to the category being targeted. For example, with the hard sport tourism group it would be 'escape' and 'social interaction' while for the hard tourism sport group it would be 'drama' and 'family'.
- Market the AFL games in Western Australia along with tourism destinations and attractions that Perth is well known for.
 - Focus on the Experience Perth Region when marketing to those involved in hard sport tourism and use the regional destinations to attract 'regular' (or longer stay) visitors and those involved in hard tourism sport.
 - Target club members who have a higher propensity to travel.

- Included a category for sport tourists in Tourism Australia's National Visitors Survey.

Future recommendations for more comprehensive research into AFL fans and their motivations and associated tourism experiences include:

- To engage the clubs of the competition early in the research process to gain access to the fans travelling interstate to increase participation numbers.
- To include two additional questions in the tourism experience section that will;
 - Identify if there was, or will be, repeat visitation connected to this current trip.
 - Discover if the distance travelled to Western Australia has an impact on the length of stay of these AFL interstate sport tourists.

7.0 Reference

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Appendix A

Survey Questionnaire

Interstate Australian Football League Fans Motivation Survey

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue at any point. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete, and all responses will remain anonymous.

SCREENING QUESTIONS

1. Are you over 18 years of age?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Have you travelled from interstate to attend this game?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If you answer yes to both questions 1 and 2 continue on with the survey. If you answer no to either question 1 or 2 please hand the survey back.

TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS

3. The following items relate to your motivations for attending this game. Please read each statement carefully and responses range from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

(Please circle the number you feel is most appropriate)

Strongly
disagree

Strongly
agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I feel like I have won when my team wins	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. A game is more enjoyable to me when the outcome is not decided until the very end	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I like going to games with my children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Games represent an escape for me from my day-to-day activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I read the team statistics regularly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Games are opportunities to socialize with other people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I look forward to the games because they are something different to do in winter	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I regularly track the statistics of specific players	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. The main reason that I watch is that I find the players attractive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I feel a personal sense of achievement when the team does well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I usually know the team win/loss record	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Games are a great change of pace from what I regularly do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I like going to games with my family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. An individual player's 'sex appeal' is a big reason why I watch	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I enjoy the 'drama' of a 'close' game	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I enjoy watching players who are physically attractive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I prefer a 'close' game rather than a 'one-sided' game	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I like going to games with my spouse	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I feel proud when the team plays well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Interacting with other fans is a very important part of being at games	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I like to talk to other people sitting near me during the game	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

TRAVEL INFORMATION

We would like to ask you the following questions about your travel. This information will be used for classification purposes and to help us understand the various views of different user groups.

1. How many AFL games (including this one) will you attend during this season?

—

2. How many times (including this one) will you travel interstate to attend an AFL game during this season?

—

3. What is the duration of this current trip to Perth?
(Tick one only)

- ☐ 1 Day ☐ 5 – 6 Days
☐ 2 Days ☐ 7 Days
☐ 3 – 4 Days ☐ Over 7 Days

4. What is the mode of transport you used to travel to Perth for this trip? (Tick one only)

- ☐ Airplane ☐ Car
☐ Bus ☐ Train

5. What is the main reason for this trip?
(Tick appropriate)

- ☐ Leisure and Recreation
☐ Business
☐ Visiting Family and Friends
☐ Football
☐ Other (Please specify): _____

6. When did you make the decision to travel to this game? (Tick one only)

- ☐ When fixtures first become available to public
☐ Start of season
☐ Between the start of season and the week of the game
☐ Week of the game
☐ Other (Please specify): _____

7. What mode of transport did you use to attend the game today? (Tick one only)

- ☐ Bus ☐ Private Car
☐ Train ☐ Walk
☐ Hire Car ☐ Other _____

29. How convenient was it for you to use this form of transport to attend the game today?
(Please circle)

Very Inconvenient Very Convenient

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

30. Who is in your immediate travel group and how many people in total in this group?

- ☐ Family, Spouse, Partner ☐ Travel Alone
☐ Friends

Total Number of people in group _____

31. What tourism destinations did you or will you visit while in Perth?

(Tick appropriate)

- ☐ Fremantle
☐ Northbridge
☐ Hillary's Boat Harbour
☐ Swan Valley Wineries
☐ Mandurah
☐ Kings Park
☐ Rottnest Island
☐ Swan River
☐ Margaret River
☐ South Western Region
☐ Other (Please specify): _____

32. What tourism activities did you or will you participate in while in Perth?

(Tick appropriate)

- ☐ Dining out
☐ Playing golf
☐ Going to the beach
☐ Shopping
☐ Casino
☐ Nightclubs/Pub
☐ Wineries
☐ Other (Please specify): _____

33. On average, what was your average cost per day on each of these items for this trip?

\$AUD

Accommodation	
Transport	
Entertainment	
Food	
Shopping	

SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF

To finish off, we would like to ask you the following questions about yourself. This information will be used to help us understand the various views of different user groups.

34. What is your current age?

- ☐ 18 – 24
☐ 25 – 34
☐ 35 – 44
☐ 45 – 54
☐ 55 – 64
☐ 65 and over

35. Gender

- ☐ Male ☐ Female

36. What is your current yearly gross income for a year?

- ☐ Under \$20,000
☐ \$20,001 – \$40,000
☐ \$40,001 – \$60,000
☐ \$60,001 – \$80,000
☐ \$80,001 – \$100,000
☐ \$100,001 and over

37. What state do you currently live in?

(Tick appropriate)

- ☐ Victoria
☐ New South Wales
☐ South Australia
☐ Queensland
☐ Australian Capital Territory
☐ Tasmania
☐ Northern Territory

38. What is your current employment status?

- ☐ Employed part-time/Casual ☐ Not employed
☐ Employed full-time ☐ Retired
☐ Other (Please specify): _____

39. What is your highest education level?

(Tick one only)

- ☐ Postgraduate Degree
☐ Bachelor Degree
☐ Diploma or Certificate (TAFE)
☐ Secondary Education
☐ Primary Education
☐ Other (Please specify): _____

40. Which AFL club do you support?

41. Are you a member of this club?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

42. Did you travel as a member of an Organised Supporters Group?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

43. What level of passion do you have for your team? (Please circle most appropriate)

Not at all Passionate							Very Passionate
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Your time and responses are greatly appreciated. Thank you

Appendix B

Letter to Marketing Managers

Dear Marketing Manager,

My name is Grace Rinaldi, I am an Honours student at Edith Cowan University in Perth, Western Australia. As part of my Bachelor of Tourism Management (Honours) course I am undertaking a research project into sport tourism. The purpose of this study is to explore the motivations and associated tourism experiences of interstate sport tourists who travel to Western Australia to support their AFL team.

This research will be conducted by anonymous survey questionnaire which will ask a series of questions relating to demographics, tourism experiences at the destination, motivations behind the participants travel and differences between sport tourists' motivations and their tourism experiences. The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes for participants to complete. After the completion of the research the results will be used to make recommendations in relevance to both the Western Australian tourism industry and the football club on how to entice interstate sport tourists to extend their time in Western Australia. These recommendations will also provide useful for the **Football Club Name** on how to attract additional fans to interstate games.

The assistance of your **Football Club Name** with this research would be appreciated. The specific reason in which I am contacting you is in regards to finding a contact person who may be able to assist me reaching these fans, they could be the organiser of a supporters group or cheersquad. The contact details would be for one of the organisers of these groups not your entire members list. Once the research project is completed if you would like a copy of the research report we would be more than happy to supply you with a one.

If you wish to contact me for further information about this research project, you can do so on 0421 885 025 or by email at grinald0@our.ecu.edu.au.

Yours Sincerely

Grace Rinaldi
Student

Dr Dale Sanders
Dr Ruth Sibson
Supervisors

Appendix C

Information Letter for Participants

Information Letter for Interview Participants

Sport Tourism: An Exploration of the Motivations and Tourism Experiences of Australian Football League Sport Tourists Travelling to Western Australia.

The purpose of this project is to explore:

- The motivations and associated tourism experiences of interstate sport tourists who travel to Western Australia to support their AFL team.

The project is being conducted by:

- Grace Rinaldi - An honours student at Edith Cowan University for Bachelor of Tourism Management (Honours).
- This project is not associated with any government agencies or organisations that have an interest in the Australian Football League.

You were selected as a potential participant:

- Because you fit the criteria of a sport tourist.
- You are an interstate AFL fan who travelled at the time of this project.

If you choose to participate in this project you will be asked to:

- Complete an anonymous questionnaire which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

As mentioned above the questionnaire will be anonymous. Please ensure you do not write your name on the questionnaire or other comments which may make you identifiable

Participation in this project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and with no negative consequences. There are no risks associated with this research to participants. Any publications that result will not identify any participants.

If you have any questions or require any further information about the research project, please contact:

Bachelor of Tourism Management Honours Student:

Grace Rinaldi

Ph: 0421885025

E-mail: grinald0@our.ecu.edu.au

Supervisors:

Dr Dale Sander

Ph: 6304 5413

E-mail: d.sander@ecu.edu.au

Dr Ruth Sibson

Ph: 6304 5600

E-mail: r.sibson@ecu.edu.au

The student's supervisors are responsible for the ethical conduct of this project. However, if you have any concerns or complaints about the project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact:

Research Ethics Officer

Edith Cowan University

100 Joondalup Drive, Joondalup WA 6027

Phone: (08) 6304 2170 Fax: (08) 6304 2661 Email: research.ethics@ecu.edu.au

