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## Participant Satisfaction

David L. Groves

*Bowling Green State University*

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## PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION

BY

DR. DAVID L. GROVES, PROFESSOR

SCHOOL OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECREATION  
BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOWLING GREEN, OHIO 43403

### ABSTRACT

One of the measures of success has been satisfaction. It is important to understand this element in terms of components and what influences the quality of an individual's experience. The primary key is improvement. This study examined satisfaction of two world's fairs. Information and convenience services are important to improve events planning.

## PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION

### INTRODUCTION

There has been much written about the recent World's Fairs.(3) The focus of most of these written materials has been upon the financial impact and management of problems. The conclusion of most of these articles is that the future of world expositions is in doubt. Most articles by-pass the central issue of visitor satisfaction (2, 4) This is the reason that most expositions are held, not for community development, increased retail business, increase in prestige, etc. A world's fair is not a place, but ideas that are generated and these intangible elements are what brings a world community together to exhibit their products and services.(1) The purpose of this article was to examine two world class special events and determine what elements of the fairs the participant liked and why.

### STUDY POPULATION

This pilot study was conducted on tours to the 1982 and 1984 World's Fairs sponsored by several travel agencies and volunteer groups in the southeastern United States. The tour schedules were regimented in relation to time and location. The average time spent at the World's Fair site was three days. There were 205 individuals directly involved

in the study. Each of the participants attended both world's fairs. That sample was heavily skewed toward the mature citizens and females. Telephone interviews were conducted using a prescribed list of nine questions during the months of January and February 1985. The average time for the interview was 10 minutes.

## INSTRUMENTATION

Open ended questions were used in an interview format. Information was sought on likes and dislikes of each fair and why. The following classification system was used to analyze the reasons why. In each of the response categories a reason was sought to explain why an individual had a particular response. These responses were classified into four base categories: personal, social, community or environmental. An example of each is: personal influence--a lack of self-confidence, social influence--peer factors, community influence--a desire for improvement and environmental factors--noise.

## ANALYSIS

Percentage distributions were used to describe significant relationships. Only those responses that had the highest percentages were utilized in the tables shown. Percentage larger than 20% was determined to be a significant factor worthy of description. Since the "82" and "84" fairs were in the same geographic location, this offered a unique opportunity for a direct comparison of events.

## RESULTS

The best attractions at the 1982 World's Fair were the international pavilions (Table 1A). The best liked attractions at the 1984 World's Fair were the international pavilions and the inspirational exhibits. When information about influences were sought, personal and social factors were the most important with the personal factors having the most influence (Table 1B). When information was sought on the least liked attractions or elements of the 1982 World's Fair, transportation was the biggest problem (Table 2A). Transportation and access was also the biggest problem with the 1984 World's Fair. When reasons were sought about why these were the least liked attractions or elements, the primary factor was the personal influences (Table 2B).

When information was sought about how to change the fair for improvement of a quality experience, convenience services seemed to be the most important factor (1982) especially in terms of access and waiting to get into the events or attractions (Table 3). The primary element within the improvement of the 1984 World's Fair was the availability of guides or escorts to help provide greater explanation and understanding. The primary difference between the 1982 and 1984 World's Fair was the size of the site and the food services.

## IMPLICATIONS

Findings suggest that satisfaction is related to information and convenience services. The pavilions are the primary attractions, but the operations and site could be improved by the better theming. The site must provide for ease of movement, food, and entertainment services. Mega event sites are overwhelming and the customers need to know how to best utilize the site to satisfy their needs. The focus of satisfaction is personal and social. This is the reason why amenity services are very important. Atmosphere is the key element.

## REFERENCES

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TABLE 1

A

## BEST ATTRACTIONS

	"82"	"84"
Do not remember	4%	3%
International Pavilions	29%	33%
Commercial/Industrial	15%	9%
Educational	11%	15%
Entire Exposition Site	8%	6%
Inspirational Exhibits	15%	23%
Entertainment	11%	14%

TABLE 1

B

## WHY

	"82"	"84"
Do not know	3%	3%
Personal	35%	25%
Social	28%	39%
Community	7%	3%
Environment	3%	2%

TABLE 2

A

LIKED LEAST

	"82"	"84"
Do not remember	8%	2%
Commercial/Industrial	11%	9%
Restaurant/Food Services	10%	18%
Transportation/Access	22%	26%
Rides	11%	7%
Educational	7%	5%
Entertainment	4%	8%

TABLE 2

B

WHY

	"82"
Do not know	2%
Personal	38%
Social	21%
Community	7%
Environment	3%

TABLE 3

## CHANGE FAIR

	"82"	"84"
Nothing	3%	7%
Transportation/Access	19%	15%
Food Services	8%	18%
Prices	17%	15%
Lines too long (wait)	28%	11%
Too many things to see	9%	16%
Not enough things to see	7%	10%
Map	18%	14%
Guides (Escorts)	18%	22%
Cleaner	9%	7%