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### Atmospheric Music in the NBA Servicescape: Fan Involvement, Team Loyalty, Consumer Attitudes and Emotional Responses

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# **Atmospheric Music in the NBA Servicescape: Fan Involvement, Team Loyalty, Consumer Attitudes and Emotional Responses**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Within the domain of entertainment and leisure services, sport is a unique experiential service-product. Further, sport consumer behavior has changed dramatically, as advances in technology have decreased barriers to and increased the scope of sport consumption. Sport consumers can now watch live, delayed, or recorded sport events when and where they choose. Therefore, sport organizations must focus on sustainability through the creation of a competitive advantage in the staging of live sport events. Given that the NBA product is consumed within an increasingly stimulating consumptive landscape (Andrews, 2006), this study sought to examine the relationship between NBA fans' involvement, home-team attitudinal loyalty, perceptions of atmospheric music, and emotional responses to the servicescape. Data were collected, utilizing a cluster sampling procedure, during the 2010-2011 NBA season. Eight hundred, 42-item questionnaires were distributed during two games, a 53% rate of response resulted in the final sample ( $N = 425$ ). One-way MANOVAs, with follow-up descriptive discriminant analysis, were conducted to analyze the relationship between levels of NBA involvement and attitudinal loyalty to the home team and reported emotional responses to the environment, as well as reported interpretation of the atmospheric music. Results revealed heightened emotional responses among direct consumers. Further, highly involved and loyal participants reported increasingly positive perceptions of atmospheric music. Results support the significant influence servicescape elements have on the live sport-consumption experience.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

Crystal Southall received her PhD in Sport Administration from the University of Northern Colorado. She is a lecturer in the School of Business at the University of Southern Maine.

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