The Impact of Consumer Perceptions of Service Convenience on Behavioural Intentions: A Study of Health Clubs in Taiwan

Yi-Wei Chang

Doctor of Business Administration
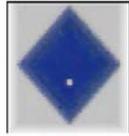
2008

VU

THE IMPACT OF CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE CONVENIENCE ON BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS: A STUDY OF HEALTH CLUBS IN TAIWAN

Submitted by

YI-WEI CHANG

BBus (Tourism & Hospitality), MBA, *La Trobe University*, Melbourne, Australia

Advisor: Professor Michael Polonsky
Chair in Marketing, *Deakin University*, Melbourne, Australia

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the

Requirements of the Degree of

DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Victoria Graduate School of Business

Faculty of Business & Law

Victoria University

Melbourne, Australia

November 2008

DECLARATION

I declare that the DBA thesis entitled: *The impact of consumer perceptions of service convenience on behavioural intentions: A study of health clubs in Taiwan* is no more than 65,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, and references. This submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge it contains no materials previously published or written by another person, nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any educational institution, expect where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis.

Yi-Wei Chang

September, 2008

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my *dear mother*, *Su-Yeah*, who passed away in the late stages of my doctoral candidature and was unable to see its completion. She was a great teacher at my high school & her continuing love, faith and belief in me lingers and constantly inspires me to go on.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to my very enthusiastic and patient principal supervisor - *Professor Michael Polonsky* - who has been a real source of support at every stage of the research. In guiding my research, he has brilliantly undertaken every responsibility of a principal supervisor from the initial conceptualisation to final editing. Without his in-depth comments, feedback, kind assistance, and constant inspiration throughout the process, this work would have never been completed. He is a masterful teacher at the School of Hospitality, Tourism & Marketing.
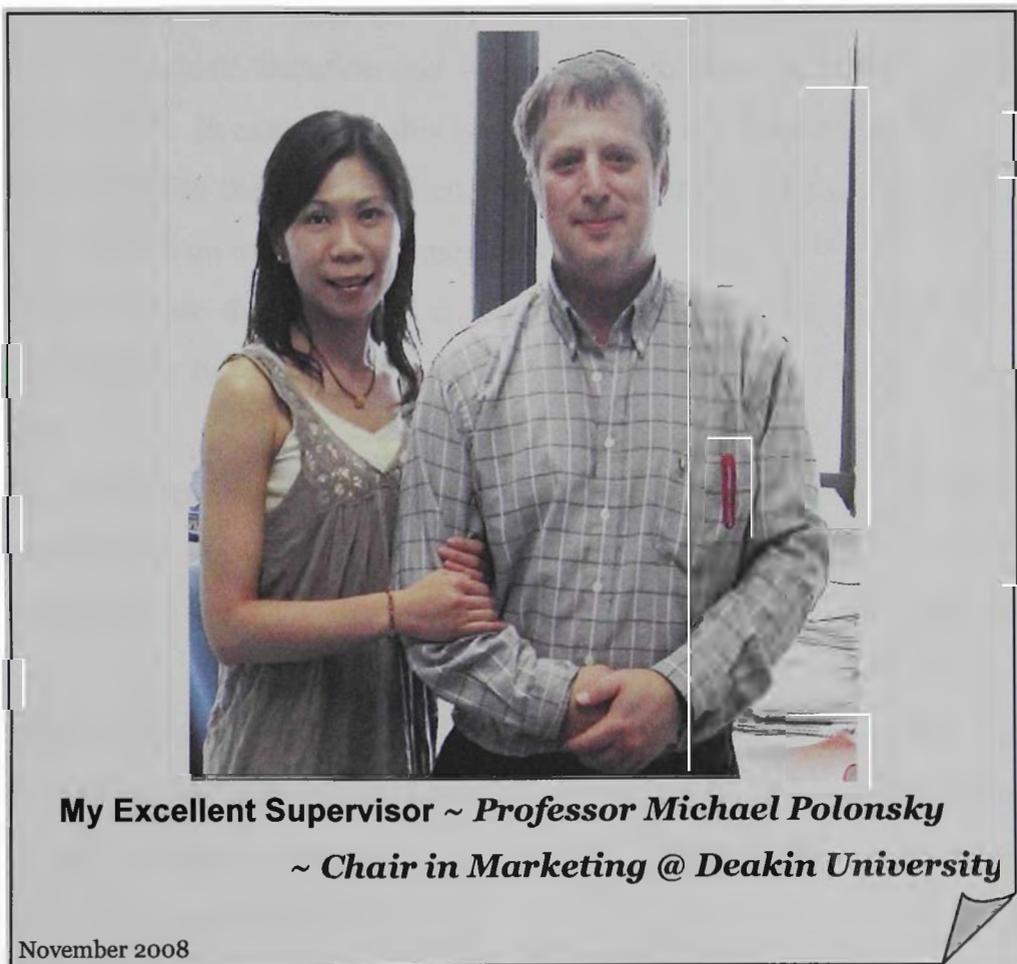
Sincere thanks to my co-supervisor - *Ms. Olga Junek* - School of Hospitality, Tourism & Marketing, for her on-going encouragement, valuable support and kind assistance. Thanks also must go to *Dr Nicholas Billington*, DBA Director (former Head of School), for his kind support in obtaining a scholarship to achieve my doctorate, as well as providing facilities for this thesis. My genuine thanks extend to *Dr Petre Santry* for her assistance with proof-reading to make this thesis more readable. I am also obliged to *Associate Professor Anne-Marie Hede*, School of Hospitality, Tourism & Marketing, for her valuable support prior to submission of the thesis.

A very special thank you goes to my undergraduate lecturer - *Mr Wiley Sims* - from School of Sport, Tourism & Hospitality Management, La Trobe University, who first opened my eyes to services marketing studies in the field of Tourism & Hospitality. He strongly encouraged me, resulting in my becoming a co-winning student of *"Best of La Trobe"*.

Without assistance from my highly supportive family in Taiwan, completing a thesis in Australia would never have been possible. I am extremely grateful to my wonderful parents *Su-Yeah* & *Chin-Kuei*, lovely sister *Ling-Ju*, and brilliant little brother *Chai-Wei*, for their constant love, patience and encouragement. This deep gratitude extends to my brilliant cousins - *Dr Cheng-Yun Pu* and *Cheng-Huang Pu* - for assisting me in survey language translation and back-translation. *Cheng-Yun*

was also always willing to share her experiences and provide me with valuable advice for my research whenever I needed it.

Last but not least, my sincere thanks are due to the owners, managers and staff of all the health clubs who participated in this research, for assisting me with data collection. This thesis could not have been completed without the active participation of respondents from their health clubs.

My Excellent Supervisor ~ *Professor Michael Polonsky*
~ Chair in Marketing @ Deakin University

November 2008

ABSTRACT

Convenience - the ability to reduce consumers' time and energy costs in purchasing or using goods and services - has become an important attribute for time poor consumers. Berry, Seiders and Grewal (2002) proposed that there are five types of service convenience comprising decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit convenience. However, little research exists, other than that conducted by Colwell, Aung, Kanetkar and Holden (2008), and Seiders, Voss, Godfrey and Grewal (2007) exploring Berry et al.'s five components. The focus of this thesis is to empirically examine consumer perceptions of multiple types of service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002) and to explore the effect of those components on overall consumer satisfaction and two consumer behavioural intentions (repurchase intention and word-of-mouth communication) in a leisure setting in Taiwan. In examining this issue, the thesis has three main aims:

1) To investigate the impact of consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction;

2) To investigate the impact of consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience on consumer behavioural intentions toward their health clubs; and

3) To investigate whether overall consumer satisfaction mediates the relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions towards the health clubs.

This thesis presents and discusses empirical findings from a survey of 443 consumers who attended three different Taiwanese health clubs. Their perceptions of type of of service convenience are examined using multiple regression analysis and mediating regression analysis.

Specifically, the results of the survey found that both consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions are affected by 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'. Perceptions of 'access convenience' also affect consumers'

behavioural intentions, but not satisfaction. The results also provide strong evidence that consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' are partially mediated through satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions. This implies that consumers may form future intentions towards service providers when they have positively evaluated their experience in terms of 'benefit' and 'post-benefit convenience' with the services. The findings of this thesis represent an important step forward in understanding the relationship between service convenience and post-consumption behaviours by investigating the hypothesised relationships proposed in the conceptual model.

This research, in conjunction with Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007), provides a foundation for future studies into service convenience by suggesting that convenience is a complex construct comprising five types of service convenience. Specifically, this evaluation of impact on consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience in relation to overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions, may assist service firms in general, and health clubs in particular, to build convenience into their overall offerings. In this way they should be able to gain a sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace (Dube, Renaghan & Miller 1994).

Keywords Convenience, Services marketing, Scale development, Satisfaction, Behavioural intentions, Mediating, Leisure

This page is intentionally blank

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

This page is intentionally blank

1 INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER ONE

Chapter One provides an introduction to the thesis. Convenience - the ability to reduce consumer's time and energy costs in purchasing or using goods and services - has become an important product/service attribute for time poor consumers. Berry, Seiders and Grewal (2002) proposed that convenience can be measured using a five-component measure of construct comprising decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit. This thesis seeks to empirically test Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience in one service setting. The effect of the five types of service convenience are assessed on overall consumer satisfaction and consumer future intentions towards service providers for one service.

This research is described in the following seven subsections of Chapter One. **Section 1.1** presents issues associated with the research background. Convenience is an important product and service attribute for time-constrained consumers and consequently is increasingly of interest to service marketers (Berry & Cooper 1990). While service marketers have generally not extensively examined the role of convenience as a consumer evaluation attribute of services (Berry et al. 2002; Brown 1990, 1989; Yale & Venkatesh 1986), the interest in convenience within marketing has increased over time, and in particular, with Berry et al. (2002) proposing there are five types of service convenience.

However, little research exists, other than that conducted by Colwell, Aung, Kanetkar and Holden (2008), and Seiders, Voss, Godfrey and Grewal (2007) thatexplores Berry et al.'s five types, which appeared after the data for this thesis was collected. This thesis builds on the work of Berry et al. (2002) by seeking to empirically test Berry et al.'s five types of service convenience as distinctive attributes of service convenience.

For the purpose of this research, five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit) will be examined, to assess their effect on overall consumer satisfaction with the service, as well as consumers' behavioural intentions towards service providers, in one service setting.

Section 1.2 outlines the relevance of leisure and recreation as a service sector, with particular emphasis on the health club industry, the industry examined in this thesis. **Section 1.3** highlights the research problem and formulates the research questions of the thesis, which explores relationships between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002). Together with overall consumer satisfaction, and two consumer behavioural intentions (repurchase intention and word-of-mouth communication). This evaluation of impact on consumer perceptions of service convenience in relation to consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions, may assist service firms in general, and health clubs in particular, to incorporate convenience into their overall offerings. In this way they should be able to gain sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace (Dube, Renaghan & Miller 1994). **Section 1.4** describes the research objective of this thesis, including three specific aims in order to answer the research questions addressed in Section 1.3. The research scope including methodology used to achieve the aims is briefly discussed in **Section 1.5**. The structure of the thesis is overviewed in **Section 1.6**, and **Section 1.7** summarises the materials discussed in Chapter One.

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Convenience, i.e. the ability of consumers to easily access and use goods and services is increasingly important to time poor consumers (Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). Some firms are in fact positioning their services as being more convenient than competitors. For example, many financial institutions promote Internet banking as a vehicle for saving consumers time and effort (J.D. Power & Associates 2006; McLain 2006; Ai-Hawari 2005; Flavian, Torres & Guinaliu 2004; Gerrard & Cunningham 2004; Sathye 1999; Balmer & Stotvig 1997). As early as 1987, O'Shaughnessy suggested that consumers make product choice decisions, partly based upon 'time and effort generated by the purchase', and that consumers' view 'speed and ease' as an important basis for choice in the purchase of some products. He suggested that minimising time, physical and mental effort increases purchase intent, and identified these factors as the key benefits of using convenience with attribute products.

The growing importance of convenience is partly related to four environmental changes that contribute to the growing consumer desire for products and services that help conserve time or take less time to consume (Scholderer & Grunert 2005; Shaheed 2004; Sheu, McHaney & Babber 2003; Berry et al. 2002; Voli 1998; Berry & Copper 1990; Fram & DuBrin 1988; Benway, Grover, Brott, Foust, Atchison & Eklund 1987; Etgar 1978; Anderson 1972). These environmental factors are:

- *demographic changes* including the increased participation of women in the paid work force and the growth of single-parent households (Carrigan & Szmigin 2004; Hill 2003; Bittman & Wajcman 2000; Yale & Venkatesh 1986; Schaninger & Allen 1981; Strober & Weinberg 1977);

- *economic changes* including increased levels of household income and less spare time, creating the need and opportunity to purchase time-saving goods and services (Scholderer & Grunert 2005; Shaheed 2004; Economist 2003; Voli 1998; Fram & DuBrin 1988; Etgar 1978);

- *lifestyle/social changes*, including an interest in leisure or entertainment activities motivating household members to value their non-work time more (Reimers & Clulow 2004; 2000; Hill 2003; Southerton, Shove & Ward 2001; Voli 1998; Fram & DuBrin 1988); and

- *technological advances* reducing time inputs for consumption activities (Colwell et al. 2008; Carrigan & Szmigin 2004; Nykiel 2001; Voli 1998; Berry & Cooper 1990; Fram & DuBrin 1988; Etgar 1978).

Convenience-orientation generally refers to individual's preference to minimise their expenditure of time and/or human energy, which alternative uses, i.e. 'if I do '*A*', I cannot do '*B*'' (Morganosky 1986). Research in this area has characterised consumers as being increasingly convenience-oriented, because of increased life/work demands making consumers time-poor (Berry 1979). Anderson (1971) was the first researcher to empirically examine time-saving and energy-saving motivations associated with convenience-oriented consumers. He defined convenience as: "1) satisfies some immediate want or need, and 2) releases time or energy, or both for alternative uses" (p. 179). This definition has been widely used in consumer behaviour and marketing literature.

The discussions of convenience in the literature have focused primarily on attempting to determine the relationships between various characteristics of convenience-oriented consumers or households and convenience consumption, rather than concentrating on the domain of the convenience construct (Berry et al. 2002; Brown & McEnally 1992). Yale and Venkatesh (1986, p. 416) suggested that past research was limited and "some measurement research is needed to identify behavioural measures of convenience consumption, which are not confounded with other factors".

Within the literature much of the research has explored convenience using a single item measure relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort. The fact that these single item studies have conceptualised the construct differently provides preliminary evidence that there are multiple types of service convenience

(Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990). Berry et al. (2002) explored convenience, and proposed a more comprehensive measurement of service convenience across time-saving and effort-saving domains within a services context. They suggested a) the convenience construct encompasses consumer perceptions of time, and b) effort expenditures to acquire goods/services. In addition to this, they suggest that there are five types of service convenience: (1) decision convenience, (2) access convenience, (3) transaction convenience, (4) benefit convenience, and (5) post-benefit convenience. These five types examine the all aspects of service convenience. However, little research other than Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) exists that explores Berry et al.'s five types, and these papers appeared in literature after the conceptualisation of this thesis. Therefore, this thesis focused on building on Berry et al.'s (2002) work by examining convenience as five types ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit convenience in one service setting. These are examined as distinctive attributes of service convenience and are measured separately. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.4.

Within the marketing literature, a key post-consumption concept is satisfaction (Grace & O'Cass 2004; Hede 2004; Voss & Parasuraman 1995). Consumer satisfaction has long been recognised as playing an essential role in the development of ongoing relationships with their consumers ensuring organisational survival (Athanassopoulos, Gounaris & Stathakopoulos 2001; Bejou & Palmer 1998). Satisfaction is not only necessary for expanding a business, but is needed for acquiring repeat businesses and gaining a larger market share, both of which improve profitability and performance (Barsky 1992). Generally, past research has suggested that there is a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions toward service providers (Mason, Tideswell & Roberts 2006; Zboja & Voorhees 2006; Wong 2004; Cronin, Brady & Hult 2000; Bitner 1990). While behavioural measures of loyalty are often included in service quality models as an outcome variable (Bloemer, de Ruyter & Wetzels 1999), its link with consumers' preferences and recommendations to

others make it an important outcome for organisations (i.e. Hede 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999).

In the convenience literature, waiting time is one part of convenience that has been explored, and impacts on consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions toward service providers (Seiders & Berry 1998; Kumar, Kalwani & Dada 1997; Hui & Tse 1996). It has been suggested that a consumer waiting in line for a service is potentially a dissatisfied consumer, because consumers may view waiting as 'time lost', which could have been used more productively (Hui & Tse 1996; Carmon, Shanthikumar & Carmon. 1995; Leclerc, Schmitt & Dube 1995; Maister 1985). In regard to the present thesis, it is assumed that building convenience into the service delivery process will not only increase consumers' levels of satisfaction with a service but also increase the likelihood that consumers will behave positively (i.e. repeat purchase intentions and spreading positive word-of-mouth).

1.2 LEISURE/RECREATION SERVICES CONTEXT

The number of service industries in developed countries has grown (Guillard 2006; Gronroos 1992) and they are increasingly important to the economy (Guillard 2006; Franklin 1997). For example, in Australia and other developed countries around 80 percent of the workforce is involved in the service sector (Lovelock, Patterson & Walker 1998). In the US labour force, the numbers of people employed in the service sector rose from 66 percent to 80 percent between 1970 and 2004 (Guillard 2006), and in 1999, 75 percent of the workforce in the UK was engaged in service industries (Mudie & Cottam 1999; Waller 1999).

As lifestyles change, consumers with increased disposable income spend more of their income on recreation and leisure pursuits, which are generally service focused (van Eijck & Mommaas 2004). Leisure broadly defined (i.e. including tourism) generates over $3.5 trillion in Gross Domestic Product, and is one of the

world's largest and fastest growing industries (Crossley, Jamieson & Brayley 2001). The leisure industry employs approximately 231 million people worldwide, accounts for almost eleven percent of the world's gross domestic product, and is a leading producer of tax revenues (World Travel & Tourism Council: WTTC 2006). Within the US, leisure related industries (including tourism) are a major contribution to the US economy (Altalo & Hale 2002), are one of the top three industries in every US state (Crossley et al. 2001).

Within the leisure setting Shaheed (2004) identified there were five groups of consumers who face varying degrees of time constraints in terms of leisure activities:

(1) **busy enough**: consumers who believe they have achieved their own work balance;

(2) **time rich**: consumers who have a lot of time on their hands during the week and at weekends;

(3) **leisure constrained**: consumers who feel they do not have enough time for leisure pursuits;

(4) **chilled**: consumers who are busy but finding time to relax, cannot see the point in rushing and trying to avoid doing so; and

(5) **time short**: consumers who feel starved of time.

While the two largest groups were those classified as busy enough (33%) and time rich (30%), the other three groups, representing 37 percent of consumers and face significant time constrains that limit their ability to consume leisure activities. Thus, convenience would likely be an important service dimension for these consumers. This is further supported by the fact that globally consumers have identified that a lack of time inhibits their ability to participate in exercise (Shaheed 2004; Centre for Population Health 1998; Fitness of Australians 1992). As such convenience of opportunities for leisure, which can include exercise, will potentially have multiple benefits to consumers, marketers and society.

One service setting that integrates leisure and health activities are health clubs. This link is important as it is generally recognised by consumers that more healthy

activities, such as participation in health clubs, increased physical and mental well being (Kraus 2001; Armstrong, Bauman & Davies 2000). This might explain why health clubs have become more popular (Christchurch City Council 2002; Tai 2002), with USA health club memberships increasing 51 percent in the decade of the 1990s (International Health, Racquet & Sports Club Association: IHRSA 2005). The interest in health club participation is indeed global. In Taiwan, for example, there are over 455,000 health club members, representing the third largest club population as percent of population amongst all Asian countries, after Japan and Malaysia (IHRSA 2005).

Despite consumers' awareness of the need to exercise, a high proportion of Asian health club members are not active enough to derive health benefits from their physical activities (Tai 2002; Choi 2001; Chiang 2000). US research has also shown that among those who exercise, about half of consumers will stop such exercise plans mid-way through health club contracts (Dishman 2001). Sawyer and Smith (1999) have found that US health clubs generally lose about 40 percent of their consumers a year, and Boyd and Nielsen (1989) found that consumers who join health clubs have a 75 ~ 80 percent chance of stopping their attendance within the first four months of joining. Sawyer and Smith (1999) suggested that the ability to retain existing memberships and reduce attrition rates are two major challenges for health club providers. Thus organisational positioning, including convenience attributes, may be an important point of differentiation and assist individual clubs reducing discontinued usage.

From a service perspective, health clubs generally provide people with a climate-controlled facility, offering a variety of equipment and the availability of professional or trained personnel to facilitate safe use of facilities (Ko 2000). They are special businesses that provide fitness and leisure services aimed at improving consumers' health and stamina, as well as offering social interactivity (Chiang 2000). The existence of numerous health clubs presents a great variety of choice for potential health club members. Thus, organisations that can build

convenience into their overall offerings should be able to have sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace (Dube et al. 1994).

In accordance with the above discussion, building convenience into the service delivery process will not only increase consumers' levels of satisfaction with services but also increase the likelihood that consumers will behave positively (i.e. repeat purchase intentions and spreading positive word-of-mouth). The focus of this thesis is to empirically examine consumer perceptions of each of the five types of service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002) and to explore the effect of these types on overall consumer satisfaction and two consumer behavioural intentions (word-of-mouth communication and repurchase intention) in a leisure setting in Taiwan. The evaluation of this impact on consumer perceptions of service convenience in relation to consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions, may assist service firms in general, and health clubs in particular, to build convenience into their overall offerings. In this way they should be able to gain sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace (Dube et al. 1994). Furthermore, the theoretical model presented in this thesis can be used in researching other service contexts.

1.3 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

This section identifies the research problems to be explored, and formulate the research questions of the thesis.

Convenience has become an important product attribute for time-constrained consumers and as such is increasingly a concept of interest to marketers. Within the literature much of the research has explored convenience using a single item measure relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort. Additionally that these single items have been conceptualised differently is some evidence that theer are multiple types of service convenience (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990). The interest in convenience

within marketing has increased over time, and in particular, with Berry et al. (2002) proposing five types of service convenience, comprising decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit. In their broader conceptualisation of service convenience, they proposed three items that can be used to measure each of their five types (i.e. a 15-item inventory).

While Berry et al. (2002) did not test these items, they formed the basis of Colwell et al.'s (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) empirical works to develop and expand to seventeen items. Seiders et al. (2007) were the next to examine a service convenience based on five types, using a 17-item inventory. They built directly on the work of Berry et al. (2002), as two of the co-authors in this work were also involved in the earlier conceptualisation. More recently, Colwell et al. (2008) also had empirically tested of a 17-item inventory measuring the five types of service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002) in the context of consumers' use of personal cellular telephone and internet services. Using an on-line survey method and focusing on undergraduate students as a sample may limit its generalisability to other contexts and respondents (Colwell et al. 2008; Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran 2001). This may also affect the generalisability of the results. Within both these late works, the five types examined are the same as those in Berry et al. (2002).

As part of their empirical research Seiders et al. (2007) sought to ensure that the domain of each of the five types was captured, as well as adapting the items to a specific service context - retailing. Within Seiders et al.'s (2007) conceptualisation of the five types of service convenience, they expanded the items from three to four, for 'access convenience' and 'benefit convenience', based on a process of in-depth interviews and quantitative testing (detailed in Section 4.3.1). Similarly, using the same process, Colwell et al. (2008) expanded the Berry et al.'s items from three to four, for 'decision convenience' and 'access convenience'. As such, the definitions of the constructs proposed by Colwell et al. (2008) are slightly different to Berry et al.'s (2002) original constructs. This is

more a manifestation of the specific context explored by Colwell et al. (2008), whereas the original definitions were proposed to apply to services generally.

The main implication of these differences is that some of the items proposed may not be applicable to all settings. For example, Seiders et al.'s (2007) items used to explore 'benefit convenience' were especially designed for merchandise rather than the service experience itself. It would be expected that the specific definition of the convenience construct may differ slightly, based on the setting and/or culture, which is often suggested in regards to assessing aspects of service quality, for example SERVQUAL (i.e. Andaleeb & Conway 2006; Olorunniwo & Hsu 2006; Olorunniwo, Hsu & Udo 2006; Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Alexandris, Dimitriadis & Markata 2002; Thrane 2002). As a result, domain specific constructs are not a limitation of this approach and are in fact critical when exploring convenience in different settings. While the items used in this thesis are marginally different to those of Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007), the results of this thesis, which were undertaken prior to Colwell et al.'s (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) published works, will enable an exploration of the generalisability of the Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience, in terms of another service context. This thesis seeks to fill this gap by empirically testing Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience; and builds on Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al (2007) research as well. Convenience will be encompassed by five types of service convenience ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit. These are examined as distinctive attributes of service convenience and are measured separately.

Convenience has been identified as a key dimension of service quality (Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999). Although the relationships between service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions have been investigated to a great extent in the literature and linkages are well-established by empirical studies (i.e. Dhurup, Singh & Surujlal 2006; Yuksel 2001; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Moutinho & Smith 2000; Levesque & McDougall 1996), there is limited empirical research specifically addressing the relationship between consumer

perceptions of service convenience, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. This is particularly so, in relation to the adoption of multiple constructs of service convenience which have not generally been explored. As mentioned earlier, in the convenience literature, while Seiders et al. (2007) built directly on the work of Berry et al. (2002) who have also suggested that service convenience component can positively affect overall consumer satisfaction, Seiders et al. (2007) did not empirical testing of linking these two areas. In another more recent study of service convenience, Colwell et al. (2008) examined the relationships between the five components of service convenience proposed by Berry et al. (2002) and overall satisfaction in the context of Canada telecommunications. Within Colwell et al.'s (2008) study, results showed that three types of service convenience including 'decision', 'benefit' and 'post-benefit', statistically significantly impact on overall consumer satisfaction. However, the definitions of the constructs proposed by Colwell et al. (2008) are more a manifestation of the specific context, whereas Berry et al.'s (2002) original definitions were proposed to apply to services generally.

Apart from service convenience affecting overall consumer satisfaction, convenience should also positively influence consumer behavioural intentions. Generally, it has been suggested that there is a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions toward service providers (Mason et al. 2006; Zboja & Voorhees 2006; Wong 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Bitner 1990). While loyalty is often included in service quality models as an outcome variable (Bloemer et al. 1999), in the service quality literature, convenience (i.e. providing service in a timely manner) is an important factor used to determine consumers' preferences and recommendations to others (i.e. Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999). In regard to the present thesis, it is assumed that building convenience into the service delivery process should increase the likelihood that consumers will return and recommend services to others. This thesis will explore Berry et al.'s (2002) five types and how they impact on overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions, using indicators of word-of-mouth communication (WOM) and repurchase intention, within a specific service context.

Furthermore, the multiple roles (i.e. an indirect effect) of consumer satisfaction in the mediating, the relationship of service quality, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions, have been examined in a number of studies modelling these variables (i.e. Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet, Tynan & Money 1999). For example, some researchers have indicated that service quality influences behavioural intentions only through value and satisfaction, whereas others argue that service quality directly affects behavioural intentions (Cronin et al. 2000; Gremler & Brown 1996). The mediating relationship of consumer satisfaction in relation to service quality has been the focus of numerous studies (i.e. Tina-Cole & Illum 2006; Tian-Cole & Crompton 2003; Thrane 2002; Baker & Crompton 2000; Bloemer, de Ruyter & Peeters 1998; Taylor 1997; Gottlieb, Grewal & Brown 1994; Anderson & Sullivan 1993); however, the mediating role of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of the types of service convenience and behavioural intentions of consumers has not yet been explored. As such, this thesis attempts to explore the mediating effect of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience (as defined by Berry et al. 2002) and consumer's behavioural intentions toward the service providers (i.e. an indirect effect).

The foregoing discussions identify the research gaps in the literature, and suggest that the link between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience as defined by Berry et al. 2002), consumer satisfaction and consumers' behavioural intentions toward their service providers, needs to be explored. Accordingly, the following three research questions have been created out of the discussion for this thesis:

Research Question 1: What is the impact of the five types of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction?

Research Question 2: Do higher consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience affect consumer behavioural intentions?

Research Question 3: Does overall consumer satisfaction mediate the relationship of each type of service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions toward service providers?

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE THESIS

In order to answer the above three research questions, this thesis aims to empirically explore the effect of Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intention toward service providers. The objective of this thesis therefore will focus on three specific aims as follow:

1) To investigate the impact of the five types of service convenience (decision convenience, access convenience, transaction convenience, benefit convenience, and post-benefit convenience) on overall consumer satisfaction;

2) To investigate the impact of the five types of service convenience (decision convenience, access convenience, transaction convenience, benefit convenience, and post-benefit convenience) on consumer behavioural intentions (i.e. repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth); and

3) To investigate whether overall consumer satisfaction mediates the relationship for each service convenience component (decision convenience, access convenience, transaction convenience, benefit convenience, and post-benefit convenience) and consumer behavioural intentions toward the service providers.

1.5 RESEARCH SCOPE

In order to specify the role of service convenience in the formation of consumers' behavioural intentions towards their service providers, the review of convenience, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions research was described in the literature review (see Chapter Two). To undertake this examination, a quantitative research approach was employed in this thesis to investigate a model of proposed relationships amongst variables and to determine the important factor among the five types of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction level, as well as on consumer behavioural intentions toward service providers. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed on-site to consumers who attended three different health clubs in Taiwan, by heath club employees. The targeted sample size in this thesis was 540 health club members (180 members per club).

In this thesis existing scales that were available in the literature were used for most of the variables considering their widely recognition and acceptability in the service marketing literature. This research adapted the existing but *un*tested scales (at least at the time the thesis data was collected) proposed by Berry et al. (2002) in relation to their five types of service convenience ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit. Within their work, Berry et al. (2002) proposed that three items for each of the five constructs, i.e. a 15-item inventory were developed. Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) have also since determined that the five types of service convenience empirically hold in two countries (Canada & US) and two settings (telecommunications & retailing). Seven-point Likert scales were used (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree), where respondents were asked about their perceptions of the provider based on existing experiences. The wording of questions was changed to fit each the five types of service convenience for the specific service being examined, i.e. health clubs (as was done by Seiders et al. 2007 and Colwell et al. 2008). The other existing scales that were used in this thesis include overall consumer satisfaction and consumer behavioural intentions, using seven-point scales.

The reliability analysis and validity coefficient for each of the composite construct are examined to test the construct validity. Following the procedure suggested by Churchill (1979), the reliability of constructs was evaluated by examining the coefficient Alphas. The data collected were then checked using the results of the correlation between constructs. This research utilised correlation analysis for two purposes, firstly to examine the presence of multicollinearity among the independent variables, and secondly to explore the relationships among the constructs. Hypotheses were investigated using multiple regression analysis, and mediating regression analysis.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

The thesis consists of six chapters. This thesis follows the procedures as shown in Figure 1.1, which are briefly described below.

Chapter 1 presents the introduction to the study, including research background, objective, outline and procedure. It is evident from Sections 1.1 and 1.2 that marketers attempt to include the interests and the needs of multiple types of convenience constructs into overall service delivery process, within the services environment, when designing strategy. While service marketers have generally not extensively examined the role of service convenience as a consumer evaluation attribute of services (Berry et al. 2002; Brown 1990, 1989; Yale & Venkatesh 1986), the interest in convenience within marketing has increased over time, and in particular, with Berry et al. (2002) proposing a five types of service convenience. However, little research other than Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) exists that explores Berry et al.'s five types. The focus of this thesis is to empirically examine consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002) in a leisure setting in Taiwan. The effect of the five types is assessed on overall consumer satisfaction and consumer future intentions towards service providers for one service.

CHAPTER 1
Research Objective
Research Questions

CHAPTER 2
Review of Literature

CHAPTER 3
Research Framework
Model of Service Convenience (Figure 3.1)
Hypotheses

CHAPTER 4
Quantitative Research Methods

CHAPTER 5
Data Analysis & Discussion

CHAPTER 6
Conclusions & Recommendations

Figure 1.1 Research procedures.

Chapter 2 undertakes a review of the service convenience and consumer behaviour literature. This discussion includes an overview of convenience theory, although the discussions in the literature have focused primarily on attempting to determine the relationships between various characteristics of convenience-oriented consumers or households and convenience consumption, rather than concentrating on the full domain of the convenience construct (Berry et al. 2002; Brown & McEnally 1992). The specific literature within the marketing area that has explored convenience using a single item measure relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort. The fact that these single item studies have conceptualised the construct differently is in fact the first evidence that convenience comprised different types (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990).

While the inseparable services required consumers' participation (Ngobo 2004; Berry et al. 2002; Seiders et al. 2000; McColl, Challaghan & Palmer 1998), consumer satisfaction has assumed a central role in building consumer behavioural loyalty. This is important as, in which a successful relationship between buyers and sellers is required to create and sustain a long-term loyalty relationship (Tian-Cole, Crompton & Willson 2002; Baker & Crompton 2000; Davis & Vollmann 1990). Therefore, to better understand consumer behaviour within the service context, this chapter also reviews the concepts of consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. They are not only necessary for expanding a business, but are also needed for acquiring repeat business and gaining a larger market share and, both of which improve profitability and performance (Barsky 1992).

Chapter 3 reviews the theoretical concepts related to service convenience, relating to the relationship between overall consumer satisfaction and their behavioural intentions. The review presents a way in which these concepts can be used to formulate hypotheses to address the research questions proposed in this thesis. A better understanding of the relationship among these variables is needed to understand the nature of the role of service convenience encompassing five

types: decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit in the formation of consumer behavioural intentions (i.e. spread positive word-of-mouth and intentions to repurchase) towards service providers. To satisfy this, a conceptual model, which illustrates how consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience relate to overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions within one service, was developed based on previous literature. Further, the relationships among the thesis constructs were hypothesised based on the literature are proposed, which are then empirical tested. A series of causal relationships among these constructs derived from this framework are then discussed and hypothesised to be empirically tested, along with the three main hypotheses, each with a subset of five types, one for each type of service convenience.

The research methodology is presented in **Chapter 4** and provides a detailed discussion of the methods used to conduct the quantitative enquiry, including the establishment of the survey instrument, the pre-tests, data collection and analysis procedures and reliability and validity testing of the scale for evaluating consumer perceptions of service convenience. This process has been guided by Churchill's (1979), framework for scale development supported in the literature (i.e. Colwell et al. 2008; Grace 2005; Karatepe, Yavas & Babakus 2005; Oh 2005; Ko 2000; Voss & Parasuraman 1995). The techniques for testing the hypotheses are based on multiple regression analysis and mediated regression analysis. The multiple regression approach has also been used in previous research looking at service quality (i.e. Burns, Graefe & Absher 2003; Kandampully & Schartanto 2000; Bloemer et al. 1998), and mediated regression analysis has also been used within the services context (i.e. Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999).

Chapter 5 discusses the analysis of the data collected in the survey and presents the findings in conjunction with relevant literature. This examination serves several purposes related to testing a conceptual framework developed in this thesis. Section 5.1 examines the response rate, demographic characteristics of the sample, and descriptive analyses. The data are also examined for normality (i.e.

skewness and kurtosis) in order to determine the validity of the underlying assumptions about the data required for the various analytical techniques employed in this thesis. In Section 5.2 the reliability analysis and correlation analysis for each of the composite constructs are examined to test the construct validity. Section 5.3 examines the research model, by testing the three hypotheses and subset of five types of service convenience, using multiple regression analysis and mediating regression analysis. Results are interpreted and discussed in relation to the hypotheses and relevant literature. Section 5.4 draws together the analysis undertaken in the chapter and summarises the findings of the chapter.

The final chapter, **Chapter 6** is to draw the material discussed in this thesis together for the presentation of conclusions, implications and recommendations based on the result of analysis. Section 6.1 summarises the findings discussed in Chapter Five. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed in Section 6.2. Section 6.3 identifies the limitations associated with this thesis. Directions for further research to extend this work are discussed in Section 6.4. Lastly, Section 6.5 provides the final conclusions drawn based on discussion of the research findings.

1.7 CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER ONE

Chapter One has introduced the rationale for exploring service convenience, marketing and consumer behaviour, which is the focus of the thesis. Convenience has become an important product attribute for time-constrained consumers and as such is increasingly a concept of interest to marketers. The interest in convenience within marketing has increased over time, and in particular, with Berry et al. (2002) proposing a five types of service convenience, which was later empirically supported by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007). This thesis builds on the work of Berry et al. (2002) and seeks to apply the measures of consumer service convenience that Berry et al. proposed ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit convenience. These are examined as

distinctive attributes of service convenience and are measured separately. The affect of these types are assessed on overall consumer satisfaction and consumer future intentions toward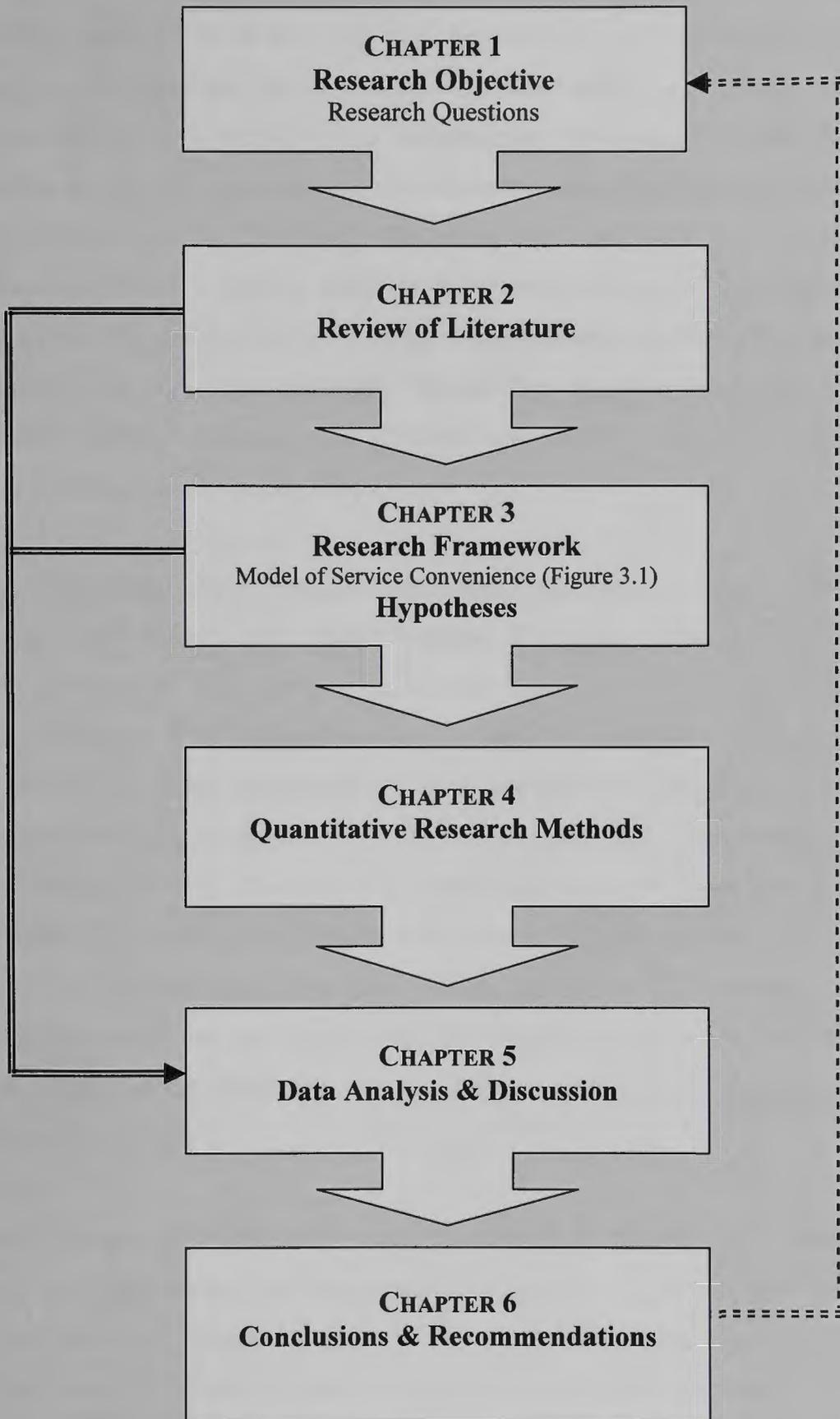s service providers within one service. Organisations that can build convenience into their overall offerings should be able to have sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace (Colwell et al. 2008; Dube et al. 1994).

This chapter has also set out the structure of the remaining five chapters in this thesis. The remainder of the thesis follows the outline described in Section 1.6 (refer to Figure 1.1). The next chapter presents a review of the literature related to the present thesis.

This page is intentionally blank

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER TWO

This chapter reviews the theoretical concepts related to service convenience, and the relationship between overall consumer satisfaction and the behavioural consumer outcomes. As mentioned in Chapter One, consumers' time scarcity has resulted in a 'time-buying' consumer who desires to purchase and use goods or services that assist in time and effort (Berry & Cooper 1990). The interest in convenience within marketing has increased over time, and in particular, with Berry et al. (2002) proposing a five types of service convenience However, little research exists, other than those conducted by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) that explores Berry et al.'s five types. This thesis seeks to fill this gap by further empirically testing Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience; and builds on Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) as well.

Within services marketing research, a key post-consumption concept is satisfaction (Grace & O'Cass 2004; Hede 2004; Voss & Parasuraman 1995). Generally, it has been suggested that there is a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions in past research (Mason et al. 2006; Zboja & Voorhees 2006; Wong 2004). In the context of services, convenience is stressed as an important factor in determining consumer satisfaction and consumers' behavioural intentions, but there is limited empirical research specifically addressing the relationship between consumer perceptions of

service convenience, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. This is particularly so, in relation to the use of five types of service convenience. In regard to the present thesis, it is assumed that building convenience into the service delivery process should increase the likelihood that consumers will return and recommend services to others. Within this chapter, four subsections will the review discusses how these concepts and gaps within the convenience literature, which is used as a basis for further discussion about constructs chosen for testing the proposed conceptual model of this thesis.

Section 2.1 defines convenience and identifies the ways that convenience has been defined in the past. A key benefit of convenience, as a product attribute, is its ability to reduce consumer's time and energy costs (Anderson & Shugan 1991; Brown 1990; O'Shaughnessy 1987; Yale & Venkatesh 1986). Within the literature much of the research has explored convenience using a single item measure relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort (Brown & McEnally 1992). The fact that these single item studies have been conceptualised differently is evidence that there are multiple types of convenience (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990). Past research has focused almost exclusively on examining factors that increase the demand for convenience goods or services that reduce consumers' time expenditure (Brown & McEnally 1992) rather than examining the role of convenience as attribute of goods and services (Berry et al. 2002; Brown 1990, 1989; Yale & Venkatesh 1986). Further, Berry et al. (2002) proposed a five types of service convenience across time-saving and effort-saving domains. However, little research exists, other than that conducted by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) exploring Berry et al.'s five types of service convenience. This thesis will build on Berry et al.'s (2002) work by examining the five types of service convenience in one service setting, but will make references to Colwell et al.'s (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) latter works as the data for this thesis was collected in 2006, prior to Colwell et al.'s (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) works appearing in the literature. Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience are examined as distinctive attributes of service convenience and are measured separately.

Section 2.2 reviews the literature on consumer satisfaction. Consumer satisfaction has assumed a central role in building consumer behavioural loyalty. This is important as a successful relationship between buyers and sellers is required to create and sustain a long-term loyalty relationship (Tian-Cole et al. 2002; Baker & Crompton 2000; Davis & Vollmann 1990). Thus service providers need to understand the concept of service convenience, as it is inseparable to the nature of services and requires co-production (Ngobo 2004; Berry et al. 2002; Seiders, Berry & Gresham 2000; McColl et al. 1998). Based on the review of literature, consumer satisfaction has been conceptualised various ways by different authors, including both transaction-specific satisfaction and cumulative satisfaction. Although the expectations disconfirmation model has been dominant in consumer satisfaction research (Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Burns et al. 2003; Santos & Boote 2003), other consumer satisfaction research has focused on only the performance measurement, rather than obtaining mathematical differences between performance and expectations. This research has suggested that assessing disconfirmation of expectations in a service performance context may mean that results can only be generalised, and potentially are not processed unless they evaluated pre- and post-purchase experience (Oliver & Winer 1987; Westbrook & Reilly1983). Absher (1998) explained, "the simplified performance-measures-only model seems capable of providing important answers about visitors' desired conditions and the extent to which they are actually experienced" (p. 41). Therefore, in this thesis, a performance-based approach has been adopted.

Generally, a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and consumers' behavioural intentions toward service providers is acknowledged (Mason et al. 2006; Zboja & Voorhees 2006; Wong 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Bitner 1990). **Section 2.3** reviews the consumer loyalty literature. While loyalty is often included in service quality models as an outcome variable, a range of behavioural measures of loyalty in relation to services could be considered as outcomes of actions, such as repeat purchase (i.e. Tian-Cole et al. 2002; Anderson & Mittal 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Wakefield & Blodgett 1996). Although researchers

have developed a composite approach to measuring consumer loyalty, many prefer to view behavioural intention as distinct from attitude (Soderlund, Vilgon & Gunnarsson 2001; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). That is, behaviour is directly influenced by intentions to behave, and, in turn, behaviour intentions are determined by individual's attitude toward performing a behaviour and felt subjective norm (belief) that one should act in a given way (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) has been explored in several studies under the assumption that attitudes actually cause behavioural intentions (i.e. Bloemer, Odekerken-Schroder & Kestens 2003; Bright 2003; Soderlund et al. 2001; Bagozzi, Wong, Abe & Bergami 2000). As such, the present thesis will use only the behavioural approach to assess consumer loyalty. In the context of services, behavioural loyalty refers to consumers' disposition in terms of preferences or intentions to the form of active behaviour that plays an important role in determining loyalty (i.e. intent to repeat purchase) (Bright 2003; Bloemer et al. 1999; Bowen & Shoemaker 1998). The outcome variables, 'word-of-mouth recommendation' and 'intention to return to the service provider,' have been the two behavioural indicators most used for measuring consumers' future intentions (Soderlund 2006; Haahti & Yavas 2005; Cronin et al. 2000). Subsequently, they have been adopted for use in this thesis. Lastly, **Section 2.4** summarises the material discussed in Chapter Two.

2.1 CONVENIENCE

As identified in the background Section 1.1, the concept of convenience has become an important focus for marketing strategy in recent years. However service marketers have generally not extensively examined the role of convenience as a consumer evaluation attribute of services (Berry et al. 2002; Brown 1990, 1989; Yale & Venkatesh 1986).

While most researchers have defined convenience as a single dimension, some research has also suggested convenience has multiple aspects including both time-saving and effort-saving domains (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990). Rather than concentrating on the full domain of convenience, most researchers have focused almost exclusively on examining factors that increase the demand for convenience in terms of the time-saving for purchasing and effort-saving products or services (Brown & McEnally 1992). The concept of service convenience has been even further expanded with the suggestion that researchers should consider the need for convenience within the overall service delivery process, rather than only focusing on the service purchased (Berry et al. 2002; Seiders et al. 2000; Brown & McEnally 1992; Robinson & Nicosia 1991). For example, time-savings might involve less time spent in the consumption process (active time), or having the provider availability at a convenient time, i.e. consumer not having to wait (passive time) (Darian & Cohen 1995). Berry et al. (2002) noted that convenience in service settings is complex and there are multiple types of concenience. They suggested that service convenience is an attribute or characteristic of a service and there are five types comprising the dynamic processes of decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit. Specifically, service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002), reflects a multi-stage, experiential service delivery process in which consumer evaluations of service convenience vary at each stage. The view that there are five types of service convenience has been adopted for use in this thesis. In their broader conceptualisation of service convenience, Berry et al. (2002) proposed three items to measure each of their five proposed types (i.e. a 15-item inventory).

While they did not test these types, they formed the basis of Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) empirical works, although they (i.e. Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007) revisited the item development and expanded the items to seventeen, which will be discussed in Section 2.1.4. The data in this thesis was collected in 2006, prior to Colwell et al.'s (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) works, and hence this thesis has focused on Berry et al.'s (2002) work and definitions by examining service convenience as a comprising five types, in one service setting.

The following subsections define the concepts and measurements used in the thesis. Section 2.1.1 defines convenience. It will start with dictionary definitions of convenience and then identify the ways that convenience has been defined in past literature. Section 2.1.2 reviews the literature on convenience-orientation, and the factors that increase the demand for convenience. Section 2.1.3 reviews literature on consumer waiting time within the context of marketing and consumer behaviour. This is important because consumer waiting time has been found to influence consumers' evaluation of convenience. Section 2.1.4 discusses the various measurement approaches proposed for the measurement of different types of service convenience. Within the literature much of the research has explored convenience using a single item measure relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort. The fact that these single item studies have conceptualised the construct differently is in fact the first evidence that convenience could be expanded to include multiple types of convenience (i.e. cover different aspects) (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990). In this section, the thesis will explore the five components based on the overall service delivery process. Section 2.1.5 discusses the different perspectives of service convenience in previous service quality literature which reflects Berry et al.'s (2002) five stages of service consumption process.

2.1.1 The Concept and Definition of Convenience

The objective of this section is to overview the definitions of convenience. It will start with dictionary definitions of convenience and then identify the ways that convenience has been defined in the literature. The thesis will identify that in most of the previous research convenience has been considered as an issue associated with time-savings or effort-savings. Berry et al. (2002) expanded on this by identifying that convenience is a five-component construct comprising the dynamic processes of decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit. However, little research other than Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) exists that explores Berry et al.'s five types of service convience. Seiders et al. (2007) built directly on the work of Berry et al. (2002), as two of the co-authors were involved in earlier conceptualisations. However, Colwell et al.'s (2008) sample was limited to students, which may limit its generalisability to other contexts and respondents, and affect results. Within both these late works, the five types examined are the same as those in Berry et al. (2002). This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.4.

Webster's Dictionary (1983) defines convenience as *the quality of being suitable to one's comfort, purposes, needs, advantage or saves work.* Brown (1990, p. 54) suggested things that 'add to one's comfort' are proposed as a psychological dimension, and 'saves work' implies saving time. Convenient *(adj.)* is defined by American Heritage Dictionary (1982) as *suited or favourable to one's comfort, purpose or needs* and *easy to reach; accessible.* Earlier research agreed that convenience has focused on either the time or effort domain (Berry et al. 2002).

With regards to the time dimension, lack of time or time pressure is seen as leading to convenience-oriented behaviour; and effort is seen as the planning ahead and physical energy involved in doing something to obtain a desired product or service (Marquis 2005). The dimensions of time and effort are widely used in the literature to conceptualise convenience, and the term 'convenience' has been defined in a variety of ways. Table 2.1 provides the definitions that have

been used in consumer behaviour research, general marketing literature and other areas.

Table 2.1 Summary of convenience definitions

Author(s)	Year	Definition(s)
Consumer Research		
Anderson	1971	1) Satisfies some immediate want or need; and 2) releases time or energy or both for alternative uses (p. 179).
Etgar	1978	Definition of convenience-orientation was that different individuals have different preferences for each type of consumption.
Nickols & Fox	1983	Measure the time and effort costs involved in home production of meals, and focus on the time-saving strategies used by employed women. Identify meal preparation as the most time consuming of household chores.
Morganosky	1986	Defined a convenience-orientated consumer as one who seeks to accomplish a task in the shortest time with the least expenditure of human energy.
Yale & Venkatesh	1986	Identify convenience preference as a distinct consumption strategy, where convenience is used as equivalent to time-savings. They suggested that convenience may vary depending on purchase situation, and divided convenience into six classes: time utilisation, accessibility, portability, appropriateness, handiness, and avoidance of unpleasantness.
Gross	1987	Convenience offers time-savings as a product benefit and serve as 'substitutes' for time spent in obligated tasks (p. 1).
Anderson & Shugan	1991	Convenience can be characteristiced both by the amount of service or processing a producer adds to a raw food product and by the corresponding reduction in the amount of individual time and effort (p. 221).
Luqmani, Yavas & Quraeshi	1994	Convenience-orientation refers to the value placed on, and the active search for, products and services that provide personal comfort and/or save time in performing various activities (p. 2).
Voli	1998	Convenience refers to "the inherent time-saving or effort-saving characteristics or attribute of a good or service and the disposition or orientation among consumers for products with these attributes" (p. 4~5).
Candel	2001	Convenience-orientation is defined as "the degree to which a consumer is inclined to save time and energy as regards meal preparation. Energy-saving may relate to both physical and mental energy saving. That is consumers' convenience-orientation relates to physical activities as well as to thinking activities involved in meal preparation" (p. 17).

Table 2.1 *(continued [1])*

Author(s)	Year	Definition(s)
Consumer Research *(continued)*		
Marquis	2005	Convenience is to be considered to encompass various utilities, including time, place, acquisition and use of a product. The construct of convenience has two main dimensions: time and energy. Evaluates convenience in terms of reducing in the amount of time and effort towards food preparation (p. 55).
Scholderer & Grunert	2005	Convenient suggests that something can be done with reduced effort, and convenience in the food area usually suggests that some kind of effort is saved or reduced (p. 106).
Marketing Literature		
Copeland	1923	The amount of time and effort expended in acquiring a consumer product.
Kotler & Zaltman	1971	Convenience as a product attribute that reduced the non-monetary price of a product such as opportunity costs, energy costs, and physic costs, in their price constructs.
Fine	1981	Convenience as a product attribute that reduced the non-monetary price of a product such as opportunity costs, energy costs, and physic costs, in their price constructs.
Murphy & Enis	1986	Convenience products are defined as "lowest in terms of both effort and risk" (p. 25). They defined 'effort' to include the objective of amount of time and money required to purchase a product. That is, the consumer will not spend much money or time in purchasing these products, nor does he/she perceive significant levels of risk in making a selection.
Brown	1990/ 1989	Convenience refers to as the value consumers place on goods and services with inherent time- or effort- saving characteristics.
Brown & McEnally	1992	Convenience is a reduction in the amount of consumer time and/or energy required to acquire, use, and dispose of a product or service relative to the time and energy required by other offerings in the product/service class (p. 49).
Berry et al.	2002	Service convenience refers to consumers' perceptions of time and effort in relation to buying or using a service (p. 5).
Butcher, Sparks & O'Callaghan	2002	Convenience is considered to be "a trade off between what is delivered and the effort required to obtain it", where effort cost includes energy need for retailing trips based on spatial (space), and temporal dimensions (p. 505)
Chandon & Wansink	2002	Consumption convenience is a function of the time, effort, and ease of preparation, depending on the number, complexity cost, and accessibility of the operations required before consumption (p. 323).
Seiders et al.	2007	Seiders et al. adopt Berry et al.'s (2002) definition where service convenience refers to "consumers' perceived time and effort in purchasing or using a service" (p. 144).

Table 2.1 *(continued* [2]*)*

Author(s)	Year	Definition(s)
Marketing Literature *(continued)*		
Colwell et al.	2008	Colwell et al. adopt Berry et al.'s (2002) definition where service convenience refers to "consumers' time and effort perceptions related to buying or using a service" (p. 161).
Other Areas		
Kelley	1958	Convenience costs are incurred through the expenditure of time, physical and nervous energy, and money required to overcome the frictions of space and time, and to obtain possession of goods and services (p. 32).
Bellenger & Korgaonkar	1980	In retail store selection, convenience approach is from a time- or money-saving point of view (p. 78).
Berry & Cooper	1990	Convenience refers to provide goods and services at the right place (locational convenience), at the right time (time-of-day convenience), and quickly at the service sit (process convenience) (p. 4).
Gehrt, Yale & Lawson	1996	In direct marketing, convenience consists of a time-driven dimension, as well as spatial-driven and effort driven dimensions (p. 21).
Seiders et al.	2000	Retail convenience means shopping speed and ease, including four types of convenience: access, search, possession, and transaction (p. 80).
Reimers & Clulow	2004	In the context of retailing, convenience occurs when barriers to the undertaking of an activity are eliminated or reduced. These barriers are referred to as costs, including spatial, temporal and effort costs (p. 208).

*Source: Literature review

In light of the above, Table 2.1 has provided the definitions of convenience from different perspectives. In consumer research, the definition of convenience has focused primarily on attempts to determine the relationships between various characteristics of convenience-oriented consumers or households, and convenience consumption (Brown & McEnally 1991). Etgar's (1978) definition of convenience-orientation was that different individuals have different preferences for a diversity of low-and high-involvement/risk products and services, ranging from frozen foods to microwave ovens. Here, convenience-

oriented consumers are individuals who want to minimise their expenditure of time and/or energy for alternative uses of time (Morganosky 1986). Convenience-oriented consumption behaviours include such activities as buying time-saving durable goods (i.e. microwave) or services (i.e. purchasing food away from home). Anderson (1971) was the first researcher to empirically examine time-saving and energy-saving motivations associated with convenience-oriented consumers. He defined convenience as: "1) satisfies some immediate want or need, and 2) releases time or energy, or both for alternative uses" (p. 179). This definition has been widely used in consumer behaviour and marketing literature. Convenience within consumer behaviour research generally recognises the multi-dimensional nature of the construct which is based on two domains of time-saving and effort-saving (Berry et al. 2002; Brown & McEnally 1992; Brown 1990; Yale & Venkatesh 1986). However, Butcher, Sparks and O'Callaghan (2002, p. 505) broadened the definition of convenience to "a trade-off between what is delivered and the effort required to obtain it", where effort cost includes energy needed for retailing trips based on spatial, and temporal dimensions. Thus, Butcher et al. (2002) recognised there may be more than two dimensions.

In marketing literature, the first reference to the term 'convenience' was by Copeland (1923) who referred it to the amount of time and effort expended in acquiring a consumer product. Brown and McEnally (1992) and Brown (1990) found that consumers associate the term 'convenience' with the time or energy used when purchasing a product, rather than as an attribute or characteristics of the product itself. This has resulted in some recent researchers broadening the perspectives and considering convenience as a product attribute that can reduce the non-monetary price of a product (i.e. Okada & Hoch 2004; Seiders et al. 2000). Brown and McEnally (1992) further noted that early marketing definitions of the term 'convenience' primarily focused on providing consumer value by decreasing consumer time and effort costs, ignoring the other dimensions, such as the psychological, comfort-adding aspects of convenience. For example, banking services available during non-banking hours, where the ATM reduced consumers'

worry (mental effort) by reducing the amount of cash they had to carry. Thus, consumers do not have to worry about running out of cash.

The concept of service convenience has been even further expanded with the suggestion that researchers should consider the need for convenience within the overall service delivery process, rather than only focusing on the service purchased (Berry et al. 2002; Seiders et al. 2000; Brown & McEnally 1992; Robinson & Nicosia 1991). For example, time-savings might involve less time spent in the consumption process (active time), or having the provider availability at a convenient time, i.e. consumer not having to wait (passive time) (Darian & Cohen 1995). There is extensive research that consumers view waiting as 'time lost', which could have been used more productively (Hui & Tse 1996; Carmon et al. 1995; Leclerc et al. 1995; Maister 1985), as such reductions in waiting time could be an important component of service convenience, and possibly impact on consumer satisfaction (Seiders & Berry 1998; Kumar et al. 1997; Hui & Tse 1996). Consumer waiting time (i.e. passive time) is discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.3.

Brown and McEnally (1992) integrated all the previous concepts when they defined convenience as:

> ... a reduction in the amount of consumer time and/or energy required to acquire, use, and dispose of a product or service relative to the time and energy required by other offerings in the product/service class (p. 49).

Recently, Berry et al.'s (2002) review of convenience-related literature suggested that past works have not adequately explored the complex interrelationships between time and effort in regards to the dynamic processes by which convenience is initiated and sustained. Berry et al. (2002) put forward a conceptual model proposing a more comprehensive measure of convenience within a services context containing five types of convenience. They proposed that service convenience refers to "consumers' time and effort perceptions related to using or buying a service" (p. 5) and that there are five types comprising the

dynamic processes of decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit, which examines the basic types of service convenience to assess their affect on overall consumer satisfaction with the service. Seiders et al. (2007) were the next to examine the five types of service convenience and two of the co-authors in this work were also involved in the earlier conceptualisation. More recently, Colwell et al. (2008) also tested of a 17-item inventory measuring Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience, in the context of consumers' use of personal cellular telephone services and personal internet services. Within both these this late works, the five types of service convenience examined are the same as those in Berry et al. (2002).

The following subsections will discuss the three different perspectives of convenience - convenience-orientation, consumer waiting and multiple types of convenience - in more detail, as these have been developed around the notion of time scarcity and time-scarce consumers.

2.1.2 Convenience-Orientation

As mentioned earlier in Section 2.1.1, convenience-orientation suggests different individuals have different preferences for, or disposition toward, convenient products and services (Voli 1998; Luqmani et al. 1994; Etgar 1978). The term convenience-orientation has been used in relation to the concept of evaluation of time by individuals seeking to minimise their expenditure of time and/or human energy, which has alternative uses (Morganosky 1986) (i.e. if I do 'A', I cannot do 'B'). Research in this area has traditionally characteristiced consumers as being increasingly convenience-oriented, because they face increased life/work demands, making these consumers time-poor (Berry 1979). Anderson (1972, 1971) identified that, "to a degree, convenience-oriented consumption represents a point of convergence between the coincidentally increasing affluence and time-consciousness of the contemporary consumer" (p. 50). As such, consumer research has investigated the lack of time as a factor that influences consumers' use of convenience goods and services that reduce consumers' time expenditure

within the household (Voli 1998; Bellante & Foster 1984). Literature suggests that family or lifestyle demographic variables impact on convenience-orientation and include: the wife's employment, the husband's employment, and the family life cycle. With respect to lifestyle variables, role overload (i.e. a working wife is having too much to do to perform multiple roles adequately or comfortably in a given amount of time) has increasingly been examined with respect to convenience consumption (Reilly 1982). A brief review of the research relating to these demographic and lifestyle variables is presented below.

A number of convenience studies have compared the consumption of convenience goods (such as microwaves) in relation to family income, which have particularly increased since the employment of women outside the home has increased (Nickols & Fox 1983; Reilly 1982; Schaninger & Allen 1981; Strober & Weinberg 1980, 1977; Douglas 1976). These studies found that spouses' employment outside the home leads to an increase in consumption of convenience goods. However, this research also found that the ownership of some time-saving durable goods, such as microwaves, were viewed as being equally important in both groups of families dual income and non-dual income (Voli 1998). This is consistent with earlier work of Strober and Weinberg (1977) who examined the consumption behaviour for time-saving durables between households with working wives and non-working wives. They found that a family with a working wife was no more or less likely to purchase time-saving durable appliances than a family with a nonworking wife. Strober and Weinberg (1977) concluded that the employment of a spouse is not sufficient to explain convenience-orientation when family income is held constant.

The family life cycle, including the size of the family, the age and presence of children residing at home, have also been included in a number of studies examining convenience-oriented consumption. These studies have tended to focus on the impacts of wives' employment and family lifecycle on household expenditures for time-saving services, such as the purchase of food away from home, child care, domestic services, personal care, and clothing care, etc.

(Soberon-Ferrer & Dardis 1991; Bellante & Foster 1984). It was found that income and family life cycle did have a significant impact on the purchase of time-saving services. In particular families with young children were more likely to consume some convenience services such as child care (Soberon-Ferrer & Dardis 1991).

Early research has found similar convenience consumption for different types of families, Reilly (1982) suggested that 'insufficient theoretical development of convenience as a construct' may have explained this lack of difference. Reilly (1982) examined the importance of role overload as the possible explanation for absence of a relationship between wife's employment status and the families durable-goods consumption. His findings indicated that the wife's working status is indirectly related to the family's consumption of convenience consumer goods through role overload, and suggested that employment does not necessarily result in role overload. He argued that empirical operationalisation of the convenience construct was problematic:

> It may be that the measure of convenience consumption used in this and similar research is not particularly sensitive. Individuals may or may not use the measured convenience foods for a number of reasons other than a desire to save time (Reilly 1982, p. 416).

Moreover, Kaufman (1990, 1986) suggested that research should not limit itself to focusing on the wives' employment, and should consider convenience from the broader perspective of the consumer overall. Yale and Venkatesh (1986) also suggested that "some measurement research is needed to identify behavioural measures of convenience consumption, which are not confounded with other factors" (p. 416).

The discussion of the definitions of convenience proposed in the literature have focused almost exclusively on attempting to determine the relationships between various characteristics of convenience-oriented consumers or households and convenience consumption, rather than on understanding convenience itself

(Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Brown & McEnally 1992; Yale & Venkatesh 1986).

Gehrt and Yale (1993) also pointed out that previous empirical investigations in the areas of convenience-orientation have adhered to a uni-dimensional, time-oriented conceptionalisation of convenience in consumer behaviour and that research should consider convenience from the perspective of the consumer. Therefore, the main focus of this thesis is to empirically examine consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience, and to offer insights in terms of consumer behaviour, as well as marketing implications. The convenience-orientation of consumers will not be investigated in this thesis.

As mentioned in Chapter One, the development of goods and services that increase consumer perceived convenience has become an important focus in marketing strategy in recent years. However, little is known regarding how convenience influences consumers' evaluation of a service in which time-saving is initiated and sustained to lead to more or less convenience (Dellaert & Kahn 1999). Of particular relevance to the present research is the fact that service encounter can be divided into three distinct phases (pre-process, in-process, post-process), and delays can occur in any stage (Geissler 2002). Thus, convenience is not simply an attribute of products or services overall but may relate to different activities. For example, time-savings might involve less time spent in the consumption process (active time), or having the provider availability at a convenient time meaning that consumers were not having to wait (passive time) (Darian & Cohen 1995). This suggests that service delivery process in which waiting can occur at each stage. There is also extensive research that consumers view waiting for a service as 'time lost', negatively impacting on their service experience (Casado Díaz & Más Ruíz 2002; Kumar et al. 1997; Hui & Tse 1996; Taylor 1994), as such reductions in waiting time could be an important component of service convenience, impacting on consumer satisfaction (Seiders & Berry 1998; Kumar et al. 1997; Hui & Tse 1996). The following subsection reviews relevant literature on consumer waiting time and how this effects

consumer evaluation of service, considering it as salient for inclusion in the convenience construct of this thesis.

2.1.3 Consumer Waiting

This section overviews the relevance of waiting time in relation to service convenience, with particular emphasis on the relationship between waiting time and consumer satisfaction. This is important because consumer waiting time has been found to influence consumers' evaluation of service convenience. While delays can occur at any stage of a service encounter, and thus will influence individuals' responses to waiting (Berry et al. 2002; Hui, Thakor & Gill 1998; Dube-Rioux, Schmitt & Leclerc 1989). It has been suggested that a consumer waiting for a service is potentially a dissatisfied consumer, because consumers may view waiting as 'time lost', which could have been used more productively (Hui & Tse 1996; Carmon et al. 1995; Leclerc et al. 1995; Maister 1985). Some firms in fact focus on the management of consumer waiting time and the reduction of this cost to minimise consumer dissatisfaction in creating competitive advantage. Importantly, waiting time has been found to influence consumer's evaluation of service and satisfaction (Seiders & Berry 1998; Kumar et al. 1997; Hui & Tse 1996; Taylor 1994).

Sheu et al. (2003) suggested that, as consumers are increasingly time constrained, waiting in line for service is usually perceived as time lost. This has a negative impact on the service experience (Kumar et al. 1997; Taylor 1994; Randy 1991). Thus, reduction of waiting of service delivery could be an important component of convenience, impacting on consumer satisfaction (Seiders & Berry 1998; Kumar et al. 1997; Hui & Tse 1996).

The service encounter has been divided into three distinct phases (pre-process, in-process, post-process), and delays can occur at any stages, and thus will influence individuals' responses to waiting as well as overall satisfaction (Berry et al. 2002; Hui et al. 1998; Dube-Rioux et al. 1989). Marketing researchers have suggested

that a consumer's evaluation of a service is affected not only the end service received, but also by the service delivery process, which is frequently produced, delivered, and consumed during a single encounter (Durrande-Moreau & Usunier 1999; Davis & Heineke 1998; Hui et al. 1998; Baker & Cameron 1996; Hui & Tse 1996; Carmon et al. 1995; Taylor 1994). As consumers' experience the service delivery process, some waiting time before receiving a service is often unavoidable (Davis & Heineke 1998; Carmon et al. 1995; Dube-Rioux et al. 1989). Several studies have focused on the management of consumer waiting time and the use of queuing systems to limit waiting, as a means to minimise consumer dissatisfaction. Durrande-Moreau and Usunier (1999) have distinguished between two aspects of waiting time that influences consumers' evaluation of a service encounter. First, objective time refers to consumers' actual waiting times. Second, subjective time refers to how individuals perceive and feel about the length of waiting time. Research suggests subjective time, based on individual's perception, is more important when evaluating services than objective time (Geissler 2002; Katz, Larson & Larson 1991). Consumers often perceive their waiting time as longer than the actual time spent waiting (Durrande-Moreau & Usunier 1999; Hornik 1984). Prior research in marketing has suggested there are several types of consumers' affective responses to waiting. This includes stress, uncertainty, boredom, anxiety and annoyance, all of which in turn, negatively influence consumer's service evaluations and satisfaction with the firm (Seiders & Berry 1998; Kumar et al. 1997; Hui & Tse 1996; Taylor 1994; Hornik 1993; Dube-Rioux et al. 1989).

The importance of waiting time in service delivery has led several researchers to focusing on perception management techniques to examine factors that influence consumers' reactions to waiting, as well as the methods firms can use to manage expectations of satisfaction with waiting and to improve perceptions of service processes (Choi & Mattila 2003; Haksever, Render, Russell & Murdick 2000; Durrande-Moreau & Usunier 1999; Pruyn & Smidts 1998; Baker & Cameron 1996; Carmon et al. 1995; Taylor 1994). Some firms believe that unnecessary waiting will result in dissatisfaction and thus firms have instituted a variety of

programs to ensure that consumers are served in a timely manner, therefore also improving consumer perceptions and hopefully satisfaction (Kumar et al. 1997; Taylor 1994). For example, consumers often overestimate their waiting time when they are in a passive mood such as perceived time pressure and sense of time urgency; however initiatives designed as distractions (i.e. TVs in airport lobbies) even 'entertaining' consumers while waiting makes waiting more acceptable (Antonides, Verhoef & Aalst 2002; Hui et al. 1998). Providing various waiting time information (i.e. length of wait) to consumers could also allow them to better estimate their waiting time in a queue in advance, and in turn, reduce their uncertainty and lower overall levels of stress (Antonides et al. 2002; Whitt 1999; Kumar et al. 1997; Hui & Tse 1996; Taylor 1994).

Consumers are increasingly constrained by time and they place greater value on their free time, and thus short waiting times may potentially seem longer and more wasteful (Katz et al. 1991). This has resulted in a growing number of businesses focusing on satisfying consumers' demands for convenience (Shaheed 2004), with the speed of service increasingly becoming a crucial service attribute during the various phases of service delivery (Kumar 2005; Sheu et al. 2003; Jones & Peppiatt 1996; Taylor 1994). Because consumers may view waiting as 'time lost', which could have been used more productively (Hui & Tse 1996; Carmon et al. 1995; Leclerc et al. 1995; Maister 1985), reductions in waiting time could be an important component of convenience, impacting on consumer satisfaction (Seiders & Berry 1998; Kumar et al. 1997; Hui & Tse 1996). However, Berry et al. (2002) suggested that a convenience construct driven by time-saving alone is limited. Other researchers have suggested convenience might, in reality be a multi-dimensional construct which should at least include both time-saving and effort-saving domains (Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990).

2.1.4 Convenience as a Multiple-Component Construct

Within the literature much of the research has explored convenience using a single item measure relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort. The fact that these single item studies have conceptualised the construct differently is in fact the first evidence that there are multiple types of convenience (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990). According to Brown (1990), academic research on the construct of convenience has generally focused on time-saving in regarding to low-risk or low-involvement products or services. In considering service convenience as a uni-dimensional construct, driven by time-saving considerations (Brown & McEnally 1991), research has also suggested convenience might in reality be a multi-dimensional construct where should at least including both time-saving and effort-saving domains (Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990).

Researchers have traditionally shown limited interest in the concept of convenience (Brown & McEnally 1991). Work by Yale and Venkatesh (1985), Brown (1989, 1990), Brown and McEnally (1992), Berry et al. (2002), Seiders et al. (2007) and Colwell et al. (2008) indicate that there has more recently been a growing interest in examining service convenience within marketing.

Yale and Venkatesh (1986) realised that the increased importance of the service economy required the examination of consumer convenience in a new, systematic way. They argued that the variables 'convenience goods' and 'time-saving durables' were 'fuzzily' delineated in previous research as "operationalisations that measure the dependent variables in a very ambiguous, non-sensitive manner" (p. 404). More importantly, they suggested that the "simple uni-dimensionality of convenience as a time-saving has proven too ambiguous for successful empirical study" (p. 404), particularly in studies comparing the time-saving needs of working wives with non-working wives families, where little difference was found (i.e. Nickols & Fox 1983; Reilly 1982; Schaninger & Allen 1981; Strober & Weinberg 1980, 1977; Douglas 1976). Yale and Venkatesh (1986) identified

two issues associated with convenience that they considered as important for marketing: "1) the determination of convenience seeking consumer segments, and 2) the determination and inclusion of convenience attributes in products and services" (p. 404). They reviewed the research through which convenience has been empirically compared to be equivalent to time-saving or time buying. Yale and Venkatesh (1986) concluded that:

> The lack of empirical evidence supporting the simple singular time-savings notion of convenience implies that the construct is more complex, with a number of variables interacting to determine the individual's need for and perception of convenience. Convenience apparently is many things to many people and it may vary among, and within, individuals along the variables just outlined (p. 405).

Thus, Yale and Venkatesh reconsidered the composition of convenience and offered a preliminary multi-dimensional operationalisation of product convenience, proposing six components of convenience: time utilisation, handiness, appropriateness, portability, accessibility and avoidance of unpleasantness, which influence consumer's perceived convenience of product. Explanations of these terms are as follows: (i) the **Time utilisation** component of convenience implies time-buying/time-saving utility of a product. The most important element in choice of consumption activity may depend on the degree to which the activity is appreciated/rewarded by significant others, for example, mother cooking a meal for family; (ii) **Handiness** refers to effort-saving capability or 'ease of production' and 'flexibility of use'; (iii) **Appropriateness** refers to fittingness to specific needs. For example, single serving cans of drink to individuals in a group; (iv) **Portability** component allows consumers to consume the products in any location they desire; (v) **Accessibility** is a primary component of convenience which deals with proximity of location, availability, and flexibility of delivery of a product. For example, shopping malls provide a variety of goods which are in the right place at the right time; and (vi) **Avoidance of unpleasantness** allows the consumer to forego an activity that he/she previously had to perform but did not enjoy (p. 406).

Brown (1989) has argued that while Yale and Venkatesh's (1986) study was important in suggesting that convenience has multiple dimensions or types, however, they were not driven by any particular theory, and "several of the components, such as 'appropriateness', are ambiguous and difficult to measure" (p. 55). As such Brown sought to develop a five-component measure of convenience: time, place, acquisition, use and execution: (1) **Time** refers to services or products provided at a time that is most convenient for consumers. That is, time does not only refer to the 'time-saving' aspect of convenience; (2) **Place** means providing a product or service in a place that is more convenient for consumers, for example, a branch bank; (3) **Acquisition** concerns making purchase of a product or service easier for consumers, for example, accepting credit cards; (4) **Use** involves making the products or services more convenient for the consumer to use, for example, banking by telephone offers some consumers increased ease in making payment and other financial transactions; and (5) **Execution** means having someone else provide consumers with your product or service.

The first four components proposed by Brown were based on economic utility theory (time, place, possession and form utilities) as well as having a cumulative (summary) measure as the fifth component of overall convenience (Brown 1989). However, Brown (1990, 1989) further claimed that 'time-saving' is not a separate type of convenience (p. 16). For example, a person may purchase a product that has time, place, acquisition or use convenience, regardless of the product itself saving the buyer any time (Brown 1989). Therefore, Brown suggested that the concept convenience should be clarified as applying to a characteristic of a product/service, rather than considering only the effort spent in using or purchasing a product/service.

Brown and McEnally (1992) further reviewed earlier literature and identified: "1) an absence of a common definition of just what convenience in marketing is, 2) a failure to recognise the multi-dimensionality of the convenience construct, 3) a focus on factors that cause the demand for convenience rather than on convenience itself, and 4) confusion resulting from misapplication of the term in

marketing" (p. 47). In this, Brown and McEnally (1992) pointed out that Yale and Venkatesh's (1986) assumption that generally "those consumers with greater time constraints will attempt to buy or save time through purchase of convenience good and time-saving durables" (Yale & Venkatesh 1986, p. 406). But convenience products may be used for reasons other than saving time (e.g. tastes good or less effort); it may be what marketers consider to be 'convenient products' are viewed differently by consumers (Darian & Cohen 1995; McEnally & Brown 1992).

Brown and McEnally (1992) used focus groups to explore whether there were multiple types of convenience and to examine Brown's (1990, 1989) components and found that Brown's (1990, 1989) five categories could be reduced. The 'time offered', 'place offered', and 'ease of acquisition' categories relate to the time and energy required in acquisition; and the 'physical effort' and 'mental effort' categories relate to energy used in either acquiring, consuming, or disposing of offerings.

Table 2.2 The comparison of multiple components/types of service convenience

Yale & Venkatesh (1986)	Brown (1990)	Berry et al. (2002)	Seiders et al. (2007)	Colwell et al. (2008)
(i) Time utilisation *Time-saving or time buying utility.*	**a) Time** *Services or products provided at a time that is most convenient for consumers.*	___	___	___
___	___	**1) Decision** *When consumers desiring a particular services performance devote time and effort in deciding how to obtain it, i.e. self perform? What to purchase? Where? Which supplier?*	**(a) Decision** *Is salient prior to the actual service exchange where consumers perceive time and effort costs associated with service purchase or use decision, i.e. the availability and quality of information about the service provider and its competitors.*	**(1) Decision** *Consumers who have recognized the need for a product or service are immediately faced with the decision of which supplier and offering to choose.*
(ii) Accessibility *Primary class of convenience, including proximity of location, availability when consumer desires product and flexibility of delivery of product.* **(iii) Portability** *Consume the product in any location he/she desires.*	**b) Place** *Providing a product or service in a place that is more convenient for consumers, for example, a branch bank.*	**2) Access** *Consumers' perceived time and effort expenditures in accessing service delivery, i.e. making reservations in person or via phone, being there for a fitness testing appointment, flight schedule, self-service?*	**(b) Access** *Is also salient prior to the actual service exchange, and is determined by the physical location, and operating hour.*	**(2) Access** *Once the consumer has decided on a service provider and service package, initiating access to that service requires personal or technological interaction.*
(iv) Handiness *Effort-saving capability/ease of production.*	**c) Acquisition** *Making purchase of a product or service easier for consumers. For example, accepting credit cards.*	**3) Transaction** *Consumers' perceived expenditures of time and effort to effect a transaction, i.e. participation in transaction? Check out service? Waiting time?*	**(c) Transaction** *Reflect the time spent in physical or remote queues ,i.e. wait times commonly are perceived as longer than they actually are and negatively influence overall service evaluation.*	**(3) Transaction** *To complete the purchase transaction of the service, a consumer must again invest time and energy.*
(v) Appropriateness *Fittingness to specific needs. For example, single serving cans for individuals in a group.*	**d) Use** *Making the products or services more convenient for the consumer to use. For example, banking by telephone offers some consumers increased ease in making payment and other financial transactions.*	**4) Benefit** *Consumers' perceived time and effort expenditures to experience the service's core benefits, i.e. confidence, and punctuality?*	**(d) Benefit** *Which encompasses the fundamental experience, varies in importance across service categories, i.e. less relevant for services with high hedonic as opposed to utilitarian value.*	**(4) Benefit** *The cellular telephone service consumer now obtains benefits in relation to the time and effort to receive them, such as the benefit of security afforded to them to now more easily call their service agent after their automobile fails to start.*
(vi) Avoidance of unpleasantness *Allow the consumer to forego an activity that he/she previously had to perform but did not enjoy.*	**e) Execution** *Having someone else provide consumers with your product or service.*	**5) Post-benefit** *Consumers' perceived time and effort expenditures when reinitiating contact with a firm after the benefit stage of the service, i.e. product maintenance, warranty, exchange?*	**(e) Post-benefit** *Becomes salient after the service exchange, which is often related to service recovery efforts, i.e. transaction error, or a consumer's change of mind.*	**(5) Post-benefit** *This effort might involve the need to contact the provider after the sale is complete to initiate service complaints or failures, request maintenance or upgrades, or for general service support.*

*Source: Literature review

As can be seen in Table 2.2, Yale and Venkatesh's (1986) 'accessibility' and 'portability' overlap and do not represent discrete categories (Gehrt & Yale 1993). Brown and Yale and Venkatesh also used different words for the same components. For example, the 'avoidance of unpleasantness' component, deals with the consumer's ability to get someone else to perform an unpleasant task. Brown's 'execution' component would encompass this aspect of convenience while also including a situation when the consumer simply wants to free time or energy by contracting a task to someone else, even if the task is pleasant (Brown 1990). Brown and McEnally (1992) further argued that Brown's proposed 'execution' component is not a type of convenience but represents the consumer's decision to 'contract out' some or all of the time and energy requirements normally associated with an offering. In some sense, execution represents the ultimate convenience – letting someone else do things or all of something for you. Thus, Brown and McEnally (1992) have reduced the proposed components to include two types (time & energy) associated with acquisition, use and disposal phases.

Berry et al. (2002) were the next to propose multiple measurements of service convenience. While their types of convenience are different to those proposed by Brown's (1990) and Yale and Venkatesh's (1986), there are some overlaps. Berry et al. (2002) proposed that a range of activities should be considered in the definition of service convenience - time-savings, time flexibility, task allocation, effort-savings, location, ease of transaction, and consumer waiting.

In Berry et al.'s (2002) view the concept of service convenience needed to be even further expanded with the suggestion that researchers should consider the need for convenience within the overall service delivery process, rather than only focusing on the service purchased. For example, time-savings might involve less time spent in the consumption process (active time), or having the provider availability at a convenient time, i.e. consumer not having to wait (passive time) (Darian & Cohen 1995).

Berry et al.'s (2002) review of convenience-related literature suggested that past works have not adequately explored the complex interrelationships between time and effort in regards to the dynamic processes by which convenience is initiated and sustained. They proposed that service convenience refers to "consumers' time and effort perceptions related to using or buying a service" (p. 5) and that there are five types ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit, which examine the basic components of service convenience to assess their effect on overall consumer satisfaction with the service. Each of these will be described in the following (Berry et al. 2002, p. 6~8):

1) **Decision convenience** is operationalised when consumers desiring a particular service devote time and effort in deciding how to obtain it. A decision to purchase involves identifying and selecting which supplier to use and what service to buy. Decision convenience not only involves consumers' perceived time and effort expenditure associated with making decisions about service purchases or uses, but also how to access the service. This is important because the decision process involves consumers' perceived time and effort expenditures to make service purchase or use decisions. Many services tend to be high in experience qualities, and they can only be evaluated after the performance of the service. Thus, when providers make decision-making more convenient, they may influence consumers' evaluation of the service. The earlier views proposed by Yale and Venkatesh (1986) and Brown (1990), did not include this in their proposed convenience components.

2) **Access convenience** is defined as consumers' perceived time and effort expenditures to initiate service delivery, i.e. actions required to request services and to receive them (either in person, over the phone, through internet or in other ways such as service facility location, operating hours, parking availability and remote contact options). This is important because the inseparability of services require consumer participation at a site where services are performed. The earlier views proposed by Yale and Venkatesh (1986) and Brown (1990) did included this important component. Brown

(1990) conceptualised 'place' component where Yale and Venkatesh (1986) included 'accessibility' and 'portability'. Hence there is some consistency in the conceptualisation of the access construct across studies.

3) **Transaction convenience** involves consumers' perceived expenditures of time and effort needed to effect a transaction. This is important because when consumers have decided to buy a service and have reached the service providers, they still must participate in a transaction to complete the purchase. Transaction convenience is the action that consumer must take to secure the service. Usually money will be involved for the promise of service performance. For example, according to a study done by an American research group (cited in Nelson 2000), 83 percent of women and 91 percent of men expressed that long checkout lines caused them to stop purchasing at a particular store. The inconvenience of long queues is a burden that interferes with consumers' perceptions of benefit in that particular store. The earlier approaches proposed by Yale and Venkatesh (1986) and Brown (1990) also included a similar transaction component, i.e. 'handiness' and 'acquisition'.

4) **Benefit convenience** is consumers' perceived time and effort expenditures to experience the service's core benefits, such as being transported in a taxi. In the benefit stage of the service process, inconveniencing consumers will have powerfully negative effects. Benefit inconvenience diminished the core benefit of a service. Specifically, because different service characteristics drive consumer convenience perceptions in different ways, the benefits of the service consumption and the process with which consumers develop service perceptions may be a main focus for marketers (Berry et al. 2002; Shostack 1977). The earlier views proposed by Yale and Venkatesh (1986) and Brown (1990) also proposed a similar benefit component, i.e. 'appropriateness' in Yale and Venkatesh (1986), and 'use' in Brown (1990). However, these earlier concepts are potentially 'ambiguous and difficult to measure' (Brown 1989, p. 55) and thus Berry et al.'s (2002) definition addresses this problem.

5) **Post-benefit convenience** involves consumers' perceived time and effort expenditures when reinitiating contact with a firm after the benefit stage of the service. This is where post service interactions occur. This is important in the service sector especially when consumers enter into ongoing relationships with their service providers, and may receive benefits on a continuing basis (Berry et al. 2002; Lovelock 1984). For example, follow-up appointments or health advice is an activity after the benefit stage of the service maybe required, i.e. a medical exam. Providing ongoing service exchanges, such as after-sales service, may therefore be important. Sometimes consumers reinitiate contact because of a service failure that was not recognised or resolved during the service encounter and dealing with dissatisfaction post-consumption is a process that must be easy to access. In this later instance, consumers need to be provided with accessible (i.e. convenient) problem solving interactions (Ramaswamy 1996; Gronroos 1990). Research also supports the importance of the post-purchase experience to overall consumer satisfaction (i.e. Berry & Parasuraman 1991; Bitner, Booms & Tetreault 1990). The earlier views proposed by Yale and Venkatesh (1986) (i.e. 'avoidance of unpleasantness'), and Brown (1990) (i.e. 'execution') did include post-service consumption. For example, Brown's (1990) proposed 'execution' component represents the consumer's decision to 'contract out' all or part of the time and energy requirements normally associated with an offering (i.e. letting someone else do some or all of something for you) rather than a type of convenience (Brown & McEnally 1992).

Overall, the earlier conceptualisation of convenience by Brown (1989) and Yale and Venkatesh (1986), is compatible with Berry et al.'s (2002) more general types of convenience, although as has been highlighted above there are important differences. Specifically, the service convenience proposed by Berry et al. (2002) reflects a multi-stage, experiential service delivery process in which consumer evaluations of service convenience vary at each stage. Berry et al. (2002) see these as best conceptualised in terms of the specific consumer activities required

to purchase or use a service. In their broader conceptualisation of service convenience, Berry et al. (2002) proposed three items to measure each of the five types (i.e. a 15-item inventory). While they did not test these items, they formed the basis of Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) empirical works, although they (i.e. Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007) revisited the item development and expanded these to seventeen items, which will be discussed next.

Seiders et al. (2007) were the next to examine the five types of service convenience, building directly on the work of Berry et al. (2002), as two of the co-authors in this work were also involved in the earlier conceptualisation. More recently, Colwell et al. (2008) had tested of a 17-item inventory measuring the five types of service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002) in the context of consumers' use of personal cellular telephone and internet services. As such, the five types they proposed are also the same as those in Berry et al. (2002). Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) both sought to ensure that the domain of each of these five types was captured, as well as ensure that they were adapted in a specific service context – telecommunications and retailing (respectively). Within Seiders et al.'s (2007) conceptualisation of the five types of service convenience, they expanded the number of items from three to four, for 'access convenience' and 'benefit convenience', based on a process of in-depth interviews and quantitative testing. Using the same process, Colwell et al. (2008) also expanded the items from three to four, for 'decision convenience' and 'access convenience' (detailed in Section 4.3.1, Table 4.1). As such, the definitions of the constructs they proposed were slightly different (see Table 2.2), but this is more a manifestation of the specific contexts, whereas the original definitions and items were more general. The main implication of these differences is that some of the items used may not be applicable to all service settings. For example, Seiders et al.'s (2007) items used to explore 'benefit convenience' were especially designed for merchandise rather than the service experience itself. Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) suggest it would be expected that the specific definition of the convenience construct may differ slightly and depending on the setting and/or culture, such differences may exist in other service assessments; for

example, SERVQUAL often varies by setting and culture (i.e. Andaleeb & Conway 2006; Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Alexandris et al. 2002; Thrane 2002). As a result, domain specific constructs are not a limitation of this approach and are in fact critical when exploring convenience in different settings. While the items used in this thesis are marginally different to that of Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007), the results of this thesis, which were undertaken prior to Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) published work, will enable an exploration of the generalisability of the Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience in terms of another service context. This thesis will build on Berry et al.'s (2002) work by examining the five types of convenience ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit convenience in one service setting. These are examined as distinctive attributes of service convenience and are measured separately. The following subsection will discuss different perspectives of convenience in previous literature relating to Berry et al.'s (2002) five types service convenience which reflect the service stages of consumer consumption process.

2.1.5 Linking Other Studies to Berry et al.'s (2002) Five Types of Service Convenience

Within the literature much research has explored convenience with service-related factors such as location, speed of delivery and efficiency relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort (Moutinho & Smith 2000; Mols 1998), as well as factors related to Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience. Table 2.3 summarises perspectives of convenience in literature which have been categorised using Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience, each phase is discussed in more detail in the following subsections.

Table 2.3 Items related to Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience

Critical Types	Related Item	References
Decision Convenience	- information disseminations	Dhurup et al. (2006)
	- availability of information	Colwell et al. (2008); Seiders et al. (2007); Ai-Hawari (2005); Lentell (2001)
	- speed of decisions	Ennew, Reed & Binks (1993)
Access Convenience	- convenient location/accessibility	Colwell et al. (2008); Seiders et al. (2007); Mason et al. (2006); Budhwar (2004); Jones, Mothersbaugh & Beatty (2003); Rosen, Karwan & Scribner (2003); Tsaur, Chiu & Huang (2002); Yuksel (2001); Heung (2000); Moutinho & Smith (2000); Levesque & McDougall (1996); Dick & Basu (1994); Ennew et al. (1993)
	- availability of parking	Seiders et al. (2007); Budhwar (2004)
	- hours of opening	Colwell et al. (2008); Seiders et al. (2007); Yuksel (2001); Bloemer et al. (1999)
	- reservation convenience	Huang, Wu & Hsu (2006)
	- the concert program following announced time and venue	Thrane (2002)
Transaction Convenience	- credit availability	Lee & Chen (2006)
	- transaction methods - account set-up - account statements	J.D. Power & Associates (2006)
	- convenient transaction procedures	Colwell et al. (2008); Seiders et al. (2007); Yu, Chang & Huang (2006); Shoemaker & Lewis (1999)
	- error free transaction	Ai-Hawari (2005)
Benefit Convenience	- prompt service/providing service in a timely manner	Colwell et al. (2008); Seiders et al. (2007); Pham & Simpson (2006); Sachdev & Verma (2004); Cronin et al. (2000)
	- being transported	Hudson, Hudson & Miller (2004)
	- convenient programming/schedule	Afthinos, Theodorkis & Nassis (2005)

- 53 -

Table 2.3 *(continued)*

Critical Types	Related Item	References
Post-benefit Convenience	- responsive to complaints/comments	Colwell et al. (2008); Seiders et al. (2007); Maxham III & Netemeyer (2002a, 2002b); Levesque & McDougall (1996)
	- hospital post-operation care	Rohini & Mahadevappa (2006)
	- after-sales service	Su & Liu (2006); Liu, Sudharshan & Hamer (2000)
	- post-flight services	Rhoades & Jr. Waguespack (2004)
	- consumer record-keeping	Afthinos et al. (2005)
	- Speed of recovery/effective recovery	Lagrosen & Lagrosen (2007); Wirtz & Mattila (2004); Andreassen (2001); Johnston & Fern (1999)

*Source: Literature review

Decision Convenience

The decision process involves consumers' perceived time and effort expenditures to make their decision about purchasing or using a service. Thus, providing 'decision convenience' is important (Berry et al. 2002). For example, in literature specific to service quality, Ai-Hawari (2005) and Ennew, Reed and Binks (1993) studied banking services and identified the speed of decision was an important convenience attribute of service quality. In another study about leisure and recreation, Dhurup et al. (2006) also explored the role of convenience in regards to service quality (information disseminations aspects of the service delivery process) and examined the relationship between service quality, consumer satisfaction and loyalty. These studies are clearly related to Berry et al.'s (2002) 'decision convenience' as consumer service evaluations of the firm increased when providers make decision-making more convenient.

Access Convenience

Previous literature has explored convenience within service-related factors such as convenient location/facility, accessibility, availability of parking, and hours of opening, in relation to the convenience-related costs of time and/or effort. This type of 'access convenience' is important because it involves consumers' required

actions to request service at a site where the services are performed (Berry et al. 2002). For example, Levesque and McDougall (1996) examined the relationship between service quality, consumer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions, to explore the determinants of consumer satisfaction in retail banking. They included both convenience (as measured by branch location of ATMs) and accessibility. In order to determine guest loyalty towards international tourist hotels, Tsaur, Chiu and Huang (2002) explored convenient location as an important service attribute. Similarly, Moutinho and Smith (2000) tested a model which examined the relationship between one element of service quality, convenience/access (or 'ease of banking'), and three other variables including consumer satisfaction, consumer loyalty, and switching behaviour. They found that access convenience is an important service attribute in influencing consumer satisfaction and increasing loyalty, whereas bank consumers perceived satisfaction was directly related to reducing switching banks. Thrane (2002) examined relationships between music service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions in the context of a jazz festival. Thrane (2002) explored convenience with service-related factors such as accessibility (i.e. the concert program following announced time and venue). As shown, all of the above various perspectives can be categorised as relating to Berry et al.'s (2002) 'access convenience'.

Transaction Convenience

Ai-Hawari (2005), mentioned earlier, also examined error free transactions to measure consumers' perceptions of internet banking service quality and consumer retention. In this study, Ai-Hawari (2005) recognised that there may be more than two types of service convenience, and that the specific of transaction may be important in terms of the service offered. In another study of service quality, Yu, Chang and Huang (2006) found that convenient transaction procedures are an important factor in attracting patrons to revisit the company, as well affected if they recommend the company to others.

Specifically, as defined by Berry et al. (2002) in Section 2.1.4, 'transaction convenience' is the action that consumers must take to secure the right to use the service through paying for the promise of service performance. In this thesis, waiting to pay, convenient transaction procedures and availability of payment methods have been identified as one transaction factor. This is important, because after consumers have decided to buy a service and have reached their service providers, they must still participate in a transaction to complete the purchase (Berry et al. 2002). All these factors could be categorised as relating to Berry et al.'s 'transaction convenience', as the above studies have confirmed that convenient transaction procedures are an important service attribute that influences consumer's evaluation of the service encounter.

Benefit Convenience

In the benefit stage of the service process, inconveniencing consumers will have powerfully negative effects (Berry et al. 2002). Previous literature has explored convenience in the service-related factors of prompt service and providing service in a timely manner. For example, Pham and Simpson (2006) examined the impact of frequency of use on service quality expectations. They found that the reliability dimension – measured by providing services at the time promised – significantly affected positive consumer word-of-mouth communication. Cronin et al. (2000) included a similar dimension (employees are able to provide service in a timely manner) to measure service quality and found a relationship between quality, value, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions.

In a fitness centre setting, Afthinos, Theodorkis and Nassis (2005) included convenient programming/schedule as a service quality dimension to examine whether members' desires for service delivery differed according to certain demographic and motivation patterns. Basing on a process of in-depth interviews and quantitative testing, they found that convenient programming and schedule of activities were more significantly desired by women than men, and concluded that this type of core benefit might be an attractive characteristic that satisfies female consumers' desire for convenience.

In a tour operating sector, Hudson, Hudson and Miller (2004) included transfer to accommodation/airport as a service quality dimension to compare three different methods of measuring consumer service quality: the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm; importance-performance analysis (IPA); and performance-based analysis. Their results showed no statistical differences between these three methodologies in providing more convenience in core services impacting on consumer satisfaction. As the above studies show, providing more benefit convenience (including providing service in a timely manner, being transported, and prompt service) can also be seen as relating to Berry et al.'s 'benefit convenience'.

Post-benefit Convenience

Post-benefit convenience refers to post-service interactions. These are important in the service sector, as when consumers enter into ongoing relationships with their service providers they usually receive benefits on a continuing basis (Berry et al. 2002; Lovelock 1984). Providing ongoing service exchanges such as after-sales service, may therefore be important. For instance, Su and Liu's (2006) study in the field of hair saloon examined the relationship between image, service quality, perceived value, and consumer satisfaction. They found that both the empathy dimension measured by good after-sales service, and reminders of promotion activities in advance, significantly impacted on overall consumer satisfaction.

Following a service failure that was not recognised or resolved during the service, the process of dealing with dissatisfaction post-consumption and re-initiation of contact must also be easy to access. In this instance, consumers need to be provided with accessible and convenient problem solving interactions (Ramaswamy 1996; Gronroos 1990). For instance, in a restaurant setting, Liu, Sudharshan and Hamer (2000) examined the effect of after-service response on service quality and behavioural intentions, defining after-service response as the service firm's speed of response to consumers' complaints/comments. Their findings demonstrated that favourable after-sales service improves levels of

overall service quality and behavioural intentions, and concluded that service providers should set up and maintain systems for responding effectively to consumer comments/complaints. Similar to Liu et al. (2000), Wirtz and Mattila (2004) also examined consumer responses to compensation, speed of recovery and apology after a service failure in a restaurant setting. Recovery speed was measured by an immediate response combined with an apology. Lagrosen and Lagrosen (2007) also included a dimension of speed of service recovery after service failure to measure service quality in the health and fitness industry based on a qualitative data collection. They identify speed of service recovery as an important convenience attribute of service quality.

From the above discussions about 'post-benefit convenience', it can be seen that, providing ongoing service exchanges such as effective responses to complaints/comments and convenient after-sales service, may be important. Consequently, these factors can be categorised as relating to Berry et al.'s 'post-benefit convenience', where providing more 'post-benefit convenience' increased consumer satisfaction, as well affected positive consumer behavioural intentions.

The five types of service convenience proposed by Berry et al. (2002) extend the literature and cover all types of convenience associated with using or purchasing a service. These include location, credit availability, user friendly service and effective response to consumers' comments. Therefore, it is proposed that a better understanding of these forms of service convenience and how they interact, will assist in marketing strategies for companies, and that, convenience be presented as the basis for encouraging purchasing of products/services that support lasting consumer relationships and increase competitiveness (Seiders et al. 2000; Anderson & Shugan 1991). However, little empirical research has been undertaken exploring Berry et al.'s five types of service convenience (i.e. Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007), and hence this thesis builds on the work of Berry et al. (2002) and seeks to apply the measures of consumer service convenience that Berry et al. proposed. These more fully encompass the measurement of

service convenience in the service delivery processes as well as reflect multi-stages of consumers' activities related to using or buying a service.

The following section defines the concepts and measurements used to evaluate the notion of satisfaction developed in the literature. This will to assist in understanding the concept of convenience as an inseparable part of services required by consumers participating during the entire production process (Berry et al. 2002; Seiders et al. 2000).

2.2 CONSUMER SATISFACTION

The creation of satisfied consumers has become one of the most critical priorities in marketing (Veloutsou, Gilbert, Moutinho & Goode 2005). In most definitions of marketing, consumer satisfaction is featured as a major issue of concern (Jones & Suh 2000). This emphasis is likely to continue due to the increased marketplace competition (Athanassopoulos et al. 2001; Bejou & Palmer 1998). Satisfaction is not only necessary for expanding a business, but is needed for acquiring repeat business and gaining a larger market share, both of which improve profitability and performance (Barsky 1992). The following subsections review the concepts and measurements of satisfaction. Section 2.2.1 discusses consumer satisfaction from differing perspectives, this includes marketers who have not to conceptualise satisfaction as a cognitively based evaluation of attributes, but as an emotional response to a product or service (Danaher & Mattsson 1994). Some recent research has viewed satisfaction as an evaluative judgment consisting of both affective and cognitive components (Hellier, Geursen, Carr & Rickard 2003; Odekerken-Schröder, van Birgelen, Lemmink, de Ruyter & Wetzels 2000). Another aspect to be taken into account in defining consumer satisfaction, is distinguishing between overall satisfaction and satisfaction with individual attributes (Green & Boshoff 2002). Satisfaction has also been further conceptualised as including both transaction-specific and cumulative satisfaction (Bitner & Hubbert 1994; Yi 1991). These differences in terms of emphasising

consumer satisfaction as a post-consumption evaluate judgement or as a process evaluation of service encounter. Even though these two conceptualisations of satisfaction have been widely recognised, literature suggests that overall satisfaction is a broader concept implying an overall evaluation based on the total purchase and post-consumption experiences as being more fundamental than transaction-specific consumer satisfaction in predicting consumers' subsequent behaviours and a firm's past, present and future performance (Giese & Cote 2002; Wang & Lo 2002; Spreng, Mackenzie & Olshavsky 1996; Gnoth 1995; Fornell 1992). Accordingly, the broader view of consumer satisfaction, as a cumulative process has been adopted for use in this thesis. In Section 2.2.2, three alternative approaches used to measure consumer satisfaction are reviewed. These include: the gaps model based on the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm; importance-performance analysis measurement (IPA); and performance-based analysis without a comparison standard.

2.2.1 The Concept and Definition of Consumer Satisfaction

Early marketing literature defines consumer satisfaction as a cognitive comparison between expected outcomes and received outcomes (i.e. Tse & Wilton 1988; Oliver 1980; Day 1977; Holloway 1967). Spreng, MacKenzie and Olshavsky (1996) viewed consumer satisfaction as an emotional state that occurs in response to the evaluation of a service. They postulated that satisfaction is an element of affect or feeling, in that consumers feel subjectively good in connection with satisfaction. Subsequently, other consumer satisfaction authors including Huang and Smith (1996) have adopted Spreng et al.'s view of satisfaction as an affective phenomenon. However, Odekerken-Schröder et al. (2000), Liljander and Strandvik (1997) and Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996) viewed satisfaction as an evaluative judgment consisting of both affective and cognitive components. Others such as Hellier et al. (2003) viewed satisfaction as consisting of both affective and cognitive components, and define consumer satisfaction as "the degree of overall pleasure or contentment felt by the

consumer resulting from the ability of the service to fulfil the consumer's desires, expectations and needs in relation to the service" (p. 1965).

Although researchers generally denote consumer satisfaction as either a cognitive response or an affective response (Giese & Cote 2000), some recent research has focused on distinguishing between overall satisfaction (global level) and satisfaction with individual attributes (transactional level) (Green & Boshoff 2002). These views of consumer satisfaction are complicated by the fact that other authors, including Yi (1991), have pointed out that within the service environment; it is unclear whether consumer satisfaction is to be seen as a process or an outcome. Transaction-specific satisfaction is conceptualised as "a consumer's evaluation of his or her experience with, and reactions to, a particular product transaction episode or service encounter", whereas overall (cumulative) satisfaction is defined as "a consumer's overall evaluation of a product or service provider to date" (Hom 2000, p. 152). There are, it seems, two distinct schools of thought on services evaluation. Firstly, satisfaction can be seen as an evaluation process and not necessarily occuring when the product or service outcomes are observed (Oliver 1993a). Secondly, it can also be seen as "an outcome of purchase and use resulting from the buyer's comparison of the rewards and costs of the purchase in relation to the anticipated consequences" (Churchill & Surprenant 1982, p. 493). Each set of researchers believe that focusing on satisfaction at a transactional or global level will provide a better understanding of consumer satisfaction.

Bitner and Hubbert (1994) identified that these two conceptualisations of satisfaction (global/transactional) are viewed differently by consumers. They found that consumers are likely to comment on particular events of a service transaction (i.e. specific employee actions) when asked about transaction-specific satisfaction. Conversely, when asked about overall satisfaction, consumers are likely to comment on global impressions and general experiences with the firm (i.e. honesty of the firm). Although these two different conceptualisations of satisfaction have been widely recognised, the encounter-specific approach seems

more appropriate in the service environment (Green & Boshoff 2002). This is because transaction satisfaction captures the complex psychological reactions that consumers have towards products, or service providers' performance over a given time-period (Oliver 1997). However, Bitner and Hubbert (1994) combined these views and pointed out that the evaluation of each encounter will not necessarily correlate with the consumer's overall satisfaction or perceptions of the firm. Therefore the evaluation of each encounter is insufficient to explain broad consumer satisfaction. Bitner and Hubbert (1994) go on to suggest that, over time it is likely that multiple service encounters will lead to an overall perceived level of satisfaction. Others have also argued that transaction-specific satisfaction is viewed as a post-choice evaluation judgment of a specific purchase occasion (Wang & Lo 2002; Oliver 1993a). They believe that overall satisfaction is a broader concept implying an overall evaluation based on the total purchase and consumption experiences after consumption, which is more fundamental than transaction-specific consumer satisfaction in predicting consumers' subsequent behaviours and a firm's past, present and future performance (Giese & Cote 2002; Wang & Lo 2002; Spreng et al. 1996; Gnoth 1995; Fornell 1992). Empirical verification by authors (i.e. Boshoff & Gray 2004; Tam 2004; Green & Boshoff 2002; Wang & Lo 2002; Cronin, Brady & Hult 2000) provides support for use of consumers' overall evaluation measure of satisfaction. Accordingly, the broader view of consumer satisfaction as cumulative has been adopted for use in this thesis.

2.2.2 Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction

A search of the literature has identified three different approaches to measuring consumer satisfaction. The first approach focuses on the method of operationalising satisfaction judgments using a gap model based on the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm (Heung 2000; Soderlund & Vilgon 1999; Gail & Scott 1995; Oliver 1993a; Tse & Wilton 1988); the second approach uses importance-performance analysis (Ennew et al. 1993; Crompton & MacKay 1989;

Martilla & James 1977); and the third approach uses performance-based without a comparison standard (Andaleeb & Conway 2006; Burns et al. 2003).

The expectations disconfirmation model has been the dominant model in consumer satisfaction research (Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Burns et al. 2003). This theory posits that expectations, coupled with perceived performance, lead to post-purchase satisfaction (Oliver 1993b). This effect is mediated through positive or negative disconfirmation between expectations and performance (Oliver 1993b). Dissatisfaction results when product/service performance is below expectations (negative disconfirmation), whereas satisfaction arises when performance equals or exceeds expected performance (positive disconfirmation) (Spreng et al. 1996; Oliver 1980). This model incorporates four constructs: expectations, performance, disconfirmation and satisfaction. Expectations refer to the consumer's estimate of performance at the time of purchase or prior to usage, i.e. what the service provider should offer or what the service provider will provide (Pham & Simpson 2006; Spreng et al. 1996; Day 1977). Performance refers to the feature of a good or service that creates the consumption experience (Halstead, Hartman & Schmidt 1994). Disconfirmation refers to the consumer's comparison of the actual service performance to their expectation (Hunt 1977). Disconfirmation can have a positive, negative or zero effect. Whereas the positive disconfirmation occurs when performance is better than expected, negative disconfirmation refers to the negative discrepancy that occurs when performance is below standard. A confirmation (zero disconfirmation) of expectations occurs when performance is equal to expectations (Oliver & DeSarbo 1988; Tse & Wilton 1988; Churchill & Surperenant 1982).

There has been a debate within the marketing literature concerning the nature of the effect of disconfirmation on satisfaction (Santos & Boote 2003; Miller 1977). The root of the problem lies in the definition of predictive expectations as the comparison standard for perceived performance. In such case, the confirmation of negative expectations is not likely to lead to satisfaction (Santos & Boote 2003). To overcome this problem, researchers have proposed other comparison standards

such as desires, and ideals (Tse & Wilton 1988; Swan & Trawick 1980). These will be discussed below.

The second approach focuses on the importance-performance analysis (IPA). While some authors have indicated that a consumer's 'desires' or 'ideal standards' should be measured (Spreng et al. 1996), Ryan (1999) has suggested that importance differs from expectation. He pointed out that the former represents a desired outcome, while the latter may be a tolerated outcome. Thus, importance-performance analysis measurement has been a frequently used method of relaying consumer feedback to managers, enabling researchers to discern that the importance of individual attributes should be identified so that management resources can be properly allocated (i.e. Crompton & MacKay 1989; Toy, Rager & Guadagnolo 1989; Martilla & James 1977). However, Oliver (1997) claimed that the meaning of importance with satisfaction "makes the inherently understood point that what is important in *buying* a product/service is not necessarily what is important in forming dissatisfaction/satisfaction judgement" (p. 23). Therefore, measuring importance within satisfaction is not used within this thesis.

The third approach suggests that the perception of the actual service should be used to measure performance levels, rather than expectation and performance, particularly in the service context (Cronin & Taylor 1994; Jayanti & Jackson 1991). While the expectations disconfirmation model (also referred to as the gap method) has been dominant in consumer satisfaction research, other consumer satisfaction research has focused only on the performance measurement, rather than obtaining mathematical differences between performance and expectations. Alford and Sherrell (1996) stated that the majority of studies examining the validity of the disconfirmation model have used product-based contexts (i.e. Oliver & DeSarbo 1988; Tse & Wilton 1988; Churchill & Surprenant 1982). Westbrook and Reilly (1983) pointed out that, assessing disconfirmation of expectations in a service performance context may mean that results can only be generalised, and potentially are not processed unless they evaluated pre- and post-purchase experience. Here, consumers often appear to report satisfaction/

dissatisfaction based on aspects of the product/service, which may not have materialised until after purchase and consumption, for example, for which expectations never existed (Oliver & Winer 1987).

From a methodological point of view, however, it is not always easy to adopt a gaps approach, since real life settings require data to be collected twice (before and after using the service) from the same consumers, and then to a comparison of answers (Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005). Furthermore, in marketing theory, expectations are associated with various standards, most of which are based on consumers' subject predictions (Santos & Boote 2003; Nicholls et al. 1998). For example, Jayanti and Jackson (1991) claimed that "when performance judgments tend to be subjective (as in services due to intangibility) expectations may play only a minor role in the formation of satisfaction" (p. 603). Similarly, Patterson and Spreng (1997) suggested that in service settings, the high degree of consumer involvement tends to decrease their sensitivity to pre-usage phenomena (i.e. prior beliefs) but increases sensitivity to the outcome. This is known as inseparability. Further to this, Nicholls, Gilbert and Roslow (1998) pointed out that a gap model and satisfaction have been viewed as separate perceptions whereas a gap concept might be described as a measure of the value of a service relationship to the consumer; the degree of satisfaction as the determinant. Babakus and Boller (1992) also found that expectations were not necessary to determine satisfaction levels as the expectation score was clearly dominated by perception score, and that the expectation score did not contribute to the difference scores.

In a US study of National Forests, Absher (1998) only used performance items and found that "the simplified performance-measures-only model seems capable of providing important answers about visitors' desired conditions and the extent to which they are actually experienced" (p. 41). Further, in a study on tourism, Burn et al. (2003) also found that performance-only measures are generally better predictors of satisfaction when determining consumer satisfaction. As such the outcome-oriented approach seems better predictors of satisfaction than the process-oriented approach (i.e. expectations disconfirmation model) when

determining consumer satisfaction in service settings. Therefore, in agreement with these researchers, a performance-based approach has been adopted for use in this thesis.

Traditional measurement methods of consumer satisfaction (such as gap model and performance-based analysis) focusing on overall evaluation of the product/service most often employ single-item rating scales to reflect 'very satisfied' to 'very dissatisfied' responses (Alcaniz, Garcia & Blas 2005; Danaher & Haddrell 1996; Westbrook & Oliver 1991). However, Danaher and Haddrell (1996) claimed single-item measures have at least two disadvantages. These are that the single-item scale cannot provide information on components of the service process, and cannot assess various dimensions separately. Therefore, a single measure may not entirely capture the complexity of consumer satisfaction. In addition, it is very difficult to assess reliability with a single-item measure when the only reliability estimates consist of a test-retest format (p. 5). Danaher and Haddrell go on to point out that recent consumer satisfaction studies have tended to use multi-item measures of consumer satisfaction (i.e. Petrick & Backman 2002; Cronin et al. 2000; Madrigal 1995). This selection of consumer satisfaction scale is discussed in more details in the following Chapter Four.

The next section of this chapter will review consumer behavioural loyalty as an outcome variable, and the ways behavioural responses are predicted by consumers' intentions to spread positive word-of-mouth and to repeat purchase a service over time.

2.3 BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS

Consumers engage in relationship building behaviours during and after encounters, which forge new relationships and maintain existing loyal relationships with service providers. As such, service marketers place emphasis on building long-term relationships (Youngdahl & Kellogg 1997). Bloemer et al. (2003) suggested that there is a higher chance of loyalty occurring when consumers desire to return to the service provider and having a willingness to recommend it to others. While loyalty is often included in service quality models as an outcome variable (Bloemer et al. 1999), a range of the behavioural measures of loyalty should also be considered as outcomes of service actions, such as repeat purchase or word-of-mouth communications (i.e. Seiders et al. 2007; Tian-Cole et al. 2002; Anderson & Mittal 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Wakefield & Blodgett 1996).

In conceptualising consumer loyalty, past literature identified three approaches to measuring consumer loyalty: behavioural, attitudinal and a composite on combination of behavioural and attitudinal measure. Behavioural loyalty refers to consumers' disposition in terms of preferences or intentions to form of active behaviour that plays an important role in determining loyalty, i.e. intent to repeat purchase (Bright 2003; Bloeme et al. 1999; Bowen & Shoemaker 1998). Attitudinal refers to consumers' strength of affection together with cognition aspect such as general feeling toward the activities, i.e. brand preference (Soderlund et al. 2001; Baker & Crompton 2000; Getty & Thompson 1994).

An early proponent of behavioural research, Day (1969), noted that in order to be actual 'truly loyal', consumers must hold a favourable attitude toward the brand in addition to repeatedly purchasing it. Day integrated both covert attitude (such as brand preference) and overt behaviour (such as repeat repurchase) measures to the conceptualisation of loyalty definition. Oliver (1999) built on this and sought to tap into the psychological meaning of loyalty, which includes attitudinal and behavioural aspects of loyalty by defining it as:

..... a deeply commitment to rebuy or repatronise a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour (p. 34).

Researchers have developed a composite approach to loyalty that integrates behavioural and attitudinal measures, which addresses the problems of earlier one-dimensional measures, either behavioural or attitudinal (Soderlund et al. 2001; Cronin et al. 2000). The composite approach has been used in tourism related fields, such as leisure, recreation and hospitality (Yoon & Uysal 2005; Opperman 1999; Evans, Patterson, O'Malley & Mitchell 1997). For instance, Shammout, Polonsky and Edwardson (2007) examine the relationships between relational bond and consumer loyalty, using a composite approach to measure loyalty. Their findings confirmed a strong positive relationship between these. Morais, Kerstetter, Lin and Mowen (2006) also used a composite measure of loyalty to measure teenagers' loyalty to a summer camp.

In another study using a composite measure of loyalty, Gandhi-Arora and Shaw (2002) examined the relationships between consumer loyalty, satisfaction and novelty in sport tourism study. In order to overcome the shortcomings of using a single construct to define loyalty, Yoon and Uysal (2005) also used a composite measure of loyalty to examine the relationship between visitors' motivations, satisfaction, and destination loyalty. The above studies therefore have showed that composite measures of loyalty better predict consumer behaviour than do single indicator.

While the combination of both attitudinal and behavioural measures can be expected to be a more comprehensive theoretical understanding of human behaviours (Oppermann 2000; Backman & Crompton 1991), many authors, still, prefer to view behavioural intention as distinct from attitudes (Soderlund et al. 2001). For example, in the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) model, attitudes and subject norms/belief are viewed as antecedents of behavioural intentions. According to their Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), behaviour is directly

influenced by intentions to behave, and, in turn, behaviour intentions are determined by individual's attitude toward performing a behaviour and felt subjective norm (belief) that one should act in a given way (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). Fishbein and Ajzen's approach to TRA has been explored in several studies under the assumption that attitudes actually cause behavioural intentions (i.e. Bloemer et al. 2003; Bright 2003; Soderlund et al. 2001; Bagozzi et al. 2000). In the field of tourism, Opperman (1999) has argued that the measurement of attitude in the leisure or tourism context is particularly difficult. For example, the purchases of tourism or recreation services are relatively infrequent when compared with the most frequently consumed products with brand loyalty. Therefore, the behavioural component of consumer loyalty can be seen as the overt action of an individual that results in a repurchase behaviour, conversely it can be seen as a covert behaviour (i.e. intention to revisit), as the individual may have the interest to revisit/repurchase in the future (Opperman 1999). Accordingly, this thesis will use only the behavioural approach to consumer loyalty as the theoretical basis.

With regards to behavioural measures, the majority of early consumer behaviour studies operationalised these using actual purchasing behaviour, as repeat purchasing frequency or relative volume of same brand purchase over time, and did not consider other intentions measures, such as an intention to spread positive word-of-mouth or consumers intentions to repurchase a service over time. (Yi & La 2004; Oppermann 2000; Oliver 1999; Pritchard, Howard & Havitz 1992; Gitelson & Crompton 1984). Jones and Sasser (1995) have also suggested that it is useful to ask consumers about their future intentions to repurchase a product or service, because consumers' future intentions toward organisations have two very important benefits: 1) when companies measure satisfaction they can capture this information to make it relatively easy to link intention and satisfaction for analytical purposes; and 2) when consumers desire to continue a relationship with a service provider they have a willingness to make efforts to maintain their relationships implying a higher level of loyalty.

Behavioural measures of loyalty have frequently been used in consumer behaviour and marketing research, particularly in leisure settings (i.e. Tian-Cole & Illum 2006; Alcaniz et al. 2005; Oppermann 2000). For instance, in a study of tourism destination loyalty, Oppermann (2000) used behavioural loyalty (i.e. intentions to return to the destination) to investigate the usefulness and predictive value of previous destination experiences on future destination choice. He found that a behavioural approach seems capable of providing important answers about visitors' desired conditions and the extent to which these affect their future behaviours. In a study of tourism image in Spain, Alcaniz et al. (2005) also found that behavioural measures (i.e. intentions to return to the destination and willingness to recommend it) are generally better predictors of consumer behaviour than attitudinal measures. As such, the above studies supported the view that behavioural intentions could be used to predict consumer future behaviours.

2.3.1 Measurement of Behavioural Intentions

With regard to behavioural intentions in a service setting, Zeithaml et al. (1996) proposed a comprehensive, multi-dimensional framework of consumer behaviour intentions in services, and suggested that favourable behavioural intentions are associated with a service provider's ability to get its consumers to: 1) say positive things about them; 2) express preference for their company over others; and 3) increase the purchase volume or agree to pay a price premium. Such measures of behavioural intentions can be used to provide insights into the nature of what constitutes a loyal consumer. Within services marketing literature, Bendall-Lyon and Powers (2004) suggested that the outcome variables 'word-of-mouth communication' and 'intention to return to the service provider' are two of the indicators most used for measuring behavioural intentions. The importance of these have been supported by other researches (i.e. Soderlund 2006; Haahti & Yavas 2005; Swanson & Davis 2003; Boulding, Kalra, Staelin & Zeithaml 1993; Babakus & Boller 1992; Cronin & Taylor 1992). In accordance with Bendall-Lyon and Powers (2004), this thesis includes two measures of behavioural

intentions - 1) consumer repurchase intention; and 2) intent to recommend the service to others.

Integrating prior research (i.e. Mitra, Reiss & Capella 1999; Zeithaml et al. 1996), Smith, Bolton and Wagner (1999) summarised behavioural intentions into two measurements: economic behaviours and social behaviours. Economic behavioural intentions refer to consumer behaviours that impact on the financial aspects of a firm through: repeat purchase (i.e. Mittal & Kammarkura 2001); willingness to pay more (i.e. Bloemer et al. 2003; Zeithaml et al. 1996); and switching behaviour (i.e. Wangenheim & Bayon 2004a, 2004b; Michel 2001; Jones, Mothersbaugh & Beatty 2000; Keaveney 1995). Social behavioural intentions refer to consumer behaviours that impact the responses of other existing and potential consumers of the firm such as: complaint behaviours (i.e. Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002a; Tax, Brown & Chandrashekaran 1998; Oliver 1987); and word-of-mouth communication (i.e. Tian-Cole et al. 2002; Anderson 1998; Getty & Thompson 1994). For the purpose of this thesis, economic behavioural intentions are referred to in the context of repurchase intention, and social behavioural intentions in the context of word-of-mouth communication. These two indicators are also similar to those reported and used throughout the services marketing literature (i.e. Bendall-Lyon & Powers 2004; Thrane 2002; Yuksel 2001).

2.3.1.1 Repurchase Intention

Given that the cost of retaining an existing consumer is less than prospecting for a new consumer (Spreng, Harrell & Mackoy 1995), repurchase intention is a very important consideration for marketers, and indicates a preference for a brand/service over time (Hellier et al. 2003; Bowen & Shoemaker 1998). A review of studies focusing on intention to repurchase supports the linkage between intentions and purchasing behaviour (i.e. Soderlund et al. 2001; Bagozzi, Baumgartner & Yi 1989; Mullet & Karson 1985).

As mentioned before, the majority of early consumer behaviour studies have been operationalised using behaviour (often based on actual purchasing behaviour) as either a repeat purchasing frequency or relative volume of the brand purchase over time. The literature also suggests that the best predictor of behaviour is intention, because if a person intends to behave in a particular way, it is likely he/she will do so (Oppermann 2000; Jones & Sasser 1995; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). As such, other research into loyalty has often used intention to return as an indicator of behavioural loyalty (Oppermann 2000), and this question has regularly appeared in most leisure and tourism surveys exploring consumer future behaviours (i.e. Tian-Cole & Illum 2006; Alcaniz et al. 2005; Hightower, Brady & Baker 2002; Thrane 2002). For instance, in a study of tourism destination loyalty, Oppermann (2000) used intentions to return to the destination to investigate the usefulness and predictive value of previous destination experience on future destination choice. He found that this approach seems capable of providing important answers about visitors' desired conditions and the extent to which these affect their future behaviours. In a study of tourism image in Spain, Alcaniz et al. (2005) also found that intentions to return to the destination are generally good predictors of consumer behaviour. As such, the above studies support the view that repeat purchase intentions can be used to predict future consumer behaviour.

2.3.1.2 Word-of-Mouth Communication

Word-of-mouth (WOM) is another behavioural response (Alcaniz et al. 2005; Bendall-Lyon & Powers 2004; Jones & Sasser 1995). Consumers making positive/negative comments and recommendations about service providers can be subsumed under the concept of 'word-of-mouth communication' (Duhan, Johnson, Wilcox & Harrell 1997; Oliver 1997). This is defined by Westbrook (1987) as "informal communication directed at other consumers about the ownership, usage or characteristics of particular goods and services and/or their sellers" (p. 261). Word-of-mouth has attracted researchers' attention as a convenient and inexpensive way of sharing interests and ideas in communications (Sweeney, Soutar & Mazzarol 2006; Silverman 1997). Word-of-mouth communication

process has been recognised as one of the most powerful behavioural forces used in the evaluation of success by service providers, and heavily relied by firms for generating future potential buyers (Soderlund & Rosengren 2007; Stokes & Lomax 2002; Silverman 2001a, 2001b; Henricks 1998; Getty & Thompson 1994).

A number of marketing and tourism researchers have demonstrated the importance of consumer word-of-mouth behaviour on others (i.e. Soderlund 2006; Sweeney et al. 2006, 2005; Alcaniz et al. 2005; Ranaweera & Prabhu 2003; Swanson & Davis 2003; Cronin et al. 2000; Oliver 1997; Zeithaml et al. 1996; Marney 1995; Getty & Thomposon 1994; Boulding et al. 1993). Indeed, in the early 1970's, Day (1971) has suggested that word-of-mouth was nine times more effective than advertising in converting potential consumers into having positive attitudes. Similarly, in a study of relationships between destination brand image, word-of-mouth information sources, and traveller destination choice, Hanlan and Kelly (2005) found that information sources (i.e. word-of-mouth) are more effective than the traditional marketing tools of personal selling and various types of advertising.

Word-of-mouth can be characteristiced in terms of timing and valence (Stokes & Lomax 2002). Its timing can be seeking input word-of-mouth into the decision-making process (pre-purchase), or participating output word-of-mouth in the post-purchase process (Lam & Mizerski 2005; Buttle 1998; Bone 1995) where its valence can be either positive or negative (Soderlund & Rosengren 2007; Swanson & Davis 2003; Buttle 1998).

Input of word-of-mouth can operate as an important source of pre-purchase information and varies in influence across product categories (Christiansen & Tax 2000; Buttle 1998). But research suggests that it is more influential within a services context than it is in the purchase of tangible goods (Sweeney et al. 2006; Wirtz & Chew 2002; Ettenson & Turner 1997; Heskett, Sasser & Schlesinger 1997; Murray 1991; Murray & Schlacter 1990; Zeithaml 1981). Some products with high search qualities are relatively easy to evaluate since their qualities can

be largely evaluated pre-purchase (Stokes & Lomax 2002). However, because many services tend to be high in experience qualities, they can only be evaluated after the performance of the service (Nyer & Gopinath 2005; Wirtz & Chew 2002; Christansen & Tax 2000). Further, they are more difficult to evaluate and present a higher risk than products associated with service purchases (Bodey & Grace 2006; File, Judd & Prince 1992) in which a new consumer might seek word-of-mouth information from an experienced source (Soderlund & Rosengren 2007; Bristor 1990; Murry & Schlacter 1990). Thus, to reduce consumer perception of risk in an intangible arena, consumers who purchase services are more likely to seek recommendation and referral to make their purchase decisions (Wirtz & Chew 2002; Herr, Kardes & Kim 1991; Murray 1991).

Moreover, word-of-mouth has been shown to be more effective than the traditional marketing tools of personal selling and various types of advertising (Gruen, Osmonbekov & Czaplewski 2006; Hanlan & Kelly 2005; Silverman 1997; Herr et al. 1991). For instance, the results of East, Hammond, Lomax and Robinson's (2005) study covering 23 different service industries, found that word-of-mouth referrals (positive WOM) were three times more important in influencing consumer purchase choices than advertising. They supported Herr et al.'s (1991) view that word-of-mouth communications have this impact because information received in a face-to-face manner (WOM) is more accessible than printed information (i.e. advertisement). As the accessibility of this input information increases, the consumer is even more likely to accept word-of-mouth when making decisions to purchase (Greenacre et al. 2006; Swanson & Kelley 2001; Biehal & Chakravarti 1986).

In contrast, people actively engaging in word-of-mouth; shift the focus on the receiver and their acquisition of information to highlight the role of consumers as senders of information and their decisions to disseminate information (Greenacre, Burke & Denize 2006). Keller and Kite (2006) also suggested that word-of-mouth is valuable only to the extent that it drives the ultimate behavioural outputs that marketers seek – brand purchase, and pass-along word-of-mouth. As such,

the production of word-of-mouth is widely thought to be an outcome of consumer experiences with a product or service (Buttle 1998). Here, word-of-mouth is stimulated by the degree of involvement a buyer has with the service, product, or supply from firms (Heath 1996). For example, consumers consider their preference with hospitality products and services as interesting conversation topics and are in the habit of telling others about their experiences concerning tourism and new restaurants (Haywood 1989). Thus word-of-mouth is particularly relevant in hospitality and tourism studies.

Word-of-mouth can be positive and negative (Soderlund & Rosengren 2007; Swanson & Davis 2003; Richheld & Sasser 1990). "Positive word-of-mouth includes relating pleasant, vivid or novel experiences recommendations to others and even conspicuous display, while negative word-of-mouth includes behaviours such as product denigration, relating unpleasant experiences, rumor and private complaining" (Anderson 1998, p. 6). That is, they tell others, external to the transaction, of their pleasure/displeasure with the service and service provider (Swanson & Kelley 2001).

Negative output word-of-mouth appears to be capable of greater influence on others (relates to the number of people to which the message is relayed) than positive output word-of-mouth (Nam, Manchanda & Chintagunta 2006; Stokes & Lomax 2002). However, Sweeney et al. (2005) found that positive word-of-mouth referral by satisfied consumers was more cognitive and more associated with service quality related comments, whereas negative word-of-mouth was more emotional in nature, and was associated with dissatisfaction. Also, negative word-of-mouth spread more quickly initially, but also dissipates more quickly than positive word-of-mouth. East et al. (2005) described that negative word-of-mouth is less frequent (and impacts less) than many people imagine. In fact, they found the positive word-of-mouth is three times more likely to occur than negative word-of-mouth, because people are more likely to have satisfactory rather than dissatisfying experiences. Also many people generally lack negative examples that they could provide (for example, how many people could

recommend against a particular dentist when it is more likely you could recommend for a dentist) (East et al. 2005). Samson (2006) further suggested that negative word-of-mouth is a good measure among existing consumers of behavioural intentions towards service provider, and may also have a strong effect on purchase decision by potential consumers, while positive word-of-mouth may be a better predictor for service business growth in low-commitment/high choice industries. Positive word-of-mouth in the form of recommendations has been studied by several services marketing researchers (i.e. Babin, Lee, Kim & Griffin 2005; Haahti & Yavas 2005; Gremler, Gwinner & Brown 2001; Liu, Furrer & Sudharshan 2001; Chung 2000) as an outcome of a service process or an aspect of behavioural intention within a consumer evaluation model (Sweeney et al. 2006, 2005). As a result, positive output word-of-mouth in terms of 'willingness to recommend' and 'recommendations to others' has been adopted for use in this thesis as behavioural indicators of consumers' future intention toward their service providers.

2.4 CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER TWO

Chapter Two has reviewed the theoretical concepts related to service convenience, relating to the relationship between service provision, consumer satisfaction and the outcomes of behavioural intentions. Convenience is an important product and service attribute for time-constrained consumers and consequently is increasingly of interest to service marketers. Within the literature much of the research has explored convenience using a single item measure relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort. The fact that these single item studies have conceptualised the construct differently provides preliminary evidence that convenience has multiple components or types (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990).

The interest in convenience within marketing has increased over time, and in particular, with Berry et al. (2002) proposing a five types of service convenience,

which was later empirically supported by Colwell et al.'s (2008) telecommunications context, and Seiders et al.'s (2007) retail service context, which showed that service convenience is complex incorporating more than simply time- or effort-savings.

The focus of this thesis is to empirically examine consumer perceptions of Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience ~ comprising decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit. The items used in this thesis to measure these types were adapted directly from Berry et al. (2002). These are slightly different to those of Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007), as the data used in this thesis was collected prior to these works appearing in the literature. However, the results of this thesis, taken in conjunction with the work of Colwell et al.'s (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) assists in exploring the generalisability of the Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience in terms of whether they hold in another service context.

In the consumer behaviour literature, achieving high levels of consumer satisfaction is a major goal for many organisations (McQuilken, Breth & Shaw 2002), therefore service providers need to understand that the process of convenience which is integral to the nature of services (Berry et al. 2002; Seiders et al. 2000; McColl et al. 1998). Within marketing literature, a key post-consumption concept is satisfaction (Grace & O'Cass 2004; Hede 2004; Voss & Parasuraman 1995). A review of the existing literature identifies significant differences in the definition of consumer satisfaction, three general elements can be identified: 1) consumer satisfaction is a response (emotional or cognitive); 2) the response occurs at a particular time (during consumption as a process or after consumption, based on accumulated experience as an outcome); and 3) the response pertains to a particular focus (expectation, product, service, importance, and performance based on consumption experience) (White & Yu 2005; Gises & Cote 2002). More recent satisfaction definitions incorporate both emotional and cognitive responses (Hellier et al. 2003; Odekerken-Schröder et al. 2000). Satisfaction has also been conceptualised as including both transaction-specific

and cumulative satisfaction. These differences in terms of emphasising consumer satisfaction as a post-consumption evaluate judgement or as a process evaluation of service encounter. Previous studies found that consumer satisfaction is an important summary of consumers' post-purchase behaviour in relation to consumer perception of service quality (Budhwar 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999; de Ruyter, Wetzels, Lemmink & Mattsson 1997; Ennew et al. 1993). The expectations disconfirmation model has been dominant in consumer satisfaction research and usually entails comparing performance to some standard. However, this standard can vary from very specific to more general standards as well as varies from context to context (Gises & Cote 2002). Other consumer satisfaction research has focused on only the performance measurement, rather than obtaining mathematical differences between performance and expectations. Absher (1998) explained, "the simplified performance-measures-only model seems capable of providing important answers about visitors' desired conditions and the extent to which they are actually experienced" (p. 41). Therefore, a performance-based approach has been adopted for use in this thesis.

Generally, a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and their behavioural intentions toward service providers is acknowledged (Mason et al. 2006; Zboja & Voorhees 2006; Wong 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Bitner 1990). While loyalty is often included in service quality models as an outcome variable (Bloemer et al. 1999), a range of types of behavioural loyalty, in relation to services, should be all considered as outcomes, such as repeat purchase and word-of-mouth recommendation (i.e. Tian-Cole et al. 2002; Anderson & Mittal 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Wakefield & Blodgett 1996). The outcome variables 'word-of-mouth communication' and 'intention to return to the service provider' are the two most used behavioural indicators for measuring consumer future intentions (Soderlund 2006; Haahti & Yavas 2005; Cronin et al. 2000). In this thesis, these indicators of behaviours are used to measure intentions: intend to spread positive word-of-mouth communication; and consumer repurchase intention.

In the next chapter, the conceptual framework and hypotheses are discussed and presented.

This page is intentionally blank

3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER THREE

The objective of this chapter is to develop the conceptual framework and propose hypotheses based on the three research questions in Section 1.3. As discussed earlier in Chapter Two, although in the literature specific to service quality, convenience is stressed as an important factor in determining consumer satisfaction (i.e. Dhurup et al. 2006; Afthinos et al. 2005; Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999), there is limited empirical research specifically addressing the relationship between consumer perceptions of service convenience and consumer satisfaction (i.e. Colwell et al. 2008), especially in relation to multiple types of service convenience. Generally, it has been suggested that there is a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions in past research (Mason et al. 2006; Zboja & Voorhees 2006; Wong 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Bitner 1990). In accordance with the literature review in Chapter Two, it is assumed that incorporating convenience into the service delivery process will not only increase consumer's level of satisfaction with a service but also increase the likelihood that consumers will repurchase and recommend the service to others. The focus of this thesis is to empirically examine consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002) and to explore the effect of those types on overall consumer satisfaction and two consumer behavioural intentions (word-of-mouth communication and repurchase intention).

This chapter begins with the conceptual framework developed for this thesis. This framework has been derived from Berry et al.'s (2002) 'A Conceptual Framework of Service Convenience' and suggests convenience encompasses five types: decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit. The effect of those are assessed on consumer satisfaction and their future intentions within one service setting. The rationale for these is discussed in Chapter Two and is outlined in this chapter as well. In **Section 3.1**, the conceptual framework is presented (Figure 3.1). It is designed to explore the three research aims identified in Section 1.4. The causal relationships proposed within the framework are discussed and hypotheses are proposed. **Section 3.2** discusses the rationale for a causal link between consumer perceptions of the five types of service convenience and consumer satisfaction, and hypotheses are then developed. In **Section 3.3**, the rationale for a causal link between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and consumer future behavioural intentions, is further discussed building on the literature in Chapter Two, and hypotheses are then are developed. **Section 3.4** discusses the mediating effects of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of each service convenience component and behavioural intentions, and hypotheses related to this are developed. **Section 3.5** summarises the materials discussed in Chapter Three.

3.1 MEASURING RELATIONSHIPS

The relationships between service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions have been extensively investigated in the literature and linkages between variables have been well-established (i.e. Dhurup et al. 2006; Yuksel 2001; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Moutinho & Smith 2000; Levesque & McDougall 1996). However, as discussed in Chapter Two, within the service quality literature much of the research has explored convenience using a single item measure of convenience-related costs of time and/or effort.

Berry et al. (2002) proposed a five-type of service convenience, which was later empirically supported by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007). Berry et al. (2002) suggest the five-component model best conceptualises convenience across the service delivery process and consumers evaluate convenience at each stage. As part of their empirical researches, Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) sought to test whether the domain of each of the five types was captured in the contexts of telecommunications and retailing. The definitions they proposed were slightly different (refer to Table 2.2), but this is a manifestation of these items being context specific. The implication of these differences was discussed in Section 2.1.4. This thesis will build on Berry et al.'s (2002) original work by examining these five types of service convenience ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit convenience in one service setting.

The model in Figure 3.1 shows the hypothesised linkages between service convenience types, overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The literature reviewed on consumer satisfaction and service quality conducted by earlier researchers suggest that consumer satisfaction leads to positive behavioural intentions (Mason et al. 2006; Zboja & Voorhees 2006; Wong 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Bitner 1990).

In accordance with the literature review in Chapter Two, building convenience into the service delivery process should not only increase consumers' level of

satisfaction with a service but also increase the likelihood that consumers will behave positively (i.e. repurchase intentions and spreading positive word-of-mouth). While loyalty is often included in service quality models as an outcome variable (Bloemer et al. 1999), there are in fact a range of behavioural loyalties that should be considered, such as repeat purchase and word-of-mouth recommendation (i.e. Tian-Cole et al. 2002; Anderson & Mittal 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Wakefield & Blodgett 1996). In the context of services, behavioural loyalty refers to consumers' disposition in terms of preferences or intentions to the form of active behaviour that plays an important role in determining loyalty (i.e. intent to repeat purchase) (Bright 2003; Bloemer et al. 1999; Bowen & Shoemaker 1998). The outcome variables 'word-of-mouth communication' and 'intention to return to the service provider' are two behavioural indicators frequently used for measuring consumer future intentions (Soderlund 2006; Haahti & Yavas 2005; Cronin et al. 2000). In this thesis, these indicators of behaviours are used to measure intentions: intention to spread positive word-of-mouth communication; and consumer repurchase intention.

While the mediating relationship of consumer satisfaction in relation to service quality has been the focus of numerous studies (i.e. Tina-Cole & Illum 2006; Tian-Cole & Crompton 2003; Thrane 2002; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999), the mediating role of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of multiple constructs of service convenience and behavioural intentions has not been explored. As such, this thesis attempts to explore the mediating effect of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of service convenience (as defined by Berry et al.'s 5 types) and consumers' behavioural intentions toward the service providers, i.e. satisfaction indirectly affect behaviour outcomes.

This thesis extends the literature on convenience in service settings by empirically testing Berry et al.'s (2002) Five Types of Service Convenience in a specific context setting (i.e. health clubs), and the effect of these types on overall consumer satisfaction and their behavioural intentions. Subsequently, the

proposed model (see Figure 3.1 below) contains three key constructs for evaluating the broad processes by which consumers' perceptions of service convenience impact on behavioural intentions, as well as the mediating effect of consumer satisfaction. The constructs of service convenience include the convenience of decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit, in health club settings (see Section 1.2 for justification & Section 2.1.4). Building on pre-existing theory discussed in Chapter Two, the researcher has hypothesised that there is a causal link between consumer-perceived service convenience, level of consumer satisfaction, and consumer future behavioural intentions towards their service provider. The relationships are described in the model below; along with the hypotheses to be tested. They will be discussed in more detail in Sections 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4.
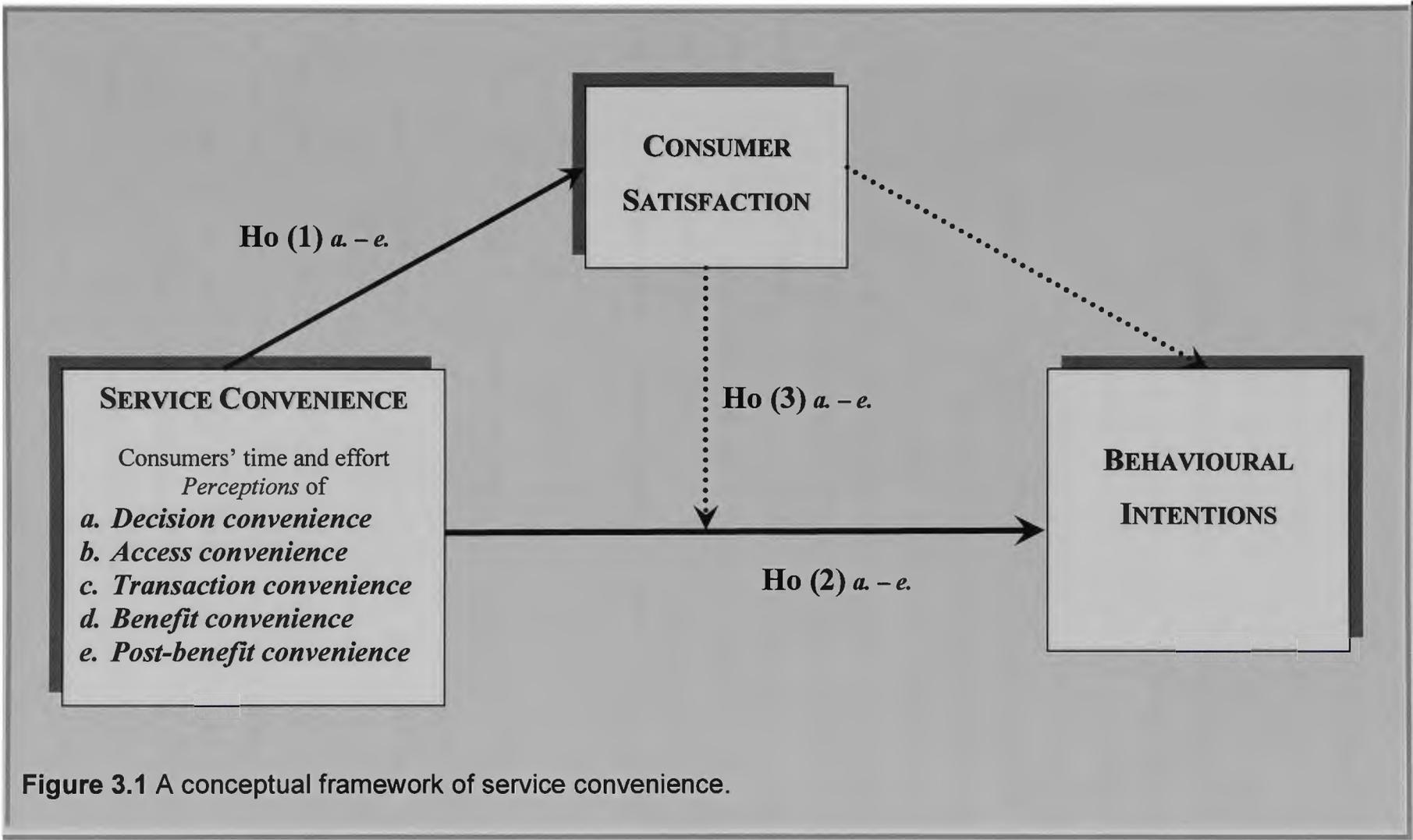
Figure 3.1 A conceptual framework of service convenience.

3.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONVENIENCE AND CONSUMER SATISFACTION

As was discussed in Section 2.1.5, within the literature much of the research has explored convenience using a single item measure relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort. In the literature specific to service quality, convenience (i.e. convenient location, hours of opening and providing service in a timely manner, etc.) is stressed as a key factor in determining consumer satisfaction (i.e. Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999). For example, Ennew et al. (1993) studied banking services and found easy access to loan office and speed of decisions were important convenience attributes of service quality in determining consumer satisfaction. In relation to the service delivery process, de Ruyter et al. (1997) found that the convenience attributes of service value (i.e. short wait time) contributed significantly to satisfaction in two different cultural samples. Budhwar (2004) examined the relationship between satisfaction and convenience in restaurant services, and found that convenience factors such as service speed, location of restaurant, and access/availability of parking, influenced consumers' overall satisfaction. Hence, the above studies confirm that convenience is an important service attribute and influences consumer satisfaction (refer to Table 2.3).

Recently, Berry et al. (2002) consider that consumer perceptions of different attributes of service convenience influence overall consumer satisfaction. Berry et al.'s (2002) proposed model was further tested in Colwell et al. (2008). They built directly on the work of Berry et al. (2002), and thus the five types they proposed are the same as those in Berry et al. (2002), using a 17-item inventory. As part of their empirical research Colwell et al. (2008) sought to ensure that the domain of each of the five types was captured, as well as ensuring they were adapted a specific service context – telecommunications. Colwell et al.'s (2008) conceptualisation of the five types of service convenience, expanded the number of items used to measure 'decision convenience' and 'access convenience' from three to four items, based on a process of in-depth interviews and quantitative testing. They found that only three of these five types of service convenience,

including decision, benefit and post-benefit, were positively related to consumer satisfaction. In their study, the lack of this relationship between 'access convenience' and consumer satisfaction was seen as particularly true in technological services (cellular and internet) where consumers frequently initiate their services outside of the service providers' presence (i.e. at home). The main implication of these differences has been discussed in Section 2.1.4. Furthermore, it has been suggested that consumers may perceive convenience slightly differently according to the type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). Hence, this thesis will build on Berry et al.'s (2002) work by examining the five types of service convenience in one service setting to explore the effect of those types on overall consumer satisfaction. This will enable an exploration of the generalisability of the Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience, in terms of another service context. Implications in regards to Colwell et al. (2008) will also be raised. Consequently, consumer perceptions of the attributes of service convenience are posited to be an important influencing overall satisfaction, resulting in the following null hypothesis being tested:

Ho (1): **There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.**

Ho (1a): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of decision convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

Ho (1b): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of access convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

Ho (1c): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of transaction convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

Ho (1d): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of benefit convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

Ho (1e): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of post-benefit convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

3.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONVENIENCE AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS

In addition to service convenience affecting overall consumer satisfaction, increased levels of the five types of service convenience should also influences the degree of consumers' behavioural intentions. While loyalty is often included in service quality models as an outcome variable (Bloemer et al. 1999), in the service quality literature, convenience (i.e. no waiting lines, providing service in a timely manner, etc.) is a key factor in determining consumer preference and recommendation to others (i.e. Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999). Although not explicitly measured in hotel settings, several researchers have demonstrated that waiting time and spatial convenience (i.e. convenient location) positively affected people's intention to return in the future and increase consumers' intention to recommend (Mason et al. 2006). For example, Shoemaker and Lewis (1999) suggested that the hotel industry generally uses value-adding strategies (such as convenience) with each transaction, which subsequently increases consumer loyalty, i.e. financial - saving money on future transactions; temporal – saving time (i.e. priority check-in); and functional (i.e. Web site available). In Tsaur et al.'s (2002) study of international hotels, they found that a convenient location was an important consideration for revisiting consumers. Further, Yu et al. (2006) found that firm responsiveness (i.e. employee service) and empathy (i.e. convenient transaction procedures) were important factors in attracting patrons to revisit the company, as well affected if they recommend the company to others.

More recently Seiders et al. (2007) sought to ensure that the domain of each of Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience was captured, for their specific context, retailing. They expanded the items from three to four, for 'access convenience' and 'benefit convenience', based on a process of in-depth interviews and quantitative testing, i.e. there were 17-items used to measure the five types of service convenience, rather than the 15-items Berry et al. (2002) originally proposed. They found that four of these five types including decision, transaction, benefit and post-benefit were positively related to behavioural intentions, except for access convenience. The main implication of these

differences has been discussed in Section 2.1.4, and this thesis will build on Berry et al.'s (2002) work by examining convenience as five types in one service setting to explore the effect of those types on consumer behavioural intention toward their service providers. Implications in regards to Seiders et al. (2007) will also be raised. Past research has shown that convenience is an important factor impacting on the future intentions of consumers toward their service providers (refer to Table 2.3).

In particular, the outcome variables of 'word-of-mouth communication' and 'intention to return to the service provider' have been the two behavioural indicators most used for measuring consumer intentions (Soderlund 2006; Haahti & Yavas 2005; Cronin et al. 2000). To measure consumers' future intentions toward their service providers, intentions are predicted by behavioural responses including consumer's intentions to spread positive word-of-mouth and repeat repurchase for a service, which have also been used in this thesis. Although much research has focused on behavioural intentions in post-purchase behaviour (i.e. Soderlund & Rosengren 2007; Greenacre et al. 2006; Bendall-Lyon & Powers 2004; Zeithaml et al. 1996), there is limited empirical research (i.e. Seiders et al. 2007) specifically addressing the relationship between consumer perceptions of the five types of service convenience and future intentions toward their service providers. This thesis proposes that building these five types of service convenience into the service delivery process should increase the likelihood that consumers will return, i.e. it is hypothesised that there is a direct positive effect between consumers' perceptions of the five types of service convenience and behavioural intentions towards their service provider. These have resulted in the following null hypothesis being tested:

Ho (2): **There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).**

Ho (2a): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of decision convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

Ho (2b): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of access convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

Ho (2c): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of transaction convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

Ho (2d): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of benefit convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

Ho (2e): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of post-benefit convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

3.4 MEDIATION EFFECTS

The mediating relationship of consumer satisfaction in relation to service quality has been the focus of numerous studies (i.e. Tina-Cole & Illum 2006; Tian-Cole & Crompton 2003; Thrane 2002; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999). For example, some researchers have indicated that service quality influences behavioural intentions only through satisfaction (Taylor 1997; Gottlieb et al. 1994; Anderson & Sullivan 1993), whereas others argued that service quality directly affects behavioural intentions (Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Cronin et al. 2000; Gremler & Brown 1996; Zeithaml et al. 1996). However, the mediating role of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship

between consumer perceptions of multiple constructs of convenience and behavioural intentions has not yet been explored. This section discusses the mediating effects of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of service convenience types and behavioural intentions.

3.4.1 Relationship between Convenience, Consumer Satisfaction & Behavioural Intentions

In literature the discussion of consumer behaviour, satisfaction is considered as an antecedent of consumer future intentions (McQuilken et al. 2002). A positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and their behavioural intentions toward service providers has generally been noted (Mason et al. 2006; Zboja & Voorhees 2006; Wong 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Bitner 1990). It is posited that satisfaction will directly influence behavioural intentions for two reasons. First, it has been suggested that the more satisfied the consumers are, the greater is their retention and desire to tell others about their experience (Schneider & Bowen 1999; Anderson & Sullivan 1993; Reichheld & Sasser 1990). Second, empirical evidence shows a positive relationship between repurchase intention and attributes of satisfaction (i.e. Baker & Crompton 2000; Kandampully & Suhartanto 2000; Mittal, Kumar & Tsiros 1999). There is also a direct relationship between overall satisfaction and repurchase intention (i.e. Boshoff & Gray 2004; Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002b; Bloemer et al. 1998; Anderson & Sullivan 1993; LaBarbera & Mazursky 1983).

A number of studies have found that service-related factors such as speed of delivery and efficiency, positively affected consumer satisfaction and future purchase intentions (Dhurup et al. 2006; Yuksel 2001; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Moutinho & Smith 2000; Mols 1998; Levesque & McDougall 1996). As previously discussed, convenience/access has been identified as a key dimension of service quality (Cronin et al. 2002; Bloemer et al. 1999). For example, Levesque and McDougall (1996) identified the determinants which include service quality dimensions (e.g. getting it right the first time), service

features (e.g. location including convenience and accessibility), service problems, service recovery and products used. They found that an immediate response to the bank's service failure and effective recovery had a major impact on consumer satisfaction and reduced their intention to switch banks.

Similarly, Moutinho and Smith (2000) tested a model which examined the relationship between convenience/access (or 'ease of banking'), consumer satisfaction, consumer loyalty, and switching behaviour. Their results showed a direct positive relationship between the ease of banking and perceived satisfaction, whereby bank consumers perceived satisfaction was directly related to reduce switching intentions and directly related to increased loyalty.

In a study of tourism destinations, Yuksel (2001) showed that first-time and repeat visitors both commonly regarded the convenience of a service (i.e. efficiency of check-in and check-out at the accommodation) as a significant predictor of satisfaction. Dhurup et al. (2006) also found that convenience (i.e. space availability and information disseminations aspects of the service delivery process) influenced satisfaction in the leisure and recreation areas, which in turn influenced loyalty. Hence, the above studies confirmed that convenience is an important service attribute and influences consumer's evaluation of the service encounter. These works also provide strong support that behavioural intentions are important outcomes of consumer satisfaction (refer to Table 2.3).

3.4.2 Consumer Satisfaction as a Mediator

The effects of consumer perceptions of service convenience on behavioural intentions are mediated by overall consumer satisfaction (as shown in Figure 3.1). This argument is consistent with the literature which treats satisfaction as a central mediator of post-purchase constructs (Oliver 1997).

While convenience has been identified as a key dimension of service quality (Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999), consumer satisfaction has multiple roles

(i.e. an indirect effect), and mediates relationships with service quality. The role of consumer satisfaction in facilitating the relationship between service quality and consumer behavioural intentions has been explored in a number of studies endeavouring to model these variables (i.e. Tina-Cole & Illum 2006; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999). For example, some researchers have indicated that service quality influences behavioural intentions only through value and satisfaction, whereas others argue that service quality directly affects behavioural intentions (Cronin et al. 2000; Gremler & Brown 1996).

Bloemer et al. (1998) have found limited direct effects of convenience (i.e. queuing time at office and hours of opening) on loyalty. However, in Bloemer and de Ruyter's (1998) research on the relationship between store image, store satisfaction and store loyalty, found that there is no direct relationship between store image and store loyalty, but rather an indirect impact on store loyalty through satisfaction. Thus, it appears that the relationship between store image and store loyalty is mediated by store satisfaction. The mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between service quality and behavioural intentions has been further confirmed in other studies (Tina-Cole & Illum 2006). Tian-Cole and Crompton (2003) proposed that the impact of service attribute quality on intentions to revisit a zoo, was not direct, but it was only through overall service quality and overall satisfaction.

Other studies have identified the direct influence of service quality on behavioural intentions but have not explored the mediating role of satisfaction. For example, Baker and Crompton (2000) studied the relationships among service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions among consumers and demonstrated that service quality perceptions not only had an indirect effect on behavioural intentions through satisfaction, but also a direct impact on behavioural intentions and increased visitors' loyalty. In addition, perceived quality also influenced visitors' behavioural intentions indirectly through satisfaction. The researchers concluded that participants' level of satisfaction did not fully mediate the effect of

quality on their behavioural intentions. This is further supported in a study by Thrane (2002) who found that quality did not directly influence visitors' revisit intentions. The impact of quality on revisit intention was only indirectly important through visitor satisfaction. Hence, the above studies confirmed that consumer satisfaction has an important mediating role in the relationship between service quality and behavioural intentions.

However, although the mediating relationship of consumer satisfaction in relation to service quality has been the focus of numerous studies, the mediating role of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of multiple constructs of convenience and behavioural intentions of consumers has not yet been explored. It is expected that an indirect positive effect between consumer perceptions of convenience and behavioural intentions towards that service provider through satisfaction (i.e. a mediator effect). To this end, the following null types of these are developed:

Ho (3): **The effects of the consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.**

Ho (3a): The effects of the consumer decision convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

Ho (3b): The effects of the consumer access convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

Ho (3c): The effects of the consumer transaction convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

Ho (3d): The effects of the consumer benefit convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

Ho (3e): The effects of the consumer post-benefit convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

3.5 CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER THREE

Building on the material in Chapter Two, Chapter Three has developed the conceptual framework presented in Figure 3.1. It is designed to explore the three research aims identified in Section 1.4. The rationale for these has been discussed as the constructs of consumer perceptions of service convenience, overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions.

As discussed in Chapter Two, within the service literature much of the research has explored convenience using a single item measure relating to convenience-related costs of time and/or effort. The relationships between service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions have been investigated in the literature and linkages are well-established (i.e. Dhurup et al. 2006; Yuksel 2001; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Moutinho & Smith 2000; Levesque & McDougall 1996). However there is limited empirical research specifically addressing the relationship between consumer perceptions of service convenience, consumer satisfaction (i.e. Colwell et al. 2008) and behavioural intentions (i.e. Seiders et al. 2007). This is particularly so, in relation to the five types of service convenience which have not generally been explored. In accordance with the literature review in Chapter Two, building convenience into the service delivery process should not only increase consumers' level of satisfaction with a service but also increase the likelihood that consumers will return and spread positive word-of-mouth. The focus of this thesis is to empirically examine consumer perceptions of the five types of service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002) and to explore the effect of those types on overall consumer satisfaction and two consumer behavioural intentions (repurchase intention and word-of-mouth communication).

Although the mediating relationship of overall consumer satisfaction in relation to service quality has been the focus of numerous studies (i.e. Tina-Cole & Illum 2006; Tian-Cole & Crompton 2003; Thrane 2002; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999), the mediating role of consumer satisfaction in the

relationship between consumer perceptions of multiple types of service convenience and behavioural intentions of consumers has not yet been explored. As such, this thesis attempts to explore the mediating effect of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of service convenience (as defined by Berry et al. - 5 types) and consumer's behavioural intentions toward the service providers (i.e. an indirect effect).

Based on the proposed model, the three main hypotheses, each with five sub-components, have been developed from the framework. This evaluation of impact on consumer perceptions of the five types of service convenience in relation to consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions, may assist organisations to incorporate convenience into their overall offerings and should be able to gain sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace.

A discussion of the research methods and procedures used in testing the above hypotheses are included in the next chapter.

This page is intentionally blank

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER FOUR

This chapter provides an overview of the methodological approach used to address the research questions proposed in Chapter One, which empirically examine the model developed in Section 3.1. The literature discussed in Chapter Two has also been drawn on to assist in developing the research methodology.

This chapter has thirteen subsections. **Section 4.1** provides an overview of the methodological approach taken. As was identified in the review of the literature in Chapter Two, this thesis attempts to investigate the relationships between each of the five types of service convenience, overall consumer satisfaction and the behavioural consumer outcomes of behavioural intentions towards the service providers in the service context by testing the hypotheses developed from existing theory. Thus, a quantitative research approach was selected for this thesis. **Section 4.2** discusses the scale development process used to ensure measures exhibited good psychometric properties. **Section 4.3** examines the development of the constructs, which are based on the literature related to convenience and services marketing (discussed in Chapter Two), and describes the selection of items for each variable.

Sections 4.4 discusses the translation and back-translation of the questionnaire as the items were prepared in English and then were translated into Chinese for the targeted population – Taiwanese health club visitors. Back-translation was then

undertaken to confirm the equivalency of the English and Chinese meanings. **Section 4.5** discusses the pre-tests and pilot study of the instrument. The scales used were examined in a pre-test of the draft survey and also were explored with marketing academics and practitioners to ensure content validity.

In **Section 4.6**, the techniques used to purify measures are discussed; this includes reliability testing to ensure the quality of measures. **Section 4.7** discusses the population and sampling method used in the thesis. **Section 4.8** discusses the data collection procedures for the final survey. **Section 4.9** discusses the screening and cleaning of the data, prior to final data analysis and includes checking for completeness of responses and examination of frequencies for each item. **Section 4.10** examines the underlying assumptions required as a pre-requisite for further multivariate analysis, i.e. each item is normality distributed.

Section 4.11 explores the reliability analysis and validity for each of the composite constructs used to explore the data. **Section 4.12** overviews with the statistical procedures that were used to examine the research questions and test the proposed model. In this thesis, multiple regression analysis and mediated regression analysis are the primary form of analysis, exploring the three main hypotheses, for each of the five types of service convenience listed in Sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 of Chapter Three. Multiple regression method is employed to determine the significance of any relationship between each of the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit convenience) and overall consumer satisfaction level (i.e. Hypothesis 1), as well as on consumer behavioural intentions toward the service providers (i.e. Hypothesis 2).

Multiple regressions have also been used in previous research to measure consumer satisfaction (i.e. Burns et al. 2003; Kandampully & Schartanto 2000; Bloemer et al. 1998). Moreover, as was discussed in Section 3.4, although the mediating relationship of consumer satisfaction in relation to service quality has been the focus of numerous studies, the mediating role of overall consumer

satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of the five types of service convenience and behavioural intentions of consumers has not yet been explored. Hence, another objective of this thesis is to examine the mediating effects of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of the types of service convenience and behavioural intentions (i.e. Hypothesis 3).

To test Hypothesis 3, based on Holmbeck (1997) and Baron and Kenny (1986) four mediation equations, the researcher needs to re-analyse the data (i.e. Hypothesis 1). The first regression equation examines the relationships between each of the five types of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction, which is same as the regression procedure of Hypothesis 1. The second equation examines the relationships between overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The third equation tests the causal relationship between each of the five types of service convenience and behavioural intentions towards service providers. These are all called direct effects. Also all of which should satisfy the third mediating condition that direct paths are all significant at $p<.001$. To determine whether mediation occurs, the researcher estimates a model (Equation 4) with a mediating path for each type of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction. Importantly, if a type of service convenience is not statistically significant in Equation 1 is then omitted from further analysis in Equation 4 and the mediation effect cannot be explored. This method used in previous research (i.e. Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002b; Baker & Crompton 2000; Bloemer et al. 1998; Holmbeck 1997; Patterson & Spreng 1997) is discussed in more depth in Section 4.12.2. Regression analysis, multiple and mediating, are used in the thesis as these allow the researcher to test complex relationships involving direct and mediating effects of predictor variables on dependent variables. **Section 4.13** summarises the material discussed in Chapter Four.

4.1 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE QUANTITATIVE METHOD

Research methods are generally divided into two types, quantitative and qualitative (Polonsky & Waller 2005; Cherry 2000). Depending on the research questions being examined, both methods provide alternative ways to gather and interpret information and research data (Polonsky & Waller 2005). In this context, Mason (2006) noted that the role, benefits and appropriate use of qualitative and quantitative methods are debated in the existing literature. For instance, Tribe (2001) argued that qualitative research is recognised for its unique contribution to in-depth understanding of the social phenomenon of human behaviour, and is increasingly replacing the outdated quantitative methodologies of more structured techniques. Others argue that without the application of quantitative approaches, results cannot be generalised to a whole population (Polonsky & Waller 2005; Page & Meyer 2000), and the research may be considered unscientific (Nunnally & Bernstein 1994; Levine 1993). However, each method can be considered as appropriate or inappropriate, depending on: the research project being undertaken; the subject under investigation; and provision of the best answers for the research questions/objectives (Polonsky & Waller 2005; Silverman 2005; Gratton & Jones 2004).

Unlike the quantitative methods used in the present thesis, qualitative research methods are techniques involving the collection of non-numerical data from small populations that include large amounts of relatively rich, detailed and contextual information (Mason 2006, 2002; Polonsky & Waller 2005). Data is obtained through focus groups, in-depth semistructured interviews, case studies, observations and document-based research (Mason 2006; Neuman 2006; Veal 2006; Polonsky & Waller 2005; Cavana et al. 2001). However, qualitative research methods involve inductive hypothesis-generating research that tends to emphasise data that support the researcher's argument, with limited indications to contrary research evidence (Silverman 2005). In turn, interpretation of qualitative findings can be judged in varying ways, from research to researcher (Silverman 2005; Zikmund 2003). However, this more exploratory method can be

problematic as it does not permit empirical testing of hypotheses and/or relationships (Silverman 2006; Cherry 2000). In other words, qualitative research can be seen as tending to identify trends and new areas to research, whereas quantitative focuses more on particular aspects to prove what has been noted/suspected in qualitative observations.

The quantitative research methods used in this thesis include techniques involving relatively large numbers of respondents and designed to generate information that can be generalised into the wider community (Polonsky & Waller 2005; Dillon, Madden & Firtle 1993). The numerical data generated is investigated by various statistical analysis techniques that can be projected to represent the population as a whole (Polonsky & Waller 2005; Page & Meyer 2000). Furthermore, a measurement and testing of hypotheses based on an empirical examination of dependent and independent variables utilising statistical techniques is employed (Neuman 2006; Mehmetoglu 2004; Zikmund 2003). Here, the objective of quantitative research is to develop and employ mathematical models, theories and hypotheses pertaining to natural phenomena (Cavana et al. 2001). This process of measurement is central to quantitative research, because it provides the fundamental connection between empirical observation, and the mathematical expression of quantitative relationships (Neuman 2006).

As was discussed in Chapter Two, services marketing and consumer behaviour literature indicates there are relationships between consumers' perceptions of service convenience, consumer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions toward service providers. This thesis attempts to investigate these relationships in one service context, by testing the proposed hypotheses based on existing theory. This method is consistent with a number of quantitative researchers who have found that service-related factors such as speed of delivery and efficiency, positively affect consumer satisfaction and future purchase intentions (Moutinho & Smith 2000; Mols 1998). For example, Moutinho and Smith (2000) tested a model which examined the relationship between one element of service quality - convenience/access (or 'ease of banking'), and three other variables including

consumer satisfaction, consumer loyalty, and switching behaviour. Their results showed a direct positive relationship between the ease of banking and perceived satisfaction, whereas bank consumers perceived satisfaction as directly relating to reduce bank switching and directly related to increase bank consumer loyalty. Dhurup et al. (2006) also found that the convenience dimension of service (i.e. space availability and information disseminations aspects of the service delivery process) influences satisfaction in the leisure and recreation areas, which in turn influences loyalty.

The scales used within the above studies have been tested for validity and reliability, thus claiming further scientific credibility, and include the consumer satisfaction scale and behavioural intentions scale (i.e. Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Bendall-Lyon & Powers 2004; Grace & O'Cass 2004; McCollough & Gremler 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Zeithaml et al. 1996; Babakus & Boller 1992; Cronin & Taylor 1992). The scales used in this thesis were adapted from these previous studies, to test the hypotheses proposed in this thesis, thus quantitative data was required (Lee 2006; Bryman 1989). A quantitative approach is also suggested by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) in their more recent works on convenience and is also used when exploring aspects of service, for example SERVQUAL (i.e. Andaleeb & Conway 2006; Olorunniwo & Hsu 2006; Olorunniwo et al. 2006; Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Alexandris et al. 2002; Thrane 2002). As such, it was decided to take a quantitative rather than a qualitative approach to data collection for this thesis. A quantitative approach has been deemed appropriate to test validity of the hypotheses.

Statistical data analysis will also allow this thesis to identify how the five types of service convenience, influence overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions towards their service providers. The objective of this subsection of Chapter Four is to discuss the various steps that were necessary to analyse the data.

4.1.1 Survey Research

As mentioned in Section 2.1.4. using Berry et al.'s (2002) *un*tested service convenience scales (at least at the time the thesis data was collected), this thesis focuses on testing a model to determine if there is a relationship between each of the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit convenience), overall consumer satisfaction levels, and consumer behavioural intentions toward service providers. A quantitative research method is appropriate for studying relationships between these variables previously (Neuman 2006; Cavana et al. 2001; Larsson 1993), and this method has also been extensively used in the services literature (i.e. Mattila 2005; Jones, Mothersbaugh & Beatty 2000; Kandampully & Schartanto 2000; Bloemer et al. 1998; Spreng et al. 1995). In order to gather the information required to address the research questions, there was a need to collect data from consumers of one category of service provider who were consumers (i.e. 540 members) of three health clubs in Taiwan.

Quantitative data collection can be performed using various methods: questionnaires (self-administered, electronic, and mail); telephone interviews; or personal face to face interviews (Zikmund 2003). Although telephone or face to face interviews have many advantages including opportunity for feedback and any doubts clarified on the spot, they have time and cost limitations (Zikmund 2003; Cavana et al. 2001). Moreover, respondents are not anonymous and may be concerned about confidentiality of information given (Cavana et al. 2001). Conversely, mail questionnaires have advantages including reaching a wide number and distribution of respondents with a minimal cost and staff involvement (Polonsky & Waller 2005) [See, for example, Andaleeb & Conway (2006) and Levesque & McDougall (1996)], as well as having the possibility of being electronically administered (Cavana et al. 2001). However, the two main disadvantages of conducting mail surveys are that there is a greater chance of nonresponse than in other methods, and there is a lack of control over who actually completes the questionnaire (Polonsky & Waller 2005; Cavana et al.

2001). As conducting mail surveys poses many disadvantages, self-administered questionnaires are considered preferable for data collection in this thesis.

Self-administered questioners are a method involving the gathering of information from individuals, filled in by the respondent using a formally designed schedule of questions (Veal 2006; Zikmund 2003). Zikmund (2003) and Cavana et al. (2001) identified several advantages in using self-administered questionnaires as: 1) less expensive and low in time costs; 2) response rate is almost always high; and 3) the survey can be widely disturbed to a large number of potential respondents and provides quick, efficient and accurate means of assessing information about the population. Others have also suggested this as the best way to collect a substantial amount of information at a reasonable cost (i.e. Kumar 2005; Malhotra, Hall, Shaw & Oppenheim 2005; Burns et al. 2003; Danaher & Haddrell 1996).

After considering the above advantages, the researcher determined that self-administered survey method was most suitable to gather the data required for this thesis, which emphasises quantitative analysis of several variables across a relatively large sample (Larsson 1993). By utilising the self-administered questionnaire survey, respondents are able to respond freely to questions with the assurance that their identities remain anonymous. Allowing consumers to be anonymous is a critical factor in obtaining more valid answers, especially, compared to personal or telephone interviews (Cavana et al. 2001; Kinnear & Taylor 1996).

The self-administrated questionnaire method is also widely used in the leisure and tourism research. For instance, Yuksel (2001) used a self-administrated questionnaire instrument in gathering data on tourists because it enabled him to assess a large sample of tourists departing from an airport with lower cost. Alexandris et al. (2002) also surveyed 400 hotel guests by utilising self-administrated questionnaires for the same reasons. Green and Boshoff (2002) used a survey to examine the relationships between service quality, satisfaction

and value in a tourism study, because it is quick, cost-effective and suitable for analysing a large sample of the population. Ai-Hawari (2005) also distributed 600 self-administrated questionnaires to bank consumers to explore the relationship between service quality and consumer retention. As such, the researcher felt that a self-administrated questionnaire survey method therefore is deemed to be suitable to gather data required in this thesis.

4.2 RESEARCH PROCESS

The development of research process for this thesis follows the design process suggested by Churchill (1979) and covers most aspects of the scale development (see Figure 4.1), to ensure the hypothesised model could be tested using measures exhibiting good psychometric properties. Churchill's (1979) model consists of eight steps: Step 1- establishing the domain of the construct; Step 2 - generation of a sample of items; Step 3 - collecting initial data, Step 4 - purifying the measure; Step 5 - collecting new data; Step 6 - assessing reliability; Step 7 - assessing validity; and Step 8 - final establishing norms (Figure 4.1). This procedure has been widely adopted in the marketing literature (i.e. Grace 2005; Karatepe et al. 2005; Oh 2005; Ko 2000; Voss & Parasuraman 1995; Sethi & King 1991).

In formulating the research process for this thesis, a review of the literature on the domain of the convenience constructs was undertaken (Chapter Two). This thesis adapted the fifteen scales proposed by Berry et al. (2002), related to five types of service convenience ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit. Making scales context specific is frequently undertaken in research, and has in fact been suggested by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) in their exploration of service convenience. However, the objective of this thesis is to focus on links (between service convenience, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions), rather than scale development. As such, the researcher did not adopt the approach undertaken by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) to expand items beyond those proposed by Berry et al. (2002). For this

reason, the specific items used are somewhat different to Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) even though both authors cover the same five types and generally are worded similarly, which will be discussed in detail in Section 4.3.1. The data in this thesis was collected in 2006, prior to Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) works appearing in the literature, and hence, scales proposed by Berry et al. (2002) were adapted for all five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit).

Apart from the previously *un*tested service convenience scales discussed above, other scales used in this thesis were adapted from the literature included overall consumer satisfaction (i.e. Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Grace & O'Cass 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Madrigal 1995), and consumer behavioural intentions (i.e. Olorunniwo & Hsu 2006; Bendall-Lyon & Powers 2004; Wong 2004; Bloemer et al. 2003; Zeithaml et al. 1996; Cronin & Taylor 1992). These are included in response to the recommendations of Converse and Presser (1986) who suggested accessing existing scales available in literature in order to save time and effort. Therefore, in this thesis the scales of overall consumer satisfaction and consumer behavioural intentions are adapted from existing scales in the literature. The adaption of existing validated scales is general undertaken within the marketing literature. The items were however modified to fit the specific context.

The revised items were evaluated for content validity. Churchill (1979) suggested a fundamental requirement for a good measure is content validity, which means the items in an instrument cover the major content domain of a construct. Content validity is usually achieved through a comprehensive literature review and in-depth interviews with practitioners and academic experts (Cavana et al. 2001). For this reason, a draft English version of the questionnaire was sent to ten marketing academics, inviting them to comment on the service convenience model and the individual items. This step was intended to ensure that the items actually represent specified definitions of constructs, identify whether people understand what is required of them, and determine if any major problems in responding to the questionnaire occurred (Churchill & Iacobucci 2004; Nunnally & Bernstein 1994). This issue will be discussed in more depth in Section 4.5.

The revised items that were then subjected to a formal pre-test involving 100 health clubs visitors. Their responses were examined using Cronbach's alpha coefficients to assess the reliability of items. The final survey was then revised and then administered. The reliability analysis and validity coefficient for each of the composite construct are using the final data to ensure the data quality (see Section 4.11).

Finally, to examine the research questions and test the proposed model, multiple regression analysis and mediating regression analysis were used. Results of the data analysis and interpretation of hypotheses testing will be discussed in Chapter Five.
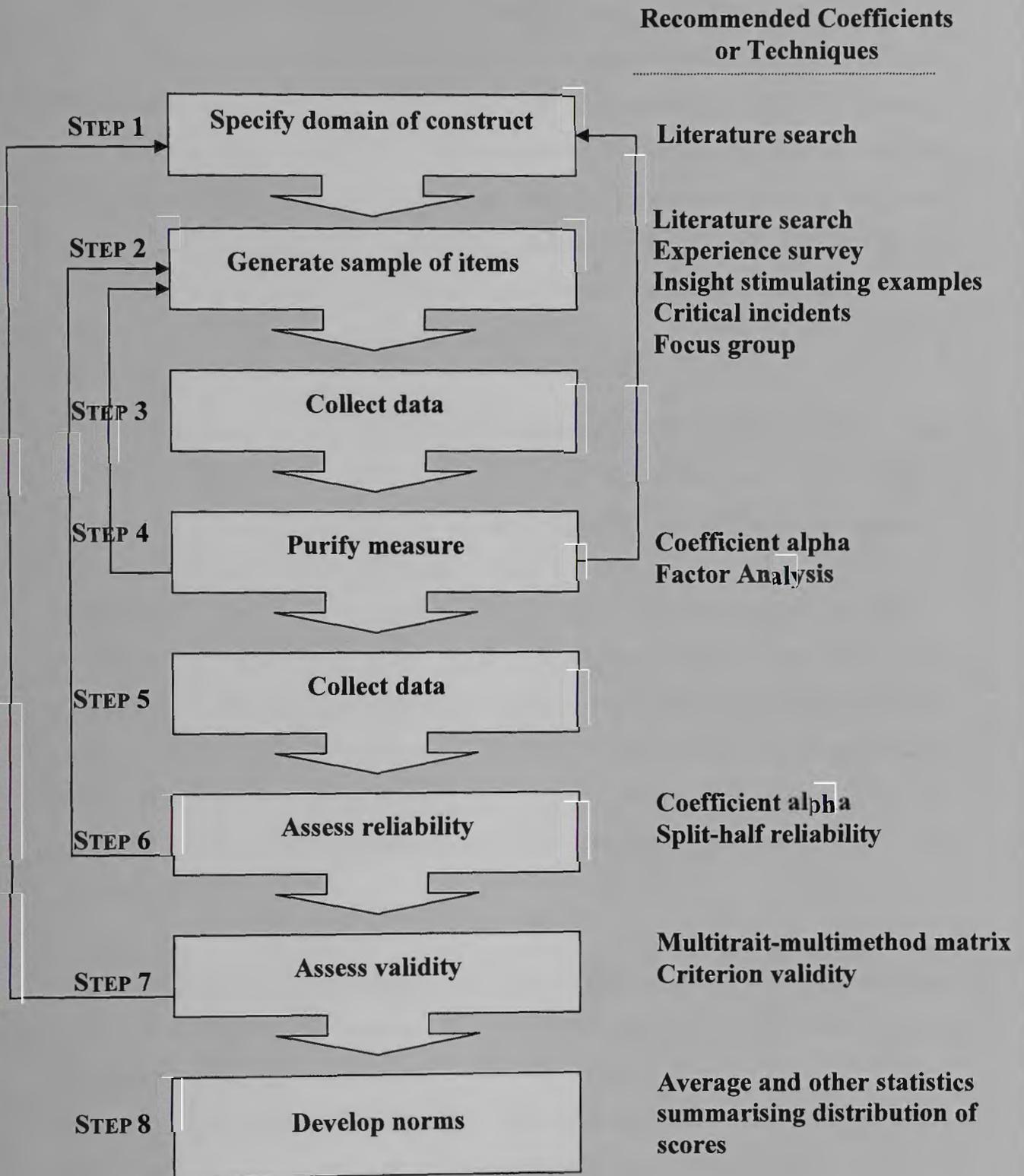
Figure 4.1 Suggested procedures for developing better measures[†]

[†]Source: Churchill (1979).

4.3 ITEM ADAPTATION: STEP 2

As mentioned earlier in Section 1.4, this thesis aims to empirically examine Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience and to explore the effect of these types on overall consumer satisfaction and consumers' behavioural intention toward their service providers. Existing *un*tested scales were used for the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit), with two other sets of validated scales for overall consumer satisfaction (i.e. Cronin et al. 2000) and consumer behavioural intentions (i.e. Bloemer et al. 2003), both of which already existed in the literature.

This section explains the process for adapting of the items for each of the constructs examined in the thesis. This constitutes Step Two of the research process, applied in this thesis. The methodology literature highlights some issues that must be considered during this process. One of the important issues in designing a questionnaire is that questions should only be included if they are linked to the research questions (Veal 2006; Laflin 1999). Veal (2006) also suggested that the wording of questions should avoid "jargon, ambiguity, leading questions, and ask only one question at a time" (p. 251). This should reduce item non-response and response error (Veal 2006). Hence it is critical to phrase questions in a way that respondents can clearly and easily understand (Malhotra et al. 2005).

The primary aim of the questionnaire was to collect data from respondents to enable the research to explore how the five types of service convenience, identified in Section 2.1.4, might influence overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. Convenience was conceptualised as having five types related to consumers' using or buying a service based on existing experiences, whereas the level of satisfaction is concerned with measuring an individual's overall evaluation of the service encounter. The dependent variables in this thesis related to behavioural intentions, which are indications of consumer's future

intentions (i.e. repeat purchasing and recommend the service to others) towards the service provider.

Another important consideration during item generation is whether constructs should be measured by a single-item or multiple-item scales. De Vaus (2002) suggested that the best way of increasing reliability is to use multiple-item indicators and other methods, such as; question wording, interviewer training and working out methods of coding. Although single item scales are simple, Danaher and Haddrell (1996, p. 5) claimed there are at least two disadvantages: "1) the single-item scale cannot provide information on types and cannot assess various dimensions separately, therefore, it may not capture the complexity of consumer satisfaction entirely; and 2) it is very difficult to assess reliability with a single-item measure, with only reliability estimate being a test-retest format". In contrast, multiple-item scales tend to be more representative, stable, and more likely to relate to a construct (Neuman 2006; Nunnally & Bernstein 1994; Spector 1992). Also, single item scales have considerable random measurement error (Sullivan & Feldman 1979; Blalock 1970). However, measurement error averages out when using multiple items. As the number of items increases, measurement error decreases (Nunnally & Bernstein 1994; Spector 1992; Blalock 1970). Thus, it can be said that the use of multiple indicators enables the maximisation of validity and reliability (Rowe 2006; Blalock 1970; Campbell & Fiske 1959).

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two identified a number of past works, which have developed constructs that could potentially be used to examine the proposed concepts explored in this thesis. Four sets of scales were adapted in this thesis, including; a) a set of 15 items developed by Berry et al. (2002) to examine respondents perception of each types of service convenience about their health clubs based on existing experiences (i.e. 3 items per component), which have been validated by Colwell et al. (2008) – in a Canadian telecommunications context and Seiders et al. (2007) – in a US retailing context; b) 3 items examining the level of overall consumer satisfaction from Cronin et al. (2000), which is concerned with measuring an individual's overall evaluation of the service

encounter, and c) 4 items exploring behavioural intentions based on Bloemer et al. (2003) towards health clubs, including the likelihood that they will repurchase and willingness to recommend the service to others, which are the outcome measures in the proposal model; and d) 14 questions on the demographic characteristics which are used to provide a profile of the respondents. The selection of scales will be discussed in more detail in the following subsections (Sections 4.3.1, 4.3.2 & 4.3.3).

4.3.1 Service Convenience

As was discussed in Section 2.1, traditionally service convenience was usually measured using a single item. Although researchers have suggested this is limited and theer are multiple types of service convenience (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Berry & Cooper 1990). Researchers have generally not examined the need for exploring a multiple types of convienvce incorporating both time-savings and effort-savings. Berry et al. (2002) proposed that the convenience construct encompasses both time-saving and effort-saving domains and they proposed five types of service convenience. Within their work Berry et al. (2002) proposed that three items for each of the five constructs, i.e. 15 items were developed (see Table 4.1 below). Little research exists, other than those conducted by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) that have explored Berry et al.'s (2002) proposed items. In this thesis the scales were made to be context specific, which is frequently undertaken in research and has in fact been suggested by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) in their exploration of service convenience. The present research undertaken in this thesis did not adopt the approach undertaken by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) to expand the items beyond those proposed by Berry et al. (2002). The specific items used are somewhat different to Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007), although in these earlier work and in this thesis, the items cover the same five types of service convience and generally are worded similarly (see Table 4.1). The data in this thesis was collected in 2006, prior to Colwell et al.'s (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) works appearing in the literature, and hence this thesis

adapted the scales proposed by Berry et al. (2002) to measure five types of service convenience variables including ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit. These encompass the distinctive attributes of service convenience and allow for the hypotheses in this thesis to be empirically tested.

Subscale	Thesis – Taiwan Health Clubs (HC) Item	Berry *et al.*'s (2002) Initial List of Service Convenience Scale Items Item	Seiders *et al.* (2007) – United States Service Retailing (SR) Item	Colwell *et al.* (2008) – Canada Cellular or Internet (CI) Item
Decision Convenience	1. I spent minimal time finding the information to choose a HC.	1) It took minimal time to get the information needed to choose a service provider.	(1) Deciding to shop at SR is quick and easy.	(1: The information I received from the CI service provider made it easy for me to choose what to buy.
	2. This HC made it easy for me to find suitable exercise programs.	2) Making up my mind about what I wanted to buy was easy.	(2) I can easily determine prior to shopping whether SR will offer what I needed.	(2: Making up my mind about what CI service I wanted to buy was easy.
	3. It was easy to get the information I needed to decide which HC to join.	3) It was easy to get the information I needed to decide which service provider to use.	(3) I can quickly find information before I shop to decide if SR has what I'm looking for.	(3: The information that I received from the service provider was very clear and easy to read.
	×	×	×	(4: The service provider let me know the exact offers before I bought the CI service.
Access Convenience	4. It was easy to contact my HC.	4) It was easy to contact the service provider.	(4) I am able to get to SR quickly and easily.	(5: The service provider was available when I needed to talk to them.
	5. It did not take much time to reach this HC.	5) It did not take much time to reach the service provider.	(5) SR offers convenient store hours.	(6: The hours of operation of the service provider were convenient.
	6. I can easily figure out the location of this HC.	6) I was able to get to the service provider's location quickly.	(6) SR offers convenient parking.	(7: The service provider is accessible through various ways (online, telephone, and in person).
	×	×	(7) SR offers convenient location.	(8: It is easy for me to contact an employee of the CI service provider if necessary.
Transaction Convenience	7. This HC allows diversified methods of payment.	7) I did not have to make much of an effort to pay for the service.	(8) SR makes it easy for me to conclude my transaction.	(9: I found it easy to complete my CI service purchase with my provider.
	8. The method of payment provided by this HC is convenient.	8) They made it easy for me to conclude my purchase.	(9) It takes little time to pay for my purchase at SR.	(10: I was able to complete the purchase of my service quickly.
	9. I was able to complete my purchase quickly in this HC.	9) I was able to complete my purchase quickly.	(10) I am able to complete my purchase quickly at SR.	(11: There were no problems to deal with during the purchase that added to the purchase time.
Benefit Convenience	10. I could easily obtain benefits from the services provided in this HC.	10) I was able to get the benefits of the service with minimal effort.	(11) The merchandise I want at SR can be located quickly.	(12: I was able to get the benefits of the CI service with little effort.
	11. The services in this HC were easy to use.	11) The service was easy to use.	(12) It is easy to find the products I am looking at SR.	(13: The service provider solved my CI needs without creating other problems.
	12. The speed of providing services in this HC met my requirements.	12) The time required to receive the benefits of the service was appropriate.	(13) It is easy to evaluate the merchandise at SR.	(14: The time required to receive the benefits of the CI service was reasonable.
	×	×	(14) I can easily get product advice at SR.	×
Post-benefit Convenience	13. When I had a problem, this HC resolved my problem quickly.	13) The service provider resolved my problem quickly.	(15) It is easy to take care of returns and exchanges at SR.	(15: My CI service provider quickly resolved any problems I had with the service.
	14. This HC enabled me to arrange my next exercise programs/plans with minimal effort.	14) It took little effort to arrange follow-up service.	(16) SR takes care of product exchanges and returns promptly.	(16: It was easy for me to obtain follow up service from the provider after my purchase.
	15. This HC has a good channel to handle complaints and recommendations.	15) The service provider made it easy for me to resolve my problem.	(17) Any after-purchase problems I experience are quickly resolved at SR.	(17: When I have questions about my service, provider is able to resolve my problem.

Source: Literature review

The wording of Berry et al.'s (2002) questions was changed to fit the service types of convenience specificly being examined, i.e. health clubs (see Table 4.1 for the wording).

Within the research a decision must be made on the most appropriate way to elicit credible responses from subjects towards objects, so that meaningful inferences can be made with the data (Cavana et al. 2001; Wrenn 1997; Devlin, Dong & Brown1993; Anderson, Basilevesky & Hum 1983). Likert scales are among the most commonly used scaling methods in instruments measuring opinions, beliefs and attitudes (Neuman 2006; DeVellis 2003; Anderson et al. 1983), and they are the easiest scale to construct, easily accomplished to administer and easy of use for respondents (Zikmund 2003; Anderson et al. 1983). Likert scales are designed to allow respondents to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement of perceived object with a statement on a five-point (or seven-point) scale (Cavana et al. 2001; Anderson et al. 1983). As a result, seven-point Likert scales were used in this questionnaire (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree), where respondents were asked about their perceptions of the service provider (health clubs in this thesis) based on existing experiences. These used with Berry et al.'s (2002) original scales. As was identified above, the wording of questions was changed to fit the service convenience types for the specific service being examined, i.e. health clubs. This approach was suggested by Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) as well as is also used extensively when exploring aspects of service, for example SERVQUAL (i.e. Andaleeb & Conway 2006; Olorunniwo & Hsu 2006; Olorunniwo et al. 2006; Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Alexandris et al. 2002; Thrane 2002). In the following section, overall consumer satisfaction is discussed.

4.3.2 Overall Consumer Satisfaction

In this thesis consumer satisfaction is measured by the level of satisfaction, which is concerned with measuring an individual's overall evaluation of the service encounter. The thesis relies on global measure of satisfaction based on

consumers' cumulative satisfaction with the service (i.e. Tam 2004; Burns et al. 2003; Baker & Crompton 2000).

As was discussed earlier in Section 2.2.2, traditional measurement methods of consumer satisfaction (such as gap model and performance-based analysis) focusing on overall evaluation of the product/service most often employed single-item rating scales to reflect 'very satisfied' to 'very dissatisfied' responses (Alcaniz et al. 2005; Danaher & Haddrell 1996; Westbrook & Oliver 1991). However, other studies of consumer satisfaction have emphasised consumers' overall evaluation using multi-item measures of consumer satisfaction (i.e. Petrick & Backman 2002; Cronin et al. 2000; Madrigal 1995). In addition, it seems unnecessary to develop new scales given the number of acceptable scales that exist in the satisfaction literature (Jones & Suh 2000). For instance, Cronin et al. (2000), who studied the effects of quality, satisfaction, and value on consumers' behavioural intentions across multiple service industries, used multi-item measures of consumer satisfaction (i.e. 3 items), where the construct reliability was 0.85, respectively. Ranaweera and Prabhu (2003) also used a similar three-item measure of overall consumer satisfaction and the reliability coefficient for the reflective scales were high ($\alpha_{cs} = 0.94$).

Similarly, Madrigal (1995) examined the relationships between cognitive and affective determinants of fan satisfaction with sporting event attendance, and they adapted three items from previous research (i.e. Oliver 1980) to assess fans' satisfaction because these validated scales for overall consumer satisfaction already existed in the literature. For the same reasons, Kouthouris and Alexandris (2005) also measured satisfaction with a three-item scale taken from a measure of satisfaction developed by Oliver (1980). The reliability of the scale was found to be 0.92, indicating a high degree of internal consistency in their study of service quality in an outdoor setting. Consumer satisfaction scales used within the above studies have been tested for validity and reliability. Thus, a three-item measure taken from previous research was used in this thesis to evaluate the overall consumer satisfaction and they refer to 'I am satisfied with my decision to be a

member of this club', 'I think I made the right choice when I decided to join this health club', and 'The health club provides services suitable for my needs', which were adapted from these works of Kouthouris and Alexandris (2005); Cronin et al. (2000) and Madrigal (1995) (see Table 4.2), and are similar to other overall consumer satisfaction indicators used elsewhere in the services marketing literature (i.e. Grace & O'Cass 2004; McCollough & Gremler 2004; Ranaweera & Prabhu 2003). The wording of items was changed to reflect the context of services.

Table 4.2 List of overall consumer satisfaction scale items

List of Satisfaction Scale Items for Health Club Sector	Madrigal's (1995) Satisfaction Scale Items	Cronin et al.'s (2000) Satisfaction Scale Items	Kouthouris & Alexandris's (2005) Satisfaction Scale Items
(1) I am satisfied with my decision to be a member of this health club.	● I am satisfied with my decision to attend this game.	● My choice to purchase this service was a wise one.	● I am satisfied with my decision to participate in this outdoor excursion.
(2) I think I made the right choice when I decided to join this health club.	● I think I did the right thing by deciding to attend this game.	● I think that I did the right thing when I purchased this service.	● I believe I did the right thing to participate in this outdoor program.
(3) The health club provides services suitable for my needs.	● I am happy that I attended this game.	● This facility is exactly what is needed for this service.	● I am happy about my decision to participate in this outdoor program.

Source: Literature review

Generally consumer satisfaction has been measured using different scales in literature focusing on satisfaction. For example, Westbrook and Oliver (1981) examined the reliability of a number of multi-item scales including semantic differential, Likert, verbal, graphic rating and PORTER/inferential scales. The results in their study indicated that semantic differential scales and Likert scales provided the highest reliabilities in a service context.

Moreover, literature suggests that Likert scales are among the most commonly used scaling methods in instruments measuring opinions, beliefs and attitudes (Neuman 2006; DeVellis 2003; Anderson et al. 1983), and they are the easiest scale to construct, easily accomplished to administer and ease of use for respondents (Zikmund 2003; Anderson et al. 1983). Thus, Likert scales are designed to measure consumers' perceptions of satisfaction, and Likert scales were employed in this thesis. These items were measured on a seven-point Likert scales, where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree). This approach has also been used in previous literature (i.e. Olorunniwo & Hsu 2006; Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Ranaweera & Prabhu 2003; Cronin et al. 2000; Madrigal 1995) (refer to Table 4.2).

In the following section, the dependent variables, behavioural intentions are discussed.

4.3.3 Behavioural Intentions

As mentioned in Section 2.3.1, behavioural intentions used in this thesis are operationalised as behavioural measures of loyalty that assess consumers' disposition in terms of preferences or intentions to the form of active behaviour towards their service provider. Word-of-mouth communication and repurchase intention are indicators of behavioural intentions, and these include whether consumer would say positive things about them, and recommend them to other consumers and the likelihood that consumer will repurchase (Baker & Crompton 2000; Zeithaml et al. 1996; Getty & Thompson 1994). These issues have been examined in previous research on services literature (i.e. Wong 2004; Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1994).

The final construct, behavioural intentions scale was measured with four items and each item is scored using a seven-point, Likert-type response format. Similar to the process employed in consumer satisfaction (Section 4.3.2), four-item consumer behavioural intentions scale was adopted from previous literature.

Because the set of validated scales for consumer behavioural intentions (i.e. Olorunniwo & Hsu 2006; Wong 2004) were reliable and describe the domain of construct, which already existed in the literature. For instance, in the literature specific to service quality, Zeithaml et al. (1996) used multi-item measures of consumer behaviour intentions in services, and suggested that such measures of behavioural intentions can be used provide insights into the nature of what constitutes a loyal consumer. Mattila (2004), who studied the negative impact of service failures on consumer behavioural loyalty, adapted multiple items from Zeithaml et al. (1996) to measure behavioural intentions where the behavioural intentions scale was reliable at the Cronbach alpha of 0.92, indicating a high degree of internal consistency.

Similarly, Bloomer et al. (2003) examined the relationships between consumers' needs for social affiliation, consumer relationship proneness and behavioural intentions in a hairdresser's context, and adapted multi-item measures of consumer behaviour intentions from previous literature because it was found reliable and described the domain of construct. For the same reason, Bendall-Lyon and Powers (2004) also adapted multi-item measures of consumer behaviour intentions from previous literature (i.e. Zeithaml et al. 1996) to measure the relationships between satisfaction with structure and process attributes to global satisfaction and behavioural intentions based on a survey of 635 consumers of healthcare services.

Behavioural intentions scales used within the above studies have been tested for validity and reliability. As such, this four-item consumer behavioural intentions scale was adopted from Wong (2004); Bloemer et al. (2003) and Zeithaml et al. (1996) (see Table 4.3 below).

Table 4.3 List of behavioural intentions scale items

List of Behavioural Intentions Scale Items for Health Club Sector	Zeithaml et al.'s (1996) Initial List of Behavioural Intentions Scale Items	Bloemer et al.'s (2003) Behavioural Intentions Scale Items	Wong's (2004) Behavioural Intentions Scale Items
1) I say positive things about this health club to others.	● Say positive things about XYZ to other people.	● I say positive things about my hairdresser's to other people.	● I say positive things about retail store XYZ to other people.
2) I encourage my friends and co-workers to go to this health club.	● Encourage friends and relatives to do business with XYZ.	● I encourage friends to go to my hairdresser's.	● I encourage friends and relatives to shop at retail store XYZ.
3) I recommend this health club to someone who seeks my advice.	● Recommend XYZ to someone who seeks your advice.	● I recommend my hairdresser's to someone who seeks advice.	● I recommend retail store XYZ to someone who seeks advice.
4) I consider this health club as my first choice.	● Consider XYZ your first choice to buy --- services.	● I consider my hairdresser's as my first choice.	● I consider retail store XYZ as my first choice.

Source: Literature review

For the purposes of analysis, respondents were requested to indicate the degree of the likelihood with the four actions towards their service providers along the following: 'I say positive things about this health club to others', 'I encourage my friends and co-workers to go to this health club', 'I recommend this health club to someone who seeks my advice', and 'I consider this health club as my first choice'. The wording of items was changed to reflect the context of services. These four items are similar to those reported and used through the services marketing literature (i.e. Olorunniwo & Hsu 2006; Bendall-Lyon & Powers 2004; Babakus & Boller 1992; Cronin & Taylor 1992). In terms of intentions measurement, Sheppard, Hartwick and Warshaw (1988) distinguished between two types of intention measures: 1) intentions (such as 'I intend/do not intend to do'), and 2) estimations (such as 'It is likely/unlikely that I will do'). They also pointed out that individuals' estimations (likely/unlikely) provided better prediction of behaviour than individuals' intentions, because while trying to estimate whether individuals actually will perform some behaviour, they are likely to consider all factors such as: current attitudes; subjective norms; and interest towards actions they are aware of that could influence their performance in participation.

Consequently, individuals' estimations measurement is applied in this thesis. These were measured on a seven-point Likert scales, where 1 = Very unlikely, 7 = Very likely.

4.3.4 Demographic Questions

The fourth set of scales related to respondent demographic characteristics. The demographic section was placed at the end of the questionnaire to minimise the chance that respondents might be unwilling to disclose sensitive topics such as income, age or family life because this might cause embarrassing or threatening to respondent's prestige (Malhotra et al. 2005). The demographic questions used in this thesis are included to collect personal data of each respondent. These questions include gender, age, marital state, income, profession and level of education. These questions are presented in a fix-response multiple-choice format. Other items related to frequency of visiting a health club and working hours (i.e. Choi 2001; Pizam & Ellis 1999). The demographic information collected in the survey will be used to understand the characteristics of the sample. The demographics section included fourteen questions, which incorporate consumer background and characteristic variables. These questions allow description of the sample prior to undertaking more complex statistical evaluation (Polonsky & Waller 2005), to determine whether this sample is representative of those used in health club and sport industry literature generally (i.e. Afthinos et al. 2005; IHRSA 2005; Taiwan National Policy Foundation, NPF 2003; Choi 2001; Ko 2000; Chelladurai 1992; Gur-Arie 1992). This is discussed in more detail in Section 5.1.1. In addition, space was provided for respondents to express any other feelings regarding their health club membership experience. Frequency distributions and percentage analysis were performed to describe the statistical aspects of demographic data in order to describe the sample (i.e. Heung 2000). The results of these are outlined in Chapter Five.

4.4 LANGUAGE TRANSLATION AND BACK-TRANSLATION

The questionnaire items were first prepared in English then were translated into Chinese for the targeted population – Taiwanese health club visitors. Translation of the questionnaire is important as it might result measurement errors and can affect conceptual and instrument equivalence (Cavana et al. 2001; Brislin 1986). To confirm the equivalency of the English and Chinese the back-translation approach was employed. This approach is frequently used in cross-cultural marketing and psychology literature (i.e. Afthinos et al. 2005; Scholderer & Grunert 2005; Bagozzi et al. 2000; Cavusgil & Das 1997; Hambleton 1993; Bagozzi et al. 1989), and is perhaps the best-known approach for questionnaire translations (Brislin 1980).

Two bilingual translators were used to work independently on the translation. As recommended by Brislin (1986), the questionnaire was first developed in English, then translated into Chinese by one Chinese-English bilingual (a Master student of the University of Oxford, UK) who were not involved in the research, and then back-translated by another Master student from the University of Melbourne to confirm that item equivalency was achieved. The original English questionnaire and the back-translated questionnaire were then compared by the above two Chinese-English bilinguals to minimise language nuances. Based on a comparison between the two questionnaires, some modifications were made. Some idiomatic, colloquial English words or phrases in questions from previous established studies were reworded (see Section 4.5 below, Stage 2 of pre-tests) to ensure that the translation had the same meaning and the questions were clear and understandable by the respondents. In this way, translation equivalence was established (Mullen 1995; Hambleton 1993). Finally, the pre-test instrument of this thesis was then administered in the Chinese language in Taiwan, which is described below.

4.5 PRE-TESTING: STEP 3

A pre-test was conducted to identify if there were any problems in the questionnaire's instructions or design (Zikmund 2003) (step three in Figure 3.1). The pre-tests were conducted in three stages (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Stages of pre-tests

Stage	Questionnaire Version	Respondents	Purposes
1	English	• ten marketing academics	➢ To ensure that the items actually represent specified definition of constructs.
2	Chinese	• two health club administrators, and • seven Chinese speakers	➢ To verify the back-translation and ensure that the words used have the same meaning, and that the questions were clear and understandable to respondents.
3	Chinese	• 100 consumers who attended one university-based health club in Taiwan	➢ To estimate the time needed to complete the survey, and ensure that the layout was straightforward and questions generally clear.

Source: Developed by the author

Firstly, as can be seen in Table 4.4, before translation of the questionnaire, a pre-test instrument was undertaken to examine the content validity of the questions. Validity refers to whether the data are measuring what they are intended to measure, which can be achieved in the design of questionnaire (Veal 2006). Specifically, this research examines content validity that is also a special type of face validity (Neuman 2006). Content validity refers to the fact that professions agree that a scale logically and accurately measures what it is intended to measure (Cavana et al. 2001). Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) suggested content validity is established before applying the full survey administration whereby testing of item fit is conducted in the pre-test stage to ensure that the items actually represent specified definition of constructs. For this reason, a draft of English version of the questionnaire was sent to ten marketing academics, inviting them

by the researcher to comment on the service convenience model, structure and individual items. Churchill and Iacobucci (2004) suggest that a personal interview should be used to identify if people understand what is required of them, and to determine if any major problems in responding to the questionnaire occurred. Overall, there was no critism of the service convenience model. All respondents felt that the interaction of service convenience perceptions and satisfaction in models of the formation of consumers' behavioural intentions would add to our ability to explain overall service delivery process. However, one academic recognised that respondents might not have experience with problem solving in a health club, so we modified 'The health club resolved my problem quickly' for Post-benefit Convenience item (Question 13), to 'When I had a problem, this health club resolved my problem quickly'. Also, some concerns were raised about the Demographic Questions, as several respondents felt that a 'work employment hours per week' (Question 7) should be added in order to measure if consumers view time as a scarce resource in relation to seeking convenience as a service attribute. As a result, this question was added. Some respondents expressed difficultly in answering the questions due to the wording, ordering and phrasing of certain items. For example, in the case of Question 1 under the sub-scale Decision Convenience: 'I spent minimal time to get the information I needed to choose a health club' was modified to 'I spent minimal time finding the information to choose a health club'. In the case of Question 4 under Access Convenience: 'I contacted the health club without any difficulty' was replaced with 'It was easy to contact my health club'. By incorporating the marketing academics' comments, adjustments such as these were made to individual items following the pre-test to address these comments.

Secondly, as was mentioned earlier in Section 4.4, once translation equivalence was established through back-translation, the second stage of the pre-test involved the distributive of the revised Chinese version of questionnaire to two health club administrators and seven Chinese speakers (see Table 4.4), asking them to examine the instrument for difficulties with question wording, problems with leading questions, or any bias due to question sequence (Zikmund 2003). For

example, the item 'equipment' in the section of Benefit Convenience (Question 11) was placed with 'services', so as to generalise to service contexts. The alternative wording for the Decision Convenience item (Question 2) 'The health club or its website made it easy for me to find suitable exercise programs or plans' was modified to 'This health club made it easy for me to find suitable exercise programs'. By incorporating the health club administrators' comments, alternative words were adjusted to make the questions sound more natural in the Chinese language. This procedure also verified the back-translation and ensured the words used have the same meaning, and that the questions were clear and understandable to respondents.

Lastly, the third stage of the pre-test involved the piloting of the revised survey instrument. The survey was distributed to 100 respondents from the target population (see Table 4.4), as suggested by Zikmund (2003). Veal (2006, p. 276) suggested the purposes of pilot studying is not just to evaluate question wording, but the sequencing, questionnaire layout, test field work arrangements, training and test fieldworks, estimating response rate, estimate interview processes and testing analysis procedures can be evaluated as well. Reynolds, Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (1993) suggested that a pre-test sample size should range from 5~10, to 50~100. The pilot test for this thesis was conducted using a convenience sampling of 100 health clubs visitors of one university-based health club in Taiwan, which is not included in the final sample. Consumers were asked to participate in the study, as they exited the health club. Participation in this research was voluntary and no incentive was provided. The draft survey was four-pages, and self-administered. It was distributed by the health club staff during a variety of hours at weekends during four-weeks in the period of September and October, 2006. The questionnaire (see Appendix 4.2) was organised and printed on both sides of an A3 sheet of paper which has folded to form a booklet comprising four A4 sized pages.

The response rate was 76% (i.e. 76 usable surveys were collected from the 100 questionnaires distributed). The pre-test confirmed that the estimate of the time

needed to complete the survey was reasonable (from 10~15 minutes and varied by participant) and the respondents indicated that the layout was straightforward and the questions were generally clear, indicating that the questions were suitable for the intended audience. Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on the survey design and no major comments were raised. As such the survey was deemed suitable for data collection.

4.6 PURIFY MEASURES: STEP 4

This section discusses the assessment of the reliability of the seven composite constructs used in this thesis (i.e. the five types of service convenience, the construct of consumer satisfaction, and the construct of behavioural intentions). To explore the reliability of the constructs we followed Churchill's (1979) suggestion in order to design good scales for measurement. This constitutes Step Four of the research process as identified in Figure 4.1. Reliability is "the extent to which research findings would be the same if the research was to be repeated at a later date or with a different sample of subjects" (Veal 2006, p. 41). The examination of reliability will indicate how reliable a score on the test will be and describe the domain of each construct. To assess the reliability of the items for each of the seven composite constructs, the internal consistency method was used in this thesis including the value of item-to-total correlation and Cronbach's alpha (α) value. As it has been suggested that a minimum value of the item-to-total correlation value should be greater than .40 (i.e. Gliem & Gliem 2003), the item-to-total-correlation values of the items on each of the construct were reliable at the .05 level of significance. However, within literature a minimum Alpha of .60 is suggested as being appropriate (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham 2006) and this is used as the minimum required reliability level within this thesis. If these items were not reliable then they could not be used in any future examination of the seven constructs. This process also has been undertaken in previous literature (i.e. Green & Boshoff 2002; Danaher & Haddrell 1996). The

item-to-total-correlations and Cronbach's alpha values for items within the seven types are reported in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 The coefficient Alphas for the constructs, n = 76

Items	Mean	SD	Item-to-total-correlation	Alpha if item deleted
Service Convenience				
Decision Convenience				
1. I spent minimal time finding the information to choose a HC.	4.86	1.25	.41	.51
2. This HC made it easy for me to find suitable exercise programs.	5.11	1.12	.43	.49
3. It was easy to get the information I needed to decide which HC to join.	4.98	1.23	.47	.42
Reliability coefficients / 3 items		Alpha = .57		
Access Convenience				
4. It was easy to contact my HC.	4.94	1.45	.48	.55
5. It did not take much time to reach this HC.	4.92	1.23	.43	.61
6. I can easily figure out the location of this HC.	4.94	1.26	.51	.52
Reliability coefficients / 3 items		Alpha = .66		
Transaction Convenience				
7. This HC allows diversified methods of payment.	4.91	1.33	.42	.54
8. The method of payment provided by this HC is convenient.	5.04	1.31	.41	.55
9. I was able to complete my purchase quickly in this HC.	4.91	1.22	.46	.49
Reliability coefficients / 3 items		Alpha = .62		
Benefit Convenience				
10. I could easily obtain benefits from the services provided in this HC.	5.06	1.32	.47	.67
11. The services in this HC were easy to use.	4.94	1.26	.55	.58
12. The speed of providing services in this HC met my requirements.	5.04	1.20	.54	.59
Reliability coefficients / 3 items		Alpha = .70		
Post-benefit Convenience				
13. When I had a problem, this HC resolved my problem quickly.	5.02	1.19	.52	.74
14. This HC enabled me to arrange my next exercise programs/plans with minimal effort.	5.03	1.16	.58	.67
15. This HC has a good channel to handle complaints and recommendations	4.86	1.28	.66	.58
Reliability coefficients / 3 items		Alpha = .75		

Table 4.5 *(continued)*

Items	Mean	SD	Item-to-total-correlation	Alpha if item deleted
Overall Consumer Satisfaction				
1) I am satisfied with my decision to be a member of this health club.	4.76	1.14	.51	.70
2) I think I made the right choice when I decided to join this health club.	5.20	1.07	.53	.67
3) The health club provides services suitable for my needs.	4.73	1.28	.64	.54
Reliability coefficients / 3 items Alpha = .74				
Behavioural intentions				
(1) I say positive things about this health club to others.	5.05	1.22	.72	.83
(2) I encourage my friends and co-workers to go to this health club.	5.09	1.20	.75	.82
(3) I recommend this health club to someone who seeks my advice.	4.86	1.32	.68	.86
(4) I consider this health club as my first choice.	4.84	1.25	.53	.77
Reliability coefficients / 4 items Alpha = .87				

*Source: Data analysis (2006)

As shown in Table 4.5, all item-to-total-correlations fall within the acceptable range for each of the five types of service convenience, overall consumer satisfaction construct and behavioural intentions constructs, ensuring that over 40% of the correlations in the matrix at the .05 level of significance (Gliem & Gliem 2003).

In Table 4.5 it can also be seen that the item correlations and Alpha values for the four types of service convenience were acceptable from the pre-test (n = 76), with coefficient Alphas ranging from: 'access convenience' .66, 'transaction convenience' .62, 'benefit convenience' .70, to 'post-benefit convenience' .75 (i.e. Grace 2005; Karatepe et al. 2005). One problem with the pre-test data, as 'decision convenience' had a rather low reliability score (.57). The researcher did

not refine this construct scale for the following two reasons. Firstly, given that the final sample size would be larger, it is anticipated that the reliability would increase with a larger sample (Pallant 2005; Cohen 1988). Secondly, the construct had only three items and dropping items would result in a scale that may not adequately sample the domain of the construct (Ravichandran & Rai 2000). In addition, reliability scores on three-item measures are generally questionable (Pallant 2005; Bloemer et al. 1999). The low reliability, if it were to exist in the larger data set would be a limitation. The Cronbach's alpha undertaken on the sample's responses to the overall consumer satisfaction scale is .74 (n = 76), respectively. The Alpha for the final behavioural intentions scale is .87, indicating a high degree of internal consistency. In light of these results, none of the Alphas were increased if any items were removed; although Alphas for 3-item measures of the five types of service convenience are questionable, possibly due to the limited number of items (Pallant 2005; Bloemer et al. 1999). The results identify that the seven constructs are therefore reliable and describe the domain of construct.

4.7 POPULATION AND SAMPLING DESIGN FOR A FINAL SURVEY

This section overviews the population and sampling design for the final questionnaire. It identifies the population to be sampled, the targeted sample size, and the sampling method. The researcher follows a four-step process of sampling in order to minimise potential sampling errors. These included: (a) defining the target population; (b) determining the sampling frame; (c) selecting the sampling technique; and (d) determining the sample size (Malhotra et al. 2005).

Once the research design and data-collection instrument is developed, the first step identifies the target population, which is "selecting those elements from which the information will be collected" (Churchill & Iacobucci 2004, p. 321). Element refers to a single member of the population, while population is defined as the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wants

to investigate (Cavana et al. 2001). While much of the services literature has been developed in the contexts of banks, retail outlets, and hotels/restaurants, leisure services are significant in terms of their global economic impact. Thus, the target population for this thesis was consumers of services provided by health clubs (see justification in Section 1.2).

One approach to collecting information from a proportion of the population is taking a sample of elements from the larger group (Churchill & Iacobucci 2004), where a sample is obtained by collecting information about only some members of the population (Cavana et al. 2001). It is therefore important that the population is defined before selecting the sample (De Vaus 2002), as it is not usually possible to interview all the people who are the focus of the research (Veal 2006). Thus, in the second step, the sampling frame needs to be identified. Here, the sampling frame refers to "a representation of the elements of the target population" (Malhotra et al. 2005, p. 364). According to Taiwan Sports Affairs Council, Executive Yuan (2005), the major categories of health clubs in Taiwan include commercial-multipurpose (48%), commercial-fitness (22%), hotel/resort spa (16%), country club (11%), and residential (3%). Thus, the empirical study of this thesis was carried out in three large commercial-multipurpose health clubs in three major cities in Taiwan. This covered all regions, and included the three largest commercial-multipurpose health clubs in Taiwan. These particular samples were chosen for the final survey because of their different geographical locations (North, Middle and South parts of Taiwan), to minimise the possibility of regional bias (i.e. de Vasconcellos, do Nascimento Silva & Szwarcwald 2005; Crick & Chaudhry 1996). In making this selection, the researcher wanted an accurate cross-section of health clubs to be represented. In addition, criteria useful in selecting a cross-section of respondents for this thesis has been based on a report of Taiwan Sports Affairs Council, Executive Yuan (2005), in which the commercial-multipurpose health club sector has: (1) targeted the middle class and family market; (2) 200 or more members; (3) membership fees on a monthly or yearly basis; (4) provided facilities of family friendly swimming pool, sauna, massage and beauty services, as well as exercise equipment and a variety of yoga,

fitness and aerobics classes. The sampling technique enables the researcher to accurately represent the major characteristics of a population (de Vasconcellos et al. 2005). Our sample of health clubs was selected to be representative of the population (i.e. Choi 2001; Ko 2000). Furthermore, as discussed in Section 4.3.4, to determine whether this sample is representative of those used in health club and sport industry literature and reports generally (i.e. IHRSA 2005; NPF 2003; Chelladurai 1992; Gur-Arie 1992), the demographics section included fourteen questions, which incorporate consumer background and characteristic variables. In this way the researcher could ensure that the sample is representive of the population. Importantly, managers of the three selected health clubs were willing to participate and allow the survey to be distributed to their members.

Further, to establish a practicable, efficient sampling method to access the target population of health club members for a cross-sectional survey in Taiwan, the third step required the researcher to select an appropriate sampling method. This is used to identify suitable methods to access health club consumers. Several types of sampling techniques exist; the researcher used a non-random technique (convenience sampling) which was applied to collect primary data from Taiwan's health club markets. Convenience sampling involves collecting information from members of the population who are conveniently identified and available to provide it (Cavana et al. 2001). The advantages are: 1) it is difficult to obtain a population list; 2) this method is less time-consuming and least expensive (Fink 2006; Fraenkel & Wallen 2006; Malhotra et al. 2005; Polonsky & Waller 2005). Although one problem with convenience samples is that they might not be generalisable to all consumers (i.e. are not random samples of the wider population), Zikmund (2003) and Cavana et al. (2001) suggested that by using convenience sampling, researchers are able to obtain a large number of complete questionnaires quickly and efficiently. This method was also used in previous service literature (i.e. Boshoff & Gray 2004; Madrigal 1995; Taylor & Baker 1994). As such, the researcher felt that a convenience sampling method therefore is deemed to be suitable for gathering data required in this thesis.

Fourth, the researcher determined the sample size for this thesis. In order to draw an appropriate sample, Sudman (1976) maintained that it is important to know what the budget limits are, and only then decide on a level of precision needed to determine sample size. In addition, in order to avoid statistical bias, Roscoe (1975) suggested that sample sizes larger than 30 and smaller than 500 are appropriate for most research and in multivariate (including multiple regression analyses), the sample size should be several times (preferably 10 times or more) as large as the number of variables in the study. In a study of tourism destinations, Yuksel (2001) targeted 400 tourists departing from an airport to examine awareness of the nature and relative importance of satisfaction in repurchase judgments of holiday destinations. Another study of service quality, distributed 400 questionnaires among hotel guests (Alexandris et al. 2002). In Green and Boshoff's (2002) study of the tourism industry, 600 questionnaires were distributed among aircraft passengers. Similarly, 600 surveys were distributed for Ai-Hawari's (2005) study of service quality in bank financial performance. Therefore, in accordance with the above examples, a sample size of 540 health club members (180 per club) was deemed sufficient for a reliable sample.

4.8 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES: STEP 5

This section of the chapter describes in detail the data collection procedures for the final survey. According to Veal (2006), an on-site (user) survey could be conducted by respondent or interviewer completion with medium costs and high response rate. This is also a common type of data collection process used in leisure, recreation and services studies (i.e. Burns et al. 2003; Petrick 2002; Ko 2000; Danaher & Haddrell 1996; Crompton & MacKay 1989). The respondent-completion survey involves distributing a questionnaire to potential respondents on their arrival at the site and collecting them on their departure, or conducting the whole procedure upon departure. A key advantage of this technique of survey administration is that the experience being examined will be easier for respondents to remember, in contrast to respondents drawing on past experiences

(Nicholls et al. 1998). Given there were no changes required in the questionnaire, the four-page questionnaire was distributed between November 2006 and January of 2007 on-site to consumers at three health clubs each day, with assistance of health club staff. Each potential respondent was recruited to participate at the exit of three health clubs. Potential respondents were presented a survey package, which included an information sheet and a questionnaire, (see Appendix 4.2 for the full survey). The information sheet (see Appendix 4.1) provided an introduction to the research and its objective, as well as included contact details of both the researcher and supervisor (Polonsky 1998). It assured the respondents that their information would be strictly confidential and their personal information remain anonymous. The information sheet is important because it reduces the probability of student researcher or participant harm and thus reduces the chance of litigation (Polonsky 1998). A total of 540 questionnaires were distributed (180 copies per location were distributed). For the final sample the response rate was 82% (i.e. 443 usable surveys were collected from the 540 questionnaires distributed). The response rate and demographic characteristics of the sample will be discussed in the analysis and results chapter, in Chapter Five.

The following section discusses the analytical process used examining the reliability and validity of the constructs. The testing of the hypotheses is also explained and justified.

4.9 DATA PREPARATION PRIOR TO ANALYSIS

Prior to data analysis, screening and cleaning the data was conducted according to procedures recommended by Pallant (2005). All the questionnaires that were returned were firstly manually checked for completeness of responses (Kumar 2005; Churchill & Iacobucci 2004). Missing data usually occurs when a respondent has failed to complete all items in a questionnaire (Hair et al. 2006; Cavana et al. 2001). Incomplete questionnaires containing one or more missing items were excluded from the dataset for analysis and this lead to 97

questionnaires being excluded from subsequent analysis. Second, the retained 443 questionnaires were checked manually once more prior to computer entry to identify if there were any missing items. Third, once the data entry was completed, the data files were carefully screened in order to minimise the data entry errors. In this connection, the examination of frequencies for each item were checked in order to detect the out-of-range values and values entered that greater than 7 were rectified after reconciling with the questionnaires.

Once cleaning of data was conducted, the descriptive analyses for determining the validity of the underlying assumptions about the data required for further multivariate analysis employed in this thesis (i.e. regression analysis), the data are examined for normality of the items. This will be discussed next. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) statistical software was utilised to analyse the data.

4.10 NORMALITY OF THE ITEMS

As a pre-requisite for multivariate analysis, is that each item must be normality distributed (Coakes, Steed & Price 2007). Hair et al. (2006) noted that if the variation from the normal distribution is sufficiently large then all statistical tests are invalid as normality is required to use F- and *t*- statistics. Assessment of the skewness and kurtosis of individual items provides an indication of normality (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007; Pallant 2005). Normality can also be determined by inspection of the histogram through a graphical method (Pallant 2005). The assumption of normality was verified in this thesis by examining both the histogram shape of the data distribution and skewness and kurtosis of each item. When the inspection of histogram shape of each item appears the reasonably shape of normal curve (i.e. most scores occurring in the centre), indicating a normal distribution (Pallant 2005). The examination of descriptive analyses was evaluated to determine the normality of the items; these were also used to check the average of the responses (i.e. all mean value are in the middle of the possible

range of score) and the spread of the data (how far an observation is away from the mean) (Coakes et al. 2007; Churchill & Iacobucci 2004; Cavana et al. 2001). A distribution is considered within a normal range when indicators of the skewness and the kurtosis values fall between −1 and +1 (Hair et al. 2006; Azzalini 2005). Others also supported this approach (i.e. Budhwar 2004; Mehmetoglu 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Heung 2000; Soderlund & Vilgon 1999; Danaher & Haddrell 1996; Westbrook & Oliver 1981). The results in relation to assessments and examination of normality will be discussed in the analysis and results chapter, in Chapter Five.

The following section continues with discussion of the analytical process used to evaluate the reliability and validity of constructs and the testing of the hypotheses and model are explained and justified.

4.11 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING MEASUREMENT SCALES: STEPS 6 & 7

The reliability analysis and validity coefficient for each of the composite construct are examined to explore the data quality. Validity is the ability of a scale or measuring instrument to measure what is intended to measure (Veal 2006; Zikmund 2003). "A measure is valid when the differences in observed scores reflect true differences on the characteristic one is attempting to measure and nothing else" (Churchill 1979, p. 65). A valid measure implies good reliability, but a reliable measure may or may not be valid (Malhotra et al. 2005). In this case, both the reliability and validity of the questionnaire of this thesis were examined. Similar to the process employed in the pre-test, the researcher tested the reliability of the seven composite constructs using the coefficient Alphas and the value of item-to-total correlation (refer to Section 4.6). Reliability of a scale is to examine its internal consistency by calculating Cronbach's alpha. This method indicates the extent to which items within a scale are correlated (Badri, Davis & Davis 1995; Saraph, Benson & Schroeder 1989). It is also reflective of the consistency between different items in a scale, in measuring the same attribute.

This constitutes Step Sixth of the research process as identified in Figure 4.1. This section addresses another major criterion for evaluating measurement – validity coefficient, which encompasses the Seventh Step of the research process guided by Churchill (1979). Two methods including content validity and the examination of validity coefficient were conducted. An instrument has content validity if it has measurement items that adequately cover the content domains or aspects of the concept being measured (Ahire, Golhar & Waller 1996) where validity coefficient is to test the degree to which an instrument can successfully predict an independent relevant criterion that is related to the phenomenon being measured (Pallant 2005).

As was discussed earlier, content validity has been achieved by drawing items from the literature (see Section 4.3), and having experts review and agree on items (Cavana et al. 2001). Content validity was achieved in the first stage in the pre-tests (see Section 4.5, Table 4.4). Specifically, the final instrument of the research concentrates on the assessment of validity coefficient, which examines the inter-relationships amongst the constructs. Following the procedure suggested by Churchill (1979), the validity was checked using the results of the correlation between constructs. This research utilised correlation analysis for two purposes, firstly to examine the presence of multicollinearity among the independent variables, and secondly to explore the relationships among the constructs. The examination of multicollinearity is considered to be particularly important because the presence of high multicollinearity would make determining the contribution of the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable difficult as it indicates that the effects of the independent variables are mixed or confounded (Coakes et al. 2007). In this research, the regression procedure assumes that the amount of variability among the selected independent variables is not explained by the other independent variables (Coakes et al. 2007; Tabachnick & Fidell 2007; Lewis-Beck 1980), and this is thought to reduce the possibility of misspecification (Gerbing & Anderson 1988; Anderson & Gerbing 1982). Thus, it is necessary to detect the linear relationships among the independent variables.

Berry and Feldman (1985) suggested that inter-correlations between all pairs of independent variables higher than cut-off value .80 should be considered as evidence of high multicollinearity. Multicollinearity among the independent variables was tested and compared in this thesis by analysis of a bivariate Pearson product-moment correlation (r) to assess the strength of the correlations among the independent variables. In this thesis, we examined a correlation matrix of the five types of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction. The results of correlation coefficients among the independent variables are presented in the next Chapter. This process has been used in previous research as well (i.e. Butcher et al. 2002; Voli 1998). To interpret results, the size of the value of Pearson correlation (r) provides an indication of the direction and the strength of the relationships between the two variables (Pallant 2005). A correlation coefficient has a value ranging from -1 to +1, with 0 indicating no relationship. In a situation where correlation between two variables is positive, it is assumed that the variables have a positive linear correlation: as one variable increases in value, so does the other. On the other hand, if the correlation between two variables is negative, then the variables are assumed to have a negative correlation (Pallant 2005) (i.e. the *higher* perceptions of convenience that consumers perceive, the *less* satisfaction they experience). To interpret results, the size of the value of Pearson correlation (r) provides an indication of the strength of the relationships between the two constructs (Pallant 2005). Cohen (1988) provided the guidelines indicating that when the correlation coefficient (r) ranges from .10 to .29, the relationship is considered weak; when the correlation coefficient ranges from .30 to .49, the relationship is moderate; and when the correlation coefficient ranges from .50 to 1.0, the relationship is considered strong. These correlations are presented with the results in the next Chapter, Section 5.2.2.

The techniques used to test the hypotheses will be discussed in the next section.

4.12 ANALYSIS OF DATA

Multivariate data analysis techniques were utilised to examine the relationships between more than two variables (Neuman 2006). In this thesis, multiple regression analysis is the primary form of analysis. This approach tests the effect of one ore more predictor variables on an outcome variable. Regression allows the user to make statements about how well the relationship between one or more of the independent variables will predict the value of the dependent variable. Regression analysis is utilised to analyses the three main hypotheses (and the subset for the five components) listed in Sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 to determine the significance of any relationship between the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit convenience), overall consumer satisfaction level, and consumer behavioural intentions toward the service providers.

As discussed in Section 3.4, this thesis identifies convenience as the key dimension of service quality (i.e. Cronin et al. 2002; Bloemer et al. 1999), consumer satisfaction has multiple roles (i.e. an indirect effect) and mediates relationships in relation to service quality. The role of consumer satisfaction in facilitating the relationships between service quality and consumer behavioural intentions, which have been explored in a number of studies endeavouring to model these variables (i.e. Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999). Although the mediating relationship of consumer satisfaction in relation to service quality has been the focus of numerous studies (i.e. Tina-Cole & Illum 2006; Tian-Cole & Crompton 2003; Thrane 2002; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999), the mediating role of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of the multiple types of service convenience and behavioural intentions of consumers has not yet been explored. Hence, another objective of this thesis is to examine the mediating effects of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of the five types of service convenience and behavioural intentions. As multiple regression analysis and mediated regression analysis serve the

purposes of this thesis and are therefore employed to test complex relationships involving mediating effects while analysing a set of dependent variables and predictor variables (i.e. Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002b; Baker & Crompton 2000; Bloemer et al. 1998; Baron & Kenny 1986).

4.12.1 Multiple Regression Analysis

The object of multiple regression analysis is to investigate the stimulations effects of two or more independent (predictor) variables on a dependent variable that is interval-scaled (Cavana et al. 2001). The purposes of multiple regressions are: "1) indicating how much of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables; 2) it also gives researcher an indication of the relative contribution of each independent variable; and 3) tests allow researcher to determine the statistical significance of the results, both in terms of the model itself, and the individual independent variables" (Pallant 2005, p. 145). In this thesis, the five types of service convenience are used as independent variables to assess the relationships predicted by the hypothesis listed in Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of Chapter Three. We expect a positive direct relationship between consumer perceptions of five types of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction, as well as behavioural intentions toward the service provider. The multiple regression method is employed to determine the significance of any relationship between each of the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit convenience), the level of overall consumer satisfaction (Hypothesis 1), and the likelihood that consumer will repurchase and spreading positive word-of-mouth (Hypothesis 2).

The advantage of multiple regression analysis is that it allows determination of the independent contributions of each predictor variable in a model by allowing for partitioning of variance. Because there were five types of service convenience, this approach allows the user to make statements about how well the relationship between more than one independent variable will predict the value of a dependent variable. Multiple regression has been used in this way within previous services

research as well (i.e. Boshoff & Gray 2004; Burns et al. 2003; Heung 2000; Kandampully & Schartanto 2000; Bloemer et al. 1998; Woodside, Frey & Daly 1989).

First, to determine the importance of relationships between the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit convenience) and the level of overall consumer satisfaction (Hypothesis 1), the following multiple regression models consist of fitting the regression equation as shown below:

$$\text{CS} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{DCON} + \beta_2 \text{ACON} + \beta_3 \text{TCON} + \beta_4 \text{BCON} + \beta_5 \text{PCON} + e$$

Where: **CS** = Overall consumer satisfaction;

         DCON = Decision convenience;   **ACON** = Access convenience;

         TCON = Transaction convenience; **BCON** = Benefit convenience;

         PCON = Post-benefit convenience;

         α = intercept term (constant);

         β_1, β_2, β_3, β_4 and β_5 = Regression coefficients for DCON, ACON,

                                     TCON, BCON & PCON; and

      e = residual term (assumed normal with mean 0 and constant variance).

In other words, the overall consumer satisfaction can be expressed in terms of a constant (α) and a slope (β_n) times each service type of convenience (DCON, ACON, TCON, BCON and PCON). The constant (α) is also referred to as the intercept, and the slope as the regression coefficient or *B* coefficient (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007).

Again, to determine the importance of relationship between the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit convenience) and consumer behavioural intentions toward the service provider

(Hypothesis 2), the following multiple regression models which consist of fitting the regression equation are shown below:

$$BI = \alpha + \beta_1 DCON + \beta_2 ACON + \beta_3 TCON + \beta_4 BCON + \beta_5 PCON + e$$

Where: **BI** = Behavioural intentions;

DCON = Decision convenience;   **ACON** = Access convenience;

TCON = Transaction convenience; **BCON** = Benefit convenience;

PCON = Post-benefit convenience;

α = intercept term (constant);

β_1, β_2, β_3, β_4 and β_5 = Regression coefficients for DCON, ACON,

TCON, BCON & PCON; and

e = residual term (assumed normal with mean 0 and constant variance).

Multiple regression can establish that a set of independent variables can explain a proportion of the variance in a dependent variable at a significant level (through a significance test of $\mathcal{R}^2$), and can establish the relative predictive importance of the independent variables (five types of service convenience) (by comparing B coefficient weights). Thus, to summarise the model fit, the indices for evaluating the result of multiple regression analysis require a conclusion of the critical indices of Probability (less than 0.05), F-value, $\mathcal{R}$-square value ($\mathcal{R}^2$), adjusted $\mathcal{R}$-square value ($\mathcal{R}^2_{adj.}$), Beta-value (β), and t-value (below $-$ 1.96 or above $+$ 1.96) (Hair et al. 2006; Cavana et al. 2001).

To assess the goodness of fit of a regression equation, if overall F-statistics (Probability $<$ .05) are large enough for researcher to reject the null hypothesis,, then the full model is considered significant and the null hypothesis of no linear relationship of the dependent to the independents is rejected (i.e. Andaleeb & Conway 2006). F is a function of $\mathcal{R}$-square ($\mathcal{R}^2$), the number of independent variables, and the number of observers. $\mathcal{R}$-square ($\mathcal{R}^2$) or the coefficient of

determination, which is the square of the correlation between the two variables indicating the percentage of total variation of dependent variables (i.e. overall consumer satisfaction) are explained by total variation of all the independent variables (i.e. each type of service convenience) (i.e. R-square = explained total variation of each type of service convenience / variation of overall consumer satisfaction), where $R^2_{adj.}$ is the value of the coefficient of multiple determination adjusted for degrees of freedom (Bray & Maxwell 1985; Henkel 1976). Adjusted R^2 is used as a conservative reduction to R^2 to penalise for adding variables, and is required when the number of independent variables is high relative to the number of cases, or when comparing models with different numbers of independents (Lewis-Beck 1980). Thus, an analysis of variance tells the researcher whether the regression model significantly fits the response variable and $R^2_{adj.}$ requires associating with F-value for checking the overall model fit (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007; Andaleeb & Conway 2006; Polonsky & Waller 2005; Bray & Maxwell 1985). Because they may not give the same answer: $R^2_{adj.}$ tells the researcher the percentage of the independent variable to explain the dependent variable when adjusted for degrees of freedom; the F-test tells the researcher whether all the independent variables are simultaneously insignificant, in that its significance depends on its degrees of freedom, which in turn depend on sample sizes and/or the nature of the test used. For example, you can have a very low $R^2_{adj.}$, but some independent variables are significant despite their explaining only a little bit variation in the dependent variable. In this case, you will get a low $R^2_{adj.}$ and a significant F-test. Thus, the F-test is used to test the significance of R^2 ($R^2_{adj.}$), which is the same as testing the significance of the regression model as a whole. These values for R^2 and $R^2_{adj.}$ further support the multiple regression findings.

To interpret the direction of the relationship between variables, the standardised Beta-value (B coefficients) representing the average amount that the dependent variable increases when the corresponding independent increases 1 unit, and other

independents controlled in the regression are at their mean values (Achen 1982). The ratio of the beta weights is the ratio of the estimated unique predictive importance of the independents. The *B* coefficient is the *un*standardised simple regression coefficient for the case of one independent. When there are two or more independents, the *B* coefficient is a partial regression coefficient (or regression coefficient) meaning the coefficients were estimated by adjusting for other variables in the model (Berk 2004; Achen 1982). The α is the constant, representing the amount the dependent (i.e. overall consumer satisfaction) will be when all the independent variables (i.e. five types of service convenience) are 0 (Bray & Maxwell 1985).

A high beta-value, and the highest standard error of beta, also corresponds to significant P- and *t*-values (Berk 2004; Cohen 1988; Berry & Feldman 1985). These provide a significance test for each of the estimated coefficients. Within a regression analysis, the *t*-test is used to identify the statistically significance of individual *B* coefficients, specifically testing the null hypothesis that the coefficient is zero (Polonsky & Waller 2005; Achen 1982). However, for significance, a high *t*-value (generally a *t*-value > 1.96 is significant) and a low P-value are generally necessary (generally a $P < 0.05$ is significant) (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007; Hair et al. 2006). Further, if a *B* coefficient is positive, then the relationship of this variable with the dependent variable is positive. This means that, as one unit of service convenience perceived as important increases from the respondents (after controlling for all other types at their mean values), so does the average amount of overall consumer satisfaction increase. Conversely, if the *B* coefficient is negative then the relationship is negative. However, when the *B* coefficient is equal to 0, there is no relationship between the variables. Importantly, the *t*-test is a test only of the unique variance an independent variable accounts for, not a test of shared variance. This may also explain that shared variance incorporated in $\mathcal{R}^2$, is not reflected in the *B* coefficient (Achen 1982). One should thus bear in mind that no interactive effect would be shown. Associated with multiple regression is multiple correlation of $\mathcal{R}^2$, which is the percent of variance in the dependent variable explained collectively by all of the

independent variables. Thus, the B coefficients reflect the unique contribution of each independent variable. Joint contributions make up R-square (R^2) but are not attributed to any particular independent variable (Bray & Maxwell 1985). The result is that the B coefficients may underestimate the importance of a variable, and make a strong joint contribution to explaining the dependent variable, but does not make a strong unique contribution (Jaccard & Turrisi 2003). Thus, when reporting relative betas, one must also report the correlation of the independent variable with the dependent variable, to acknowledge if it has a strong correlation with the dependent variable - that is whether two variables increase or decrease together (Polonsky & Waller 2005; Bray & Maxwell 1985) (refer to Section 4.11). The B coefficient is a semi-partial coefficient, in contrast to the partial coefficients found in partial correlation. The partial coefficient for a given independent variable removes the variance explained by control variables from both the independent and dependent, and then assesses the remaining correlation (Jaccard & Turrisi 2003). In contrast, a semi-partial coefficient only removes the variance from the independent variables. That is, where partial coefficients look at total variance of the dependent variable, semi-partial coefficients look at the variance in the dependent after it is accounted for when control variables have been removed (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007; Berk 2004). Thus, the B coefficients, as semi-partial coefficients, reflect the unique (independent) contribution of each independent variable, to explain the total variance in the dependent variable (Jaccard & Turrisi 2003; Berry & Feldman 1985). Ultimately, when assessing relative importance of independents, light is thrown on the ratio of beta weights by also looking at the correlation and semi-partial correlations of a given independent with the dependent (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007; Berry & Feldman 1985; Bray & Maxwell 1985).

4.12.2 Mediated Regression Analysis

As mentioned earlier, another objective of this thesis is to examine the mediating effects of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and behavioural intentions. When a hypothetical causal sequence of three or more variables is proposed, the middle variable is considered a mediator (indirect effect) representing at least part of the chain of events leading to changes in the dependent variable (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007). In this thesis, the mediated variable of overall consumer satisfaction is treated as a mediator. This thesis hypothesises that overall consumer satisfaction 'causes' some differences in consumer perceptions of the five types of service convenience, which in turn, 'cause' consumer behavioural intentions towards the service provider. Consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience, overall consumer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions are in causal sequence, with consumer perceptions of the five types of service convenience being the Independent Variables (IV), overall consumer satisfaction being the Mediator (*Me*), and behavioural intentions the Dependent Variable (DV). To examine the mediating effects of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and behavioural intentions links (Hypothesis 3), the researcher must estimate models suggested by Holmbeck (1997) and Baron and Kenny (1986). The mediated regression approach is used in this thesis to determine whether mediation (overall consumer satisfaction) will occur for changes in the independent variable (the types of service convenience), which in turn, 'causes' consumer behavioural intentions towards the service provider. Four conditions for mediation are examined in this thesis. This method used in previous research (i.e. Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002b; Baker & Crompton 2000; Bloemer et al. 1998; Holmbeck 1997; Patterson & Spreng 1997) is discussed in more depth below.

In general, the following four multiple regression analyses (a path-analytic framework) (see Table 4.6) can be used to test whether a variable (overall consumer satisfaction) functions as a mediator:

Table 4.6 Multiple regression equations

Equation 1	$CS = \alpha(1) + \beta_1 DCON + \beta_2 ACON + \beta_3 TCON + \beta_4 BCON + \beta_5 PCON + e(1)$
Equation 2	$BI = \alpha(2) + b\,CS + e(2)$
Equation 3	$BI = \alpha(3) + \beta_1 DCON + \beta_2 ACON + \beta_3 TCON + \beta_4 BCON + \beta_5 PCON + e(3)$
Equation 4	$BI = \alpha(4) + \beta_1 DCON + \beta_2 ACON + \beta_3 TCON + \beta_4 BCON + \beta_5 PCON + b\,CS + e(4)$

Where: CS = Overall consumer Satisfaction; **BI** = Behavioural intentions;

DCON = Decision convenience;   **ACON** = Access convenience;

TCON = Transaction convenience;   **BCON** = Benefit convenience;

PCON = Post-benefit convenience;

α **(n)** = intercept term (constant);

β_1, β_2, β_3, β_4, β_5 and b =   Regression coefficients for DCON, ACON, TCON, BCON, PCON & CS; and

e **(n)** = residual term (assumed normal with mean 0 and constant variance).

To summarise the model fit, the indices for evaluating results of the multiple regression analyses also require conclusion of the critical indices including Probability (less than 0.05), F-value, $\mathcal{R}$-square value ($\mathcal{R}^2$), adjusted $\mathcal{R}$-square value ($\mathcal{R}^2_{adj.}$), Beta-value (β), and t-value (below – 1.96 or above + 1.96) (Hair et al. 2006; Cavana et al. 2001) (refer to Section 4.12.1).

To test the above four equations, statistical approaches for testing mediation have been devised based on differences in coefficients (B) and products of the mediator coefficient (Olkin & Finn 1995). Baron and Kenny (1986) suggested that a variable (i.e. overall consumer satisfaction) is confirmed as a mediator when the

following four conditions are held: (a) the coefficients of each type of service convenience in the first equation are significant (i.e. $\beta_n \neq 0$); (b) the coefficient of *CS* in the second equation is significant (i.e. $b \neq 0$); (c) the coefficients of each type of service convenience in the third equation are confirmed to be significant (i.e. $\beta_n \neq 0$); and (d) the coefficients of each type of service convenience have become nonsignificant after the inclusion of overall consumer satisfaction, and coefficient of *CS* in the third equation has been shown to be significant (i.e. $b \neq 0$) in the fourth equation. When the coefficient for each type of service convenience in the fourth equation is different from zero (nonsignificant) (i.e. $\beta_n \neq 0$) when the mediator (*CS*) has been controlled, and the aforementioned three conditions are all held, mediation is said to be perfect, this is termed the *complete* mediational model (i.e. Thrane 2002). This indicates that most effects of *CS* are transferred to the mediator. Alternatively, if the coefficient for each type of service convenience becomes zero (i.e. $\beta_n = 0$) when the mediator (*CS*) is controlled and the aforementioned conditions are all held, this indicates that the result is not entirely mediated. Thus, if there are indirect effects when the mediator (overall consumer satisfaction) is added, the coefficient (β_n) in the paths between each type of service convenience and behavioural intentions, and the coefficient (b) in the path between overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions, must decrease in the fourth equation. This indicates that a relationship of partial mediation exists, implying a *partial* mediation model, which approach has been supported by the literature (i.e. Wirtz & Mattila 2004; Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002b).

As can be seen in Table 4.6, to test Hypothesis 3, based on Holmbeck' (1997) and Baron and Kenny' (1986) four mediation equations, the researcher needs to re-analyse the data (i.e. Hypothesis 1). The first regression equation examines the relationships between each type of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction, which is same as the regression procedure of Hypothesis 1. The second equation examines the relationships between overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The third equation tests the causal relationship between the five types of service convenience and behavioural intentions towards

service providers. These are all called direct effects. Also all of which should satisfy the third mediating condition that direct paths are all significant at p<.05. To determine whether mediation occurs, the researcher estimates a model (Equation 4) with a mediating path of the types of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction. Importantly, if a type of service convenience that is not statistically significant in Equation 1 it is then omitted from further analysis in Equation 4 and the mediation effect cannot be explored.

Furthermore, the *B* coefficients will change if variables or interaction terms are added or deleted from the equation and reordering the variables without adding or deleting will not affect the beta weights (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007). That is, the *B* coefficients help assess the unique importance of the independent variables relative to the given model embodied in the regression equation (Berk 2004). However, adding or subtracting variables from the model can cause the *B* and *B* coefficients to change markedly, possibly leading to the conclusion that an independent variable initially perceived as unimportant is actually important (Jaccard & Turrisi 2003).

4.13 CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter Four has provided an overview of the methodological approach taken in this thesis, including preparation and administration of the survey, and the analytical processes used to develop measures for each of the constructs of interest; that is the five types of service convenience, overall consumer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions. The use of quantitative research was justified. Questionnaire design and administration, and sample decisions were made. To confirm the equivalency of the English and Chinese language, a back-translation approach was employed. Assessment of reliability and validity of the seven composite constructs used in this thesis (i.e. the five types of service convenience, the construct of consumer satisfaction, and the construct of behavioural intentions) have been discussed. This process has been guided by

Churchill (1979), and this process is supported in the literature (i.e. Colwell et al. 2008; Grace 2005; Karatepe et al. 2005; Oh 2005; Ko 2000; Voss & Parasuraman 1995). The techniques for testing the hypotheses include multiple regression analysis and mediated regression analysis. These have been discussed. The selection of these data analysis techniques serves two main purposes. Firstly, studies relevant to this thesis (in this area of leisure or tourism) have used multiple regression analysis (i.e. Boshoff & Gray 2004; Burns et al. 2003; Heung 2000; Kandampully & Schartanto 2000) and mediated regression analysis (i.e. Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002b; Baker & Crompton 2000; Bloemer et al. 1998). Secondly, variables used in the conceptual framework of service convenience (Figure 3.1) were selected on the basis of previous services marketing studies where variables used in the conceptual framework were largely based on the results of regression analysis.

Having discussed the methodology, this thesis proceeds to describe and analyse the research findings. Results of the data analysis and interpretation of hypothesis testing are discussed in the following chapter.

This page is intentionally blank

5 | DATA ANALYSIS

5.0 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER FIVE

This chapter outlines the analysis of the data collected in the survey and presents the findings. The analysis of the data is described in four subsections of this chapter. **Section 5.1** examines the response rate, demographic characteristics of the sample, and descriptive analyses. The data are also examined for normality (i.e. skewness and kurtosis) in order to determine the validity of the underlying assumptions about the data required for the various analytical techniques employed in this thesis. In **Section 5.2** the reliability analysis and correlation analysis for each of the composite constructs are examined to test the construct validity. **Section 5.3** examines the research model, by testing the three hypotheses, and subset of five types of service convenience, using multiple regression analysis and mediating regression analysis. Results are interpreted and discussed in relation to the hypotheses and relevant literature. **Section 5.4** draws together the analysis undertaken in the chapter and summarises the findings of the chapter.

5.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

This first section of the chapter provides the response rate to the main survey, as well as the demographic characteristics of the respondents. As this is the first stage in the data analysis, screening of data and normality analysis were also conducted. Data screening is important to make sure that data have been correctly entered and that the distributions of the items, to be used in the analysis, are normal (Coakes et al. 2007). These include examining the descriptive analyses and data normality of all items of service convenience, overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions in the questionnaire.

5.1.1 Response Rate and Demographic Characteristics

The survey used in this thesis was administered by heath club employees on-site to consumers who attended three health clubs in Taiwan. One hundred and eighty (180) copies of the survey were distributed at each health club in the period between November 2006 and January of 2007 (540 copies in total). The response rate was 95% (513 completed surveys). After discarding questionnaires containing incomplete responses, the final sample size was 443 on an effective response rate of 82% (i.e. 443 usable surveys were collected from the 540 questionnaires).

Table 5.1 Survey replies by each health club of the survey

(180 per copies distributed to each location)

Health club	Location	Completed responses (Response rate)
1.	Taipei	159 (88.3%)
2.	Taichung	139 (77.2%)
3.	Kaohsiung	145 (80.5%)
Total		443 (82.0%)

Source: Data analysis (2007)

The response rate per health club of the survey varied (see Table 5.1). The response rate in the final survey is higher than that of the pilot survey. To increase response rate, the following processes describing in the literature include: 1) the confidentiality of the survey has been more effectively communicated to the health club visitors before the survey started (i.e. Tian-Cole & Illum 2006; Yanamandram & White 2004); 2) the questionnaires were collected at various times (weekdays/weekends/holidays as well as various times of the day); 3) the surveys were considerable more appropriately presented (such as layout and colour printing of papers) (i.e. Burns et al. 2003; Jobber & Sanderson 1983); and 4) Gifts (A$1 dollar/unit) purchased from souvenir shop in Melbourne were distributed to stimulate response at the time the questionnaire was being completed (i.e. Seiders et al. 2007; Gunn & Rhodes 1981).

Demographic data was collected in order to develop a profile of the respondents to the main survey to identify if the sample is representative of the population under research. Information according to age, gender, education, hours of work employment, frequency of use, duration of use per visit and length of health club membership. Summary profiles of the final survey respondents are presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Demographic profiles of respondents, n = 443

Demographic Characteristics[†]	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	180	40.6
	Female	263	59.4
	Total	443	100.0
Age	18~20	65	14.7
	21~34	142	32.1
	35~44	108	24.4
	45~54	83	18.7
	55 and above	45	10.1
	Total	443	100.0
Education level	Secondary school or below	29	6.5
	Senior high school	137	30.9
	College or university	214	48.3
	Postgraduate and above	63	14.2
	Total	443	100.0
Work employment (hours per week)	20 hours or below	97	21.9
	21~25 hours	67	15.1
	26~30 hours	109	24.6
	31~35 hours	83	18.7
	36~40 hours	64	14.4
	41 and above	23	5.2
	Total	443	100.0
Frequency of use (each week)	Less than once	86	19.4
	1 to 2 times	227	51.2
	3 to 4 times	103	23.3
	5 to 6 times	24	5.4
	7 times and above	3	.7
	Total	443	100.0

Table 5.2 *(continued)*

Demographic Characteristics[†]	Category	n	%
Duration of use per visit (hours)	**Less than an hour**	58	13.1
	1 to 1.5 hours	157	35.4
	1.5 to 2 hours	92	20.8
	2 to 2.5 hours	67	15.1
	2.5 to 3 hours	45	10.2
	3 hours and above	24	5.4
	Total	443	100.0
Length of health club membership	**Less than 1 year**	154	34.8
	1 to 2 years	121	27.3
	2 to 3 years	63	14.2
	3 to 4 years	63	14.2
	4 to 5 years	29	5.2
	5 years and above	18	4.3
	Total	443	100.0

[†]**Note:** Full demographic questions are available in the Appendix.

Source: Data drawn from final survey responses (2006/07)

As can be seen in Table 5.2 over half of the 443 respondents (59.4%) were female and 40.6 percent were male. This gender distribution is confirmed in the report of IHRSA (2005), where US health club membership shows women as a growing majority in all health clubs, accounting for 57 percent of the total. Within the US commercial health club category, women also constitute 60 percent of the national membership. Table 5.2 also shows that the majority of respondents were aged between 18 and 34 years (46.8%). The remaining 53.2 percent were approximately divided between 35-44 years (24.4%), 45-54 years (18.7%), and above 55 years (10.1%), respectively. These results are also consistent with the IHRSA (2005), which reports that most clubs attract young professionals, with 18 to 34 year olds being the largest age group, and adults aged 35-54 the second largest. As shown in Table 5.2 above, the data showed that the highest level of education that most respondents had achieved was an undergraduate degree (48.3%), followed by senior high school (30.9%). This is consistent with

Afthinos et al.'s (2005) findings reported that the majority of health club respondents (47.3%) had achieved a college degree. As can be seen in Table 5.2 above, the majority of respondents (61.7%) were working part-time (less than 30 hours per week), while 37.9 percent were working full-time. About half (51.2%) of these respondents exercised in the health club one to two times per week, followed by those who exercised three to four times per week (23.3%). These results are consistent with the Taiwan NPF Research Report (2003) showing that the majority of frequent health club members attended one to two times per week (63%) being the largest group, followed by those attending three to four times per week (19.1%). These results are also confirmed by IHRSA's (2005) report that the projected number of visit for the average frequent health club attendee was 92 times per year, or an average of 1.8 times per week. Table 5.2 above shows that most respondents (69.3%) in the present thesis stayed in the health club for less than two hours per visit. The majority of these (34.8%) had used the health club facilities for less than one year, and a small proportion of respondents (4.3%) had used them for over five years, followed by four to five years (5.2%). These results are also consistent with Choi (2000) whose findings showed that a total of 34.5 percent of respondents had been members for less than twelve months.

Based on the results and industry statistics, this sample appears to be representive of the wider health club population in Taiwan.

The descriptive analyses determining validity of the underlying assumptions about such data required further multivariate analysis (i.e. regression analysis), in which data are examined for normality of all items for each of the seven constructs. This is further discussed in the next subsection.

5.1.2 Test of Normality

Descriptive analyses were performed on all items in the questionnaire. As a pre-requisite for allowing further multivariate analysis, there is an underlying assumption that each variable should be normally distributed (Coakes et al. 2007) (as described in Section 4.10). Hair et al. (2006) noted that if the variation from the normal distribution is sufficiently large then all statistical tests are invalid, as normality is required to use F- and *t*- statistics. Analysis at this stage consisted of examination of the skewness and kurtosis of all items to gain an overall picture of the normality within the items, including those of: the five types of service convenience, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions in the questionnaire. Normality can also be determined by inspection of the histogram through a graphical method (Pallant 2005). The assumption of normality was verified in this thesis by examining both the histogram shape of the data distribution and skewness and kurtosis of all items. The examination also identified mean value and standard deviation. The mean and the standard deviation were produced to check the average of the responses and the spread of the data (Churchill & Iacobucci 2004). Table 5.3 provides information on the univariate normality analysis of all items.

Table 5.3 Normality of the items, n = 443

Item	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Service Convenience				
D 1: minimal time finding the information	4.91	1.33	-.409	-.188
D 2: made it easy for me	5.15	1.33	-.251	-.458
D 3: easy to get the information	5.06	1.36	-.245	-.159
A 4: easy to contact	5.04	1.32	-.245	-.568
A 5: did not take much time to reach	5.06	1.29	-.279	-.619
A 6: easily figure out the location	5.29	1.22	-.430	-.383
T 7: diversified methods of payment	5.08	1.25	-.238	-.217
T 8: method of payment is convenient	4.84	1.28	-.270	-.347
T 9: complete my purchase quickly	5.27	1.23	-.459	.044
B 10: easily obtain benefits	5.22	1.22	-.465	.421
B 11: easy to use	4.91	1.20	-.383	-.363
B 12: speed of providing services	5.00	1.19	-.388	-.258
P 13: resolved my problem quickly	4.86	1.25	-.405	.291
P 14: minimal effort to arrange next	5.10	1.17	-.519	.267
P 15: good channel to handle complaints	4.89	1.21	-.187	-.040
♣Seven-point scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree				
Overall Consumer Satisfaction				
CS1: satisfied with my decision	4.88	1.05	-.363	.176
CS2: made the right choice	5.02	1.09	-.237	.038
CS3: suitable for my needs	5.01	1.16	-.154	-.121
♣Seven-point scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree				
Behavioural Intentions				
BI1: say positive things	5.25	1.23	-.485	.255
BI2: encourage my friends and co-workers	5.24	1.15	-.219	-.473
BI3: recommend to someone who seeks advice	5.09	1.28	-.200	-.562
BI4: my first choice	5.11	1.31	-.247	-.605
♣Seven-point scale: 1 = very unlikely, 7 = very likely				

✻ Note: full item description is available in the Appendix;

       D = Decision convenience;   **A** = Access convenience;

       T = Transaction convenience;   **B** = Benefit convenience;

       P = Post-benefit convenience;

       CS = Overall consumer satisfaction; **BI** = Behavioural intentions.

✻Source: Data analysis (2007)

As can be seen in Table 5.3 the mean of each of the 15-item of service convenience ranged from 4.84 to 5.29. The mean of the 3-item of consumer satisfaction ranged from 4.88 to 5.02, indicating their average satisfaction level was high. The mean of the 4-item of behavioural intentions ranged from 5.09 to 5.25. The range of standard deviation on all items was from 1.05 to 1.36, suggesting mild deviations to the mean average of each item and that the values were not far from their mean (Coakes et al. 2007; Churchill & Iacobucci 2004; Cohen 1988). As a result, the mild deviations from the linearity are not serious (Coakes et al. 2007), and also indicate a desirable dispersion of the data.

As also can be seen in Table 5.3, the measurement of skewness and kurtosis for all items in this thesis identified no violation of the assumption of normality. The values of skewness and kurtosis for all items in this thesis fall between −1 and +1 within a normal range (Hair et al. 2006; Azzalini 2005). This demonstrates that these items of the main survey are considered as normally distributed meaning that the sampling distribution of means is normal, indicating 'goodness of the data' (Cavana et al. 2001). The inspection of histogram shape of individual item in this thesis also appeared the reasonably shape of normal curve (i.e. most scores occurring in the centre), identifying the central tendency of the data (see Appendix 5.1), indicating a normal distribution (Pallant 2005). As the assumption of normality was not violated in this thesis and thus in this thesis parametric techniques (i.e. correlation and regression analysis) could be used for data analysis (Pallant 2005; Cohen 1988).

The next subsection considers the development of reliable and valid measures for each construct for determining the construct validity.

5.2 ASSESSMENT OF RELIABILITY & VALIDITY

This section aims to assess the reliability and validity of the seven composite constructs used in this thesis (i.e. the five types of service convenience, consumer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions). The methods of assessment of the reliability and validity of these seven constructs were described in Chapter Four (Section 4.11). First, in order to assess the reliability of the items for each of the seven constructs, the internal consistency method was used in this thesis using Cronbach's alpha (Veal 2006; Cohen 1988; Churchill 1979). If these items were not reliable then items could not be used in any future examination of the seven constructs. The examination of reliability will indicate how reliable a score on the test will be. Second, to test the construct validity, two methods including content validity and the examination of validity coefficient were conducted.

As was discussed earlier, content validity was achieved by drawing items from the literature (see Section 4.3.1), and having experts review and agree on items (Cavana et al. 2001). All items were pilot tested and respondents for the pre-test evaluated the appropriateness of the measuring items (see Section 4.5). It was evident that these research procedures ensured the high content validity of the measurement instrument. Specifically, the final instrument of the research concentrates on the assessment of validity coefficient, which examines the inter-relationships amongst the constructs.

Following the procedure suggested by Churchill (1979), the validity was checked using results of the correlations of items in constructs. This research utilised correlation analysis, firstly to determine if multicollinearity was present, and secondly to explore the relationships among the constructs. The examination of multicollinearity is considered to be particularly important because the presence of high multicollinearity would make determining the contribution of the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable difficult, as multicollinearity indicates that the effects of the independent variables are mixed or confounded (Coakes et al. 2007). Furthermore, in this research, the regression procedure

assumes that the amount of variability of the selected independent variable not explained by the other independent variables (Coakes et al. 2007; Tabachnick & Fidell 2007; Lewis-Beck 1980). Thus, it is necessary to check the linear relationships among the independent variables in this case. Berry and Feldman (1985) suggested that inter-correlations between all pairs of independent variables higher than cut-off value .80 should be considered as evidence of high multicollinearity. Multicollinearity among the independent variables (i.e. the five types of service convenience) was tested and compared in this thesis by analysis a bivariate Pearson product-moment correlation (r) to assess the strength of the correlations among the independent variables. The following subsections below describe these examinations.

5.2.1 Reliability Analysis

Similar to the process employed in the pre-test, the researcher tested the reliability of the seven composite constructs using the coefficient Alphas (refer to Sections 4.6 & 4.11). Within literature, a minimum Alpha of .60 is suggested as being appropriate (Hair et al. 2006) and this is used as the minimum required reliability level within this thesis. The Cronbach's alpha values for items within each of the seven components are reported in Table 5.4. The researcher also reports Alpha, mean and standard deviations for the composite items, both for those used in this thesis and those used by Seiders et al. (2007), Colwell et al. (2008) (see pages 162 & 163), Madrigal (1995), Cronin et al. (2000), Wong (2004), and Olorunniwo and Hsu (2006) (see page 164) .

Table 5.4 Construct Alphas

Subscale[†]	Thesis - Taiwan Health Clubs (HC) n=443			Seiders et al. (2007) - United States Service Retailing (SR) n=972			Colwell et al. (2008) - Canada Cellular or Internet (CI) n=201		
	Alpha	SD	Mean	Alpha	SD	Mean	Alpha	SD	Mean
Decision convenience	.62	0.97	4.95	.76	0.75	3.65	.66	2.73	3.54
Access convenience	.75	1.05	5.20	.83	0.81	3.71	.75	2.66	3.78
Transaction convenience	.69	0.97	5.08	.89	0.71	4.14	.67	2.03	3.97
Benefit convenience	.74	1.00	5.08	.84	0.66	4.05	.67	2.16	3.61
Post-benefit convenience	.77	1.02	4.86	.95	0.98	3.95	.79	2.87	3.46

[†]**Note:** full item description is available on Page 163.

Source: Data analysis (2007)

Table 5.4 *(continued [1])* Items used in the literature

Subscale	Thesis - Taiwan Health Clubs (HC) n=443	Seiders et al. (2007) - United States Service Retailing (SR) n=972	Colwell et al. (2008) - Canada Cellular or Internet (CI) n=201
	Item	**Item**	**Item**
Decision Convenience	I spent minimal time finding the information to choose a HC.	Deciding to shop at SR is quick and easy.	The information I received from the CI service provider made it easy for me to choose what to buy.
	This HC made it easy for me to find suitable exercise programs.	I can easily determine prior to shopping whether SR will offer what I needed.	Making up my mind about what CI service I wanted to buy was easy.
	It was easy to get the information I needed to decide which HC to join.	I can quickly find information before I shop to decide if SR has what I'm looking for.	The information that I received from the service provider was very clear and easy to read.
	×	×	The service provider let me know the exact offers before I bought the CI service.
Access Convenience	It was easy to contact my HC.	I am able to get to SR quickly and easily.	The service provider was available when I needed to talk to them.
	It did not take much time to reach this HC.	SR offers convenient store hours.	The hours of operation of the service provider were convenient.
	I can easily figure out the location of this HC.	SR offers convenient parking.	The service provider is accessible through various ways (online, telephone, and in person).
	×	SR offers convenient location.	It is easy for me to contact an employee of the CI service provider if necessary.
Transaction Convenience	This HC allows diversified methods of payment.	SR makes it easy for me to conclude my transaction.	I found it easy to complete my CI service purchase with my provider.
	The method of payment provided by this HC is convenient.	It takes little time to pay for my purchase at SR.	I was able to complete the purchase of my service quickly.
	I was able to complete my purchase quickly in this HC.	I am able to complete my purchase quickly at SR.	There were no problems to deal with during the purchase that added to the purchase time.
Benefit Convenience	I could easily obtain benefits from the services provided in this HC.	The merchandise I want at SR can be located quickly.	I was able to get the benefits of the CI service with little effort.
	The services in this HC were easy to use.	It is easy to find the products I am looking at SR.	The service provider solved my CI needs without creating other problems.
	The speed of providing services in this HC met my requirements.	It is easy to evaluate the merchandise at SR.	The time required to receive the benefits of the CI service was reasonable.
	×	I can easily get product advice at SR.	×
Post-benefit Convenience	When I had a problem, this HC resolved my problem quickly.	It is easy to take care of returns and exchanges at SR.	My CI service provider quickly resolved any problems I had with the service.
	This HC enabled me to arrange my next exercise programs/plans with minimal effort.	SR takes care of product exchanges and returns promptly.	It was easy for me to obtain follow up service from the provider after my purchase.
	This HC has a good channel to handle complaints and recommendations.	Any after-purchase problems I experience are quickly resolved at SR.	When I have questions about my service, provider is able to resolve my problem.

Source: Literature review

Table 5.4 *(continued [2])*

Construct	Item	Thesis - Taiwan Health Clubs (HC) n=443			Madrigal (1995) n=232			Cronin et al. (2000) n=1,994		
		Alpha	SD	Mean	Alpha	SD	Mean	Alpha	SD	Mean
Overall Consumer Satisfaction	I am satisfied with my decision to be a member of this club.	.76	0.91	4.97	.95	.64	6.79	.85	1.71	6.37
	I think I made the right choice when I decided to join this health club.									
	The health club provides services suitable for my needs.									

Source: Data analysis (2007)

Table 5.4 *(continued [3])*

Construct	Item	Thesis - Taiwan Health Clubs (HC) n=443			Wong (2004) n=565			Olorunniwo & Hsu (2006) n=317		
		Alpha	SD	Mean	Alpha	SD	Mean	Alpha	SD	Mean
Behavioural Intentions	I say positive things about this HC to others.	.89	1.07	5.17	.92	1.26	4.40	.86	1.46	5.40
	I encourage my friends and co-workers to go to this HC.									
	I recommend this HC to someone who seeks my advice.									
	I consider this HC as my first choice.									

Source: Data analysis (2007)

As can be seen in Table 5.4, Cronbach's alpha value for each construct was greater than the cut-off value .60, suggested by Hair et al. (2006). The test for reliability of the measures obtained good reliability for each of the types of the service convenience. The Alpha reliability coefficient of the 'decision convenience' component (Cronbach's alpha = .62) is higher than the Alpha reliability coefficient of the pilot-study (Cronbach's alpha = .57), possibly due to the increased sample size resulting in a higher degree of internal consistency (Pallant 2005; Cohen 1988). More importantly, the results also appear to be generally consistent with Colwell et al.'s (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) studies of service convenience as viewed by Canada telecommunications users and US retail consumers. While the Alphas for five constructs are lower than in Seiders et al. (2007), this may be because there were only three items (Grace 2005; Karatepe et al. 2005; Bloemer et al. 1999), whereas Seiders et al. (2007) included an additional item in two constructs and they also had a significantly larger sample size. The results of the Alphas identify that the five types are therefore reliable, confirming the results of Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007).

Consistent with prior research (i.e. Cronin et al. 2000; Madrigal 1995), the Alpha reliability coefficient for the overall consumer satisfaction scale was .76. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this composite measure of behavioural intentions was .89, thus suggesting adequate reliability (i.e. Olorunniwo & Hsu 2006; Wong 2004) (refer to Table 5.4, p. 164). In addition, none of the Alphas were increased if any items were removed; indicating a high degree of internal consistency. The results identify that the seven constructs are therefore reliable (i.e. Grace 2005; Karatepe et al. 2005). Also indicate that the data would be suitable for exploring relationships among variables.

5.2.2 Correlation Analysis

As mentioned earlier, this research utilised correlation analysis for two purposes, firstly to examine the presence of multicollinearity among the independent variables, and secondly to explore the relationships among the constructs.

In the conceptual framework of service convenience in Figure 3.1, it was proposed firstly that overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions are determined by the five types of service convenience (i.e. Hypothesis 1 & Hypothesis 2); and secondly that the five types of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction affect the dependent variable (behavioural intentions) (i.e. Hypothesis 3). More specifically, in the proposed framework, overall consumer satisfaction is identified as having two different roles. Firstly, it works as a dependent variable (Hypothesis 1), and secondly it becomes an independent variable affecting consumer behavioural intentions (Hypothesis 3).

As such, prior to testing these proposed hypotheses, the bivariate Pearson product-moment correlation (r) was utilised to examine if multicollinearity among the independent variables exits (i.e. five types of service convenience, consumer satisfaction variable and behavioural intentions variable). Table 5.5 presents the results of correlations among the independent variables.

Table 5.5 Bivariate correlations among the independent variables

Construct/variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(1) Decision	1.00						
(2) Access	.67**	1.00					
(3) Transaction	.66**	.70**	1.00				
(4) Benefit	.62**	.64**	.61**	1.00			
(5) Post-benefit	.50**	.45**	.53**	.71**	1.00		
(6) Consumer Satisfaction	.41**	.43**	.46**	.65**	.65**	1.00	
(7) Behavioural Intentions	.55**	.58**	.54**	.71**	.67**	.69**	1.00

** Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level (2-tailed), n = 443.

Source: Data analysis (2007)

As shown in Table 5.5 this bivariate correlation analysis among the five types of service convenience indicated that the correlations among all the independent variables were lower than the limit of .80 recommended by Hair et al. (2006) and Berry and Feldman (1985). Results can also be seen in Table 5.5 where overall consumer satisfaction is shown as an independent variable (i.e. Hypothesis 3, the mediating regression). These results indicate that multicollinearity was not a problem for these constructs used in this thesis. This process has been used in previous research as well (i.e. Butcher et al. 2002; Voli 1998).

The examinations of the above statistical analyses (i.e. normality checks and the examination of multicollinearity) have confirmed that the constructs are suitable for use in parametric techniques. All variables were normally distributed. There were no violations of the assumption of normality. Also the correlation analysis has supported the use of parametric techniques, as multicollinearity was not identified as problem in the data.

Regression analyses including multiple regression and mediating regression were used to analyse the data and test the hypotheses. The results of these will be discussed in the next section.

5.3 HYPOTHESES TESTING

The data are analysed to determine if the research questions or hypotheses can be supported (Cavana et al. 2001). In this section, the results of three regression analyses are reported, by testing the three hypotheses, and subset related with five types. The multiple regression analysis tested the effect of consumer perceptions of five types of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction (Hypothesis 1), and on consumer behavioural intentions (Hypothesis 2). These were undertaking in order to identify the significant of the independent variables (five types of service convenience) that determine the level of overall consumer satisfaction and their behavioural intentions toward the service providers. Hypothesis 3 was tested using a mediating regression to determine whether service convenience directly influences consumer behavioural intentions towards service provider or acts indirectly through overall consumer satisfaction.

5.3.1 Predicting Consumer Satisfaction by Service Convenience

The data was analysed by multiple regression, using the five types of service convenience as independent variables and consumer satisfaction as the dependent variable. As mentioned earlier in Section 4.11, the correlation between types of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction was examined prior to regression analysis (refer to Table 5.5).

As can be seen in Table 5.5, the correlation between the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit) and overall consumer satisfaction are all statistically significant. The following proposed hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis.

Hypothesis 1

There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction

Table 5.6 The results of Hypothesis 1, n = 443

	Standard coefficient			
	Beta	*t-value*	*Sig.*	*Hypothesis*
Constant (1.531)		8.09	.000**	
Decision convenience	-.059	-1.17	.243	*Ho (1a)*: Not supported
Access convenience	.016	.29	.766	*Ho (1b)*: Not supported
Transaction convenience	.067	1.27	.206	*Ho (1c)*: Not supported
Benefit convenience	.367	6.46	.000**	*Ho (1d)*: **Supported**
Post-benefit convenience	.379	7.73	.000**	*Ho (1e)*: **Supported**
R- square (R^2)		.498		
Adjusted R–square ($R^2_{adj.}$)		.492		
F-value *(df)*		86.71**(5, 437)		

** p<.001.

Source: Data analysis (2007)

Findings in Table 5.6 indicate the overall regression model was an acceptable fit, and the full model was found to be significant as indicated by the overall F-statistic (F = 86.71, p<.001). The F-test is used to test the significance of R^2, which is the same as testing the significance of the regression model as a whole. The value for R^2 = .498 ($R^2_{adj.}$ = .492), which confirms that the five types of service convenience included in the regression model explain 49.8% of the variation in the overall consumer satisfaction.

As can be seen in Table 5.6, results show no significant causal relationship between consumer satisfaction and consumer perceptions of 'decision

convenience', 'access convenience' and 'transaction convenience'. Therefore, Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c are rejected.

From the Beta coefficients presented in Table 5.6, it can be seen that the component of 'benefit convenience' had a significant effect on overall consumer satisfaction (Beta-value = .367, t-value = 6.46, p<.001), therefore Hypothesis 1d is supported. This means that, with a one unit increase in agreement from the respondents that they perceived a 'benefit convenience' important, their satisfaction increased by .367 units, assuming all that variables that are controlled for in the regression. This statistically significant result suggests that the greater the level of 'benefit convenience' perceived by consumers to health clubs, the greater the level of their overall satisfaction generated.

Similarly, the 'post-benefit convenience' component was found to be statistically significant in affecting overall consumer satisfaction (Beta-value = .379, t-value = 7.73, p<.001), supports Hypothesis 1e. This means that, with one unit increase in 'post-benefit convenience', overall consumer satisfaction is also increased by .379 units, when other types are controlled for in the regression. In short, this means that the greater the level of 'post-benefit convenience', the greater the level of their overall satisfaction generated.

In light of the above, the results suggest that Hypothesis 1 is *partially* supported. They show that only two types of consumer perceptions of service convenience 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' increase satisfaction, meaning that Hypotheses 1d and 1e are supported. The findings therefore suggest that overall consumer satisfaction will be greater if health club providers build more 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' convenience into their overall service delivery processes. However, the results indicate that the other three types of service convenience 'access', 'decision' and 'transaction', do not statistically impact on overall consumer satisfaction, i.e. Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c are rejected. The

effect of each service component on consumer satisfaction is discussed in more depth in the following.

5.3.2 Discussion of Results of Hypothesis 1

As noted in Section 3.2 of Chapter Three, little is known about the effect of the five types of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction. This thesis builds on the work of Berry et al. (2002) by seeking to empirically test Berry et al.'s five types of service convenience in one service setting. The effect of these is assessed on overall consumer satisfaction. The results of Hypothesis 1 suggest that overall consumer satisfaction is only affected by consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'. However, as the other types of convenience were not statistically significant in influencing consumer satisfaction, Hypothesis 1 is only partially supported. That is, the greater the level of consumer perceptions of service convenience related to 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' of a health club, the greater the level of their service evaluations and satisfaction with the firm.

In this thesis, consumer perceptions of *Decision Convenience* including information availability, was not significant in affecting overall consumer satisfaction, therefore Hypothesis 1a is rejected. This finding is inconsistent with Colwell et al.'s (2008) study of telecommunication settings which identified 'decision convenience' was an important service attribute in determining consumer satisfaction. These varying results might partly relate to differences between the purchasing of tangible goods and intangible services.

A potential explanation for the lack of relationship between 'decision convenience' and overall consumer satisfaction might be identified in previous literature. For example, in Hypothesis 1a, service focused health clubs were selected (van Eijck & Mommaas 2004), as 'decision convenience' was considered less relevant than in the context of purchase of tangible goods where 'decision convenience' is more influential (i.e. Colwell et al. 2008 - a personal cellular

phone service) (Stokes & Lomax 2002). Past literature demonstrates that many services tend to be higher in experience qualities, as evaluated after performance of the service (Nyer & Gopinath 2005; Wirtz & Chew 2002; Christansen & Tax 2000). In contrast, products with high search qualities (i.e. colour, style or price) are mainly evaluated pre-purchase (Stokes & Lomax 2002). This may further explain why there are differences in the model developed in the Taiwan leisure setting as compared to Colwell et al.'s (2008) telecommunications context. Further, the respondents in this thesis were members of health clubs who may have been no longer searching out information, and in fact had limited need to use information services. This is in agreement with literature that suggests satisfaction is a broader concept implying an overall evaluation based on the total purchase and post-consumption experience (Giese & Cote 2002; Wang & Lo 2002; Spreng et al. 1996; Gnoth 1995; Fornell 1992). Therefore, in this thesis, satisfaction was not evaluated on pre-experience expectations; rather, it was evaluated on attributes that were generated by the experience itself (McGill & Iacobucci 1992). Indeed, participation in the service experience may sharpen consumers' expectations and align them more closely with their actual perceptions. Thus, 'decision convenience' may improve how Taiwanese consumers think about their health club services, but not necessarily increase overall consumer satisfaction. However, these findings might only reflect health club perspectives but differ when other service settings are considered.

In regard to *Access Convenience*, the finding in this thesis is consistent with Heung (2000) who reported that the convenience factor (i.e. location of hotel and ease of transportation) among other service attributes does not statistically significantly impact on overall consumer satisfaction, i.e. Hypothesis 1b is rejected. The result of Hypothesis 1b is also consistent with Colwell et al.'s (2008) study in the telecommunications context. In their study, the lack of this relationship between 'access convenience' and consumer satisfaction were seen as particularly true in technological services (such as cellular and internet) where consumers frequently initiate their services outside of the service providers' presence (i.e. at home). In the case of this thesis, it might be also that the health

club is located near respondents' homes or workplaces. That is, people may only choose to be members of health clubs that are convenient, meaning that the issue of locational convenience only affects their initial decisions, not their ongoing assessments. The lack of statistically significant results in regards to Hypothesis 1b, 'access convenience', might partly relate to the nature of the health club industry. Arguably, health clubs are businesses where services are consumed in the leisure time, providing fitness and leisure services aimed at improving consumers' health and stamina, as well as offering a social interactivity that constitutes the core service (Lagrosen & Lagrosen 2007; Chiang 2000). This is in contrast with banking facilities where location is a core function (i.e. Ai-Hawari 2005; Moutinho & Smith 2000; Ennew et al. 1993; Hansen & Weinberg 1977) due to linkages with retailing services (Leistriz, Ayres & Stone 1992) that are frequently used by consumers (Bruwer 1997), requiring their close proximity. Alternatively, the results in this thesis might suggest that consumer perceptions of 'access convenience' are not clearly formed prior to service delivery, and that experience itself prompts consumers to their evaluation criteria.

As defined in Section 2.1.4, *Transaction Convenience* is the action that consumers take to secure the right to use a service with money usually involved for the promise of service performance (Berry et al. 2002). Therefore, waiting to pay has been specified as one transaction factor in this thesis. Overall, the finding relating to 'transaction convenience' is consistent with Colwell et al.'s (2008) study of telecommunication sector, which found no significant causal relationships between 'transaction convenience' and consumer satisfaction. Therefore, Hypothesis 1c is rejected. However, the results associated with Hypothesis 1c are inconsistent with Cronin et al. (2000), Bloemer et al. (1999), and Pruyn and Smidts (1998), whose studies identified reduced waiting time as one transaction factor in determining consumer satisfaction. The lack of support for Hypothesis 1c, might also partly relate to the health club setting. Specifically, 'transaction convenience' may be less relevant to health club consumers, as members frequently have long-term contracts, where payments are one off or made on a regular basis. Thus, they do not purchase each session and direct

payment is relatively infrequent when compared with frequently consumed products, such as supermarkets (Seiders et al. 2007; Opperman 1999). Indeed, it might also mean that 'transaction convenience' is more influential in the frequent purchase of tangible goods than it is within a services context, and that the transaction itself is important in terms of the service. Finally, these findings might only reflect Taiwanese perspectives and differ when other cultural groups are considered.

The significant causal relationships between consumer perceptions of *Benefit Convenience* and overall consumer satisfaction in this thesis are consistent with Colwell et al.'s (2008) study of telecommunication settings, and supports Hypothesis 1d. The result is similar to Levesque and McDougall's (1996) finding in the context of service quality in retail banking, where consumers perceived core performance (i.e. prompt service and performs the service right the first time) was an important factor in determining consumer satisfaction. The results of the present thesis also suggest that overall consumer satisfaction will be greater if health club providers or managers build more 'benefit convenience' into their service offers. In fact, consumers appeared to be generally more positive in situations where the core service is delivered as expected, than when there is a problem with the delivery process and the core service is not delivered. Specifically, in order to maintain consumer satisfaction, health club managers should ensure that the core service is delivered, with benefits of service consumption and processes through which consumers develop service perceptions held as a main focus for marketers.

As expected, findings in relation to the testing of Hypothesis 1e also support a causal relationship between health club consumer perceptions of *Post-benefit Convenience* and overall satisfaction, and thus Hypothesis 1e is supported. This finding is consistent with those of Colwell et al. (2008), Su and Liu (2006) and Berry et al. (2002) where consumer perceptions of 'post-benefit convenience' were found to significantly impact on overall satisfaction. For example, Su and Liu's (2006) findings in the field of hair salon found that among service quality

dimensions, empathy (i.e. effective after-sales service) significantly impacted on overall consumer satisfaction. Similarly, in Colwell et al.'s (2008) study of a telecommunications context reported that 'post-benefit' convenience was positively associated with overall satisfaction. In line with the implications above, this result would suggest that more corrective actions may be required in instances when the core outcomes are not delivered, rather than when there are problems in the delivery process. This evaluation of impact on consumer perceptions of 'post-benefit convenience' in relation to consumer satisfaction may assist organisations to build more 'post-benefit convenience' into their overall service offerings, to improve consumer service evaluations and satisfaction with the firm. In this way they should be able to gain sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace (Dube et al. 1994).

As shown above, findings in this thesis are that Hypotheses 1d and 1e are supported, but Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c are not supported. Thus, these findings have theoretically and empirically advanced the understanding of the effect of these two types of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction, for health clubs in particular. This suggests that overall consumer satisfaction will be greater if health club providers build more 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' convenience into their overall service delivery processes. Additionally, the results of this thesis also support the work of Colwell et al. (2008) in regard five types of service convenience, that is, convenience is a complex construct that incorporates more than simply time or effort savings.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that consumers may perceive convenience slightly differently according to the type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). This may explain why there are differences in the model developed in the Taiwan leisure setting as compared to the banking sector (i.e. Ai-Hawari 2005; Moutinho & Smith 2000; Ennew et al. 1993); therefore, Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c were rejected. Another explanation could be that 'decision convenience', 'access convenience' and

'transaction convenience' may be less relevant in this health club context, and may slightly differ in their impact on overall satisfaction. For example, consumer perceptions of 'decision convenience' may not be clearly formed prior to service delivery, and experience itself may prompt consumers with their evaluation criteria. Alternatively, this result, in conjunction with Colwell et al.'s (2008), might suggest that 'decision convenience' is more influential in the purchase of tangible goods (i.e. a personal cellular phone service) than it is within a services context (i.e. health club). As such, the value of the specific aspects of convenience will differ in various settings, and more research is needed to understand the role of the five different types of service convenience in each service setting.

5.3.3 Predicting Consumer Behavioural Intentions by Service Convenience

The data were analysed by multiple regression, using the five types of service convenience as independent variables and consumer behavioural intentions as the dependent variable. As was shown in Table 5.5, the correlation (r) between the types of service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions indicate that multicollinearity was not a problem for these construct used in this thesis. Table 5.5 also indicates that the correlation between the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit) and behavioural intention are all statistically significant.

The following proposed hypothesis was tested.

Hypothesis 2

There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth)

Table 5.7 The results of Hypothesis 2, n = 443

	Standard coefficient			
	Beta	*t-value*	*Sig.*	*Hypothesis*
Constant (1.079)		5.24	.000**	
Decision convenience	.049	1.07	.285	*Ho (1a)*: Not supported
Access convenience	.189	3.87	.000**	*Ho (1b)*: **Supported**
Transaction convenience	.015	.32	.748	*Ho (1c)*: Not supported
Benefit convenience	.323	6.28	.000**	*Ho (1d)*: **Supported**
Post-benefit convenience	.321	7.24	.000**	*Ho (1e)*: **Supported**
$\mathcal{R}$- square ($\mathcal{R}^2$)		.589		
Adjusted $\mathcal{R}$–square ($\mathcal{R}^2_{adj.}$)		.584		
F-value *(df)*		125.25**(1, 441)		

** p<.001.

*Source: Data analysis (2007)

As can be seen in Table 5.7, the results indicate the entire regression model is a good fit, and the full model was found to be significant as indicated by the overall F-statistic (F = 125.25, p<.001). The F-test is used to test the significance of $\mathcal{R}^2$, which is the same as testing the significance of the regression model as a whole. The value for $\mathcal{R}^2$ = .589 indicates that the five types of service convenience included in the regression equation explain 58.9% variation of the consumer behavioural intentions. The $\mathcal{R}^2_{adj.}$ = .584 thus suggests that, when adjusted for degrees of freedom, the five components explain 58.4% of the variation of the consumer behavioural intentions.

From the Beta coefficients presented in Table 5.7, it can be seen that 'benefit convenience' and 'transaction convenience' had a nonsignificant effect on consumer behavioural intentions. Therefore, Hypotheses 2a and 2c are rejected.

The Beta coefficients presented in Table 5.7, identify that the 'access convenience' component (Beta-value = .189, t-value = 3.87, p<.001) was found to be statistically significant and influence consumer behavioural intentions, meaning that Hypothesis 2b is supported. This finding confirms that holding other independent variables constant, an increase of one unit importance of consumer perceptions of 'access convenience', increases behavioural intention by .189 units. This means that the greater the level of 'access convenience' perceived by consumers to health clubs, the more positive they will be.

Similarly, the 'benefit convenience' component had statistically significant effect on consumer behavioural intentions (Beta-value = .323, t-value = 6.28, p<.001), and supports Hypothesis 2d. This means that, consumer behavioural intention is increased by .323 units with the one unit important increase of consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience', assuming all that other variables are controlled for in the regression. This result suggests that, consumer perceptions of the 'benefit convenience' affects consumer behavioural intentions toward the service providers.

'Post-benefit convenience' (Beta-value = .321, t-value = 7.24, p<.001) was also found to be statistically significant and influence consumer behavioural intentions, therefore, Hypothesis 2e is supported. Findings suggest that holding other independent variables constant, with the one unit increase of consumer perceptions of 'post-benefit convenience', behavioural intentions is also increased by .321 units. This result suggests that the greater the level of 'post-benefit convenience' perceived by consumers to health clubs, the more likely they are to repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth.

Overall, the results suggest Hypothesis 2 is *partially* supported. The results are shown that consumer perceptions of three types of in service convenience - 'access convenience', 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' - significantly impact consumer behavioural intentions toward the service providers, meaning that Hypotheses 2b, 2d and 2e are supported. However, the results indicate that the two other types of service convenience 'decision' and 'transaction', do not statistically significantly impact on consumer behavioural intentions, and thus Hypotheses 2a and 2c are rejected. That means insignificant causal relationships were found between consumer perceptions of 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' and consumer behavioural intentions.

The results therefore suggest the likelihood that consumers will repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth will increase if health club providers or managers build more 'access convenience', 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into service offers. The effect of each service component on consumer behavioural intentions is discussed in more depth in the following.

5.3.4 Discussion of Results of Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 suggests that consumer behavioural intentions towards the service providers are significantly affected by their perceptions of aspects of service convenience. Specifically, using multiple regression analysis, three types of service convenience including 'access', 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' were found to be significant, influencing consumer behavioural intentions, meaning that Hypotheses 2b, 2d and 2e are supported. The other types were not statistically significant in influence outcomes (behavioural intentions), so Hypotheses 2a and 2c are rejected. Thus, it can be said that Hypothesis 2 is partially supported in this thesis. That is, the greater the level of consumer perceptions of service convenience related to 'access', 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' of a health club, the greater the level of their repurchase and spread of positive word-of-mouth intentions towards their service providers.

As was discussed earlier in Section 5.3.2, the lack of statistically significant results in regards to *Decision Convenience* might partly relate to the health club industry. That is, the respondents in this thesis were members of health clubs and thus it might be that they were no longer searching out information and in fact had limited need to use information services.

Another point related to *Transaction Convenience* may be that in this health club context; members were based on long-term contracts and had organised to pay once, through future direct debits. As they do not purchase each session separately, purchases of recreation services are relatively infrequent when compared to most frequently consumed products, such as supermarkets (Seiders et al. 2007; Opperman 1999). This result is, however, contradictory to that of Seiders et al. (2007), who found that 'transaction convenience' (among other types of service convenience) is significant in influencing behavioural intentions. Consequently, another potential explanation might be that 'transaction convenience' (i.e. waiting to pay) is more influential in the purchase of tangible goods (i.e. retailing) than it is within a services context (i.e. health club). While we intentionally focused on Taiwanese health club consumers, it might have been the case that technological advances (i.e. credit card and internet banking) reduced time inputs for consumption activities (McLain 2006; Ai-Hawari 2005; Flavian et al. 2004; Gerrard & Cunningham 2004). Thus, there might not be an in-depth interaction between the consumers and the health clubs where consumers often initiate their transaction services outside of the service providers' presence (i.e. at home).

The significant causal relationships between consumer perceptions of *Access Convenience* and consumer behavioural intentions in this thesis are consistent with those of Ai-Hawari (2005) and Tsaur et al. (2002), and supports Hypothesis 2b. For example, Tsaur et al.'s (2002) study found that consumer perceptions of hotel service attributes of location had a significant impact on behavioural intentions explains 18 percent of intentions. The result of Hypothesis 2b in this thesis indicates that health club consumer perceptions of 'access convenience' are

significant and explain 18.9 percent of consumer behavioural intentions. However, these results contradict Jones, Mothersbaugh and Beatty (2003) and Bloemer et al. (1998) who failed to find a significant causal relationship between convenient location or hours of opening, and repurchase intentions. For example, Jones et al.'s (2003) study of convenient location in the banking industry found that although satisfaction levels may be low for some consumer segments, the retention level of these segments might remain high due to perceptions of convenient location. Thus, they concluded that a convenient location can act as a protective barrier to prohibit defection during periods of lower satisfaction. In a recent study of service convenience, Seiders et al. (2007) also found no significant causal relationship between consumer perceptions of 'access convenience' and behavioural intentions. Although unimportant in other contexts, 'access convenience' in health clubs needs to be seen as an important attribute of service in influencing consumer behavioural intentions towards service providers, such as operating hours, parking availability and location. Thus, 'access convenience' may not improve how health club consumers think about their service providers (i.e. Hypothesis 2b was rejected), but they do increase patronage behavioural intentions. Service providers seeking to build more 'access convenience' into their overall service offerings to increase consumer behavioural intentions may therefore be successful in increasing loyalty.

As expected, Hypothesis 2d indicates that consumer perceptions of *Benefit Convenience* are statistically significant in influencing consumer behavioural intentions towards service providers, and thus Hypothesis 2d is supported. This finding is consistent with those of Seiders et al. (2007) and Levesque and McDougall (1996), that consumers are generally more satisfied with core value, and subsequently have greater word-of-mouth and repurchase intentions. Seiders et al. (2007) found that consumer perception of 'benefit convenience' was an important attribute in determining consumer behavioural intentions in the context of retail stores. Similarly, Levesque and McDougall's (1996) retail banking study found that consumers' perceived core performance (i.e. prompt service and performing the service right the first time) was an important factor in determining

consumer satisfaction as well as future intentions to their retail banking providers. Specifically, the result associated with Hypothesis 2d is similar to Seiders et al. (2007). In this thesis, 'benefit convenience' explains 32.3 percent of variance in behavioural intentions towards the health clubs. In Seiders et al. (2007), consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' explained 36.0 percent of consumer behavioural intentions. The results therefore suggest that consumer behavioural intentions will be positive (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth) if health club providers or managers build more 'benefit convenience' into service offers. This evaluation of impact on consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' in relation to consumer behavioural intentions, may assist organisations to build more 'benefit convenience' into their overall service offerings in order to maintain consumer loyalty.

The findings in relation to Hypothesis 2e also support the causal relationship between consumer perceptions of *Post-benefit Convenience* and behavioural intentions, which is consistent with Seiders et al. (2007), Liu et al. (2000), and Levesque and McDougall (1996). Furthermore, Hypothesis 2e indicates that consumer behavioural intentions are affected by consumer perceptions of 'post-benefit convenience'. This result is similar to that of Seiders et al.'s (2007) results that consumer perception of 'post-benefit convenience' is an important attribute in determining consumer behavioural intentions in the context of retail stores.

In the above context, Afthinos et al. (2005) found that consumers expressed a strong desire for effective after-sales service, for example, record-keeping for identifying consumer desires, program renewals, and speed of response to complaints/recommendations. In addition, the process of dealing with dissatisfaction post-consumption and reinitiating contact must be easy to access following a service failure that was not recognised or resolved during the service. In this latter instance, consumers need to be provided with accessible (i.e. convenient) problem solving interactions (Ramaswamy 1996; Gronroos 1990). In a restaurant setting, Wirtz and Mattila (2004) examined consumer responses to compensation, speed of recovery, and apology after a service failure. Recovery

speed was measured by an immediate response combined with an apology. Lagrosen and Lagrosen (2007) also included a similar dimension (speed of service recovery after service failure) to measure service quality in the health and fitness industry based on qualitative data collection. They identified speed of service recovery as an important convenience attribute of service quality.

Liu et al. (2000) found that effective service recovery increases consumers' willingness to recommend the firm to others, and concluded that service providers should set up and maintain systems for responding effectively to consumer complaints. Other studies have also suggested that consumers realise that service failures will occur on occasion, but believe that service providers should proactively resolve any such failure (Andreassen 2001; Hart, Hesket & Sasser 1990). Results of this thesis therefore suggest that providing ongoing service exchanges such as well-designed service recovery processes, effective responses to complaints/comments, and convenient after-sales service can increase the likelihood that consumers will behave positively (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth). For example, service managers could establish record-keeping to identify consumers' desires. This would enable them to arrange future exercise program/services with minimal effort, and provide reminders of promotion activities in advance. On the other hand, firms could develop policies on how to compensate consumers who experience service failure, in order to maintain their behavioural loyalty. In this way, service managers should be able to gain sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace.

In brief, Hypotheses 2a, 2d and 2e are supported, but 2b and 2c are not supported. These findings have theoretically and empirically advanced the understanding of the effect of these three types of service convenience on consumer behavioural intentions, for health clubs in particular. These results suggest that health club service providers should build more 'access', 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' convenience into their overall service delivery processes, in order to increase subsequent consumers' behavioural loyalty (Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002;

Shostack 1977). Although results of Hypothesis 1 indicates no significant causal relationships between consumer perception of 'access convenience' and overall satisfaction, the results of Hypothesis 2 does show that consumer perceptions of 'access convenience' have a significant impact on consumer behavioural intention towards service providers. 'Access convenience' might not play a prominent role in influencing consumer service evaluations and satisfaction with the firm (i.e. Hypothesis 1a), but it does influence the likelihood that consumers will repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth. Here, potential explanation for the lack of other relationships between convenience ('decision' and 'transaction') and consumer behavioural intentions might be identified in past literature. In addition, the results might suggest that the two types of service convenience ('decision' and 'transaction') may improve how health club consumers think about their service providers, but they do not necessarily increase patronage behavioural intentions. For example, consumers may abandon their purchase if the 'transaction convenience' is low, or abandon a health club service that fails to provide 'decision convenience'. However, high levels of 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' may also fail to encourage higher levels of future behavioural intentions. Alternatively, 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' may be less relevant in the health club context as 'decision convenience' is more influential in the purchase of tangible goods than it is in a services context (Stokes & Lomax 2002). At the same time, purchases of recreation services are relatively infrequent when compared with the most frequently consumed products (Opperman 1999). As such, service providers seeking to build more 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' into their overall service offerings to increase consumer behavioural intentions may be unsuccessful in increasing consumer outcomes. However, the findings might only reflect Taiwanese perspectives and thus could differ when other cultural groups are considered.

Considering the results of Hypotheses 1 and 2 together (see Table 5.8), these suggest that different types of service convenience appear to affect consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions.

Table 5.8 Summary of results of Hypothesis 1 & Hypothesis 2, n = 443

Subscale	Hypothesis 1	Hypothesis 2
	Independent variables → Dependent Variable	
	Convenience → Consumer satisfaction	**Convenience → Behavioural Intentions**
a. Decision		
b. Access		**
c. Transaction		
d. Benefit	**	**
e. Post-benefit	**	**

Source: Data analysis (2007)   ** p<.001.

As can be seen in Table 5.8, in this thesis both consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions are affected by types of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'. However, consumer behavioural intentions are also affected by 'access convenience'. Therefore, service providers may choose to consider building 'access convenience' into service offers, as it seems to improve consumer outcomes, even though it does not interact with satisfaction. Furthermore, it has been suggested that consumers may perceive convenience slightly differently according to the type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). For example, certain types (i.e. transaction – waiting to pay) may be more important in contexts that involve more frequent purchases (i.e. supermarkets). On the other hand, value of the specific aspects of convenience will differ in various settings, and research is needed to understand the role of the five different types of service convenience in each service setting.

5.3.5 Mediation Effects

Hypothesis 3 was examined using four phases exploring the mediation effect following the process proposed by Holmbeck (1997), and Baron and Kenny (1986). The first regression equation examines the relationships between the types of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction. The second equation examines the relationships between overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The third equation tests the causal relationship between the types of service convenience and behavioural intentions towards service providers. These are all called direct effects. Also all of which satisfies the third mediating condition that direct paths are all significant at $p < .05$.

A hypothesised variable is classified as functioning as a mediator to the extent that it accounts for the relationship between the predictor and the dependent variables (Baron & Kenny 1986). To determine whether mediation occurs, the researcher estimates a model (Equation 4) with a mediating path of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction. However, types of service convenience that are not statistically significant in Equation 1 are then omitted from further analysis in Equation 4. The mediation effect cannot be explored because they do not affect overall consumer satisfaction. Hypothesis 3 was tested using a mediating regression to determine whether multiple types of service convenience directly influences consumer behavioural intentions towards service provider or acts indirectly through overall consumer satisfaction.

The data were analysed by multiple regressions, using the five types of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction as independent variables and consumer behavioural intentions as the dependent variable. As was shown in Table 5.5, the correlation (r) between the types of service convenience, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions indicate that multicollinearity was not a problem for these construct used in this thesis. Table 5.5 also indicated that the correlations between the five types of service convenience (decision, access, transaction, benefit and post-benefit), consumer satisfaction and behavioural

intention are all statistically significant. In addition, the significant positively correlations of overall consumer satisfaction with behavioural intentions ($r = .69$, $p<0.01$) suggest that the level of consumer satisfaction is a good predictor of behavioural intentions towards service providers, i.e. intentions to repurchase and spreading positive word-of-mouth.

The following proposed hypothesis was tested using mediating regression analysis.

Hypothesis 3

The effects of the consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction

To test Hypothesis 3, based on Holmbeck's (1997) and Baron and Kenny's (1986) four mediation equations, the researcher needs to re-analysis the data (i.e. Hypothesis 1). Types of service convenience that were not statistically significant are then omitted from further analysis, because they do not affect overall consumer satisfaction. As such, these types ('decision', 'access' and 'transaction') are not included in further analysis (Equations 3 or 4), because of insignificant relationships in Equation 1. 'Access convenience' retained a significant direct effect on consumer behavioural intentions as discussed in Sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4 (Hypothesis 2). The regression estimates of equations of Hypothesis 3 are shown in the following table.

Table 5.9 Regression estimates of equations of Hypothesis 3, n = 443

	Standard coefficient			
Independent Variable → *Dependent Variable*	**Beta**	*t-value*	*Sig.*	*Results*
Equation 1				
Constant (1.531)		8.09	.000**	
Decision Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	-.059	-1.17	.243	*Ho (1a):* Not supported[†]
Access Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	.016	.29	.766	*Ho (1b):* Not supported[†]
Transaction Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	.067	1.27	.206	*Ho (1c):* Not supported[†]
Benefit Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	.367	6.46	.000**	*Ho (1d):* **Supported**
Post-benefit Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	.379	7.73	.000**	*Ho (1e):* **Supported**
R^2 ($R^2_{adj.}$) = .498 (.492) **F-value** *(df)* = 86.71***(5, 437)*				
Equation 2				
Constant (1.079)		5.24	.000**	
Consumer Satisfaction → *Behavioural Intentions*	.694	20.22	.000**	Supported
R^2 ($R^2_{adj.}$) = .481 (.480) **F-value** *(df)* = 408.67***(1, 441)*				
Equation 3[†]				
Constant (.875)		4.73	.000**	
Benefit Convenience → *Behavioural Intentions*	.479	10.74	.000**	*Ho (2d):* **Supported**
Post-benefit Convenience → *Behavioural Intentions*	.328	7.36	.000**	*Ho (2e):* **Supported**
R^2 ($R^2_{adj.}$) = .559 (.557) **F-value** *(df)* = 278.91***(2,440)*				
Equation 4[†]				
Constant (.248)		1.30	.000**	
Benefit Convenience → *Behavioural Intentions*	.352↓	7.91	.000**	*Ho (3d):* **Partially mediated**
Post-benefit Convenience → *Behavioural Intentions*	.200↓	4.47	.000**	*Ho (3e):* **Partially mediated**
Consumer Satisfaction → *Behavioural Intentions*	.335	8.05	.000**	Supported
R^2 ($R^2_{adj.}$) = .616 (.613) **F-value** *(df)* = 234.47***(3, 439)*				

[†]**Note:** Consumer perceptions of the three types of service convenience components including 'Decision', 'Access' & 'Transaction' were excluded from the mediating regression equations in the research, because of their insignificant contribution to the regression Equation 1.

** p<.001.

**Source*: Data analysis (2007)

As can be seen in Table 5.9, the first phase is the first regression equation which is same as the regression procedure of Hypothesis 1, and has been described previously in Section 5.3.1. The results indicated only two types of service convenience including consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' (Beta-value = .367, *t*-value = 6.46, p<.001) and 'post-benefit convenience' (Beta-value = .379, *t*-value = 7.73, p<.001) significantly determine the level of their overall satisfaction (refer to Table 5.6). Thus, other three types of service convenience are therefore eliminated from the regression model during the mediating regression procedure because of their insignificant contribution to the regression equation, were not significant at p<.05, i.e. they are not included in Equations 3 and 4. These means that in the mediating equation three types of service convenience ('decision', 'access' and 'transaction') will be omitted and not included in further analysis. However, the Hypothesis 1d 'benefit convenience', and Hypothesis 1e 'post-benefit convenience', were significant and influence overall consumer satisfaction, thus satisfying the first mediating condition (Wirtz & Mattila 2004; Baker & Crompton 2000; Holmbeck 1997; Baron & Kenny 1986), therefore, Hypothesis 3 are related to 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'.

The second phase is to examine the relationships between overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The path was analysed by a simple regression, using as regressor overall consumer satisfaction as independent variable and behavioural intentions as the dependent variable. The entire regression model was an acceptable fit, and the full model was found to be significant as indicated by the overall F-statistic (F = 408.67, *df* = 1, 441, p<.001). The value for $\mathcal{R}^2$ = .481 ($\mathcal{R}^2_{adj.}$ = .480), which confirms that overall consumer satisfaction explains 48.1% of the variation in the behavioural intentions. The second equation also indicates the overall consumer satisfaction significantly impacts consumer behavioural intentions towards service providers. Overall consumer satisfaction score (Beta-value = .694, *t*-value = 20.22, p<.001) was found to be statistically significant impact on consumer behavioural intentions towards the service providers. This means that, with one unit agreement from the

respondents that they are satisfied with the services, increases their behavioural intention towards service providers by .694 units. Thus, satisfy the second mediating condition.

The third phase is to test that causal relationship between two types of service convenience ('benefit' and 'post-benefit') and behavioural intentions towards service providers. This analysis is similar to the regression procedure of Hypothesis 2 (Section 5.3.3). However, 'access convenience' which was significant in Hypothesis 2, is omitted in Equation 3, because it was not statistically significant in regression Equation 1, and thus did not affect overall consumer satisfaction (refer to Table 5.6). This means that three types of service convenience ('decision', 'access' and 'transaction') are not included in this analysis (Equation 3), even though 'access convenience' had a significant direct effect on consumer behavioural intentions (see Section 5.3.3). As a result, the multiple regression examined 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' as independent variables and behavioural intentions as the dependent variable (see Regression equation 3, Table 5.9).

The regression had an acceptable fit and the full model was found to be statistically significant as indicated by the overall F-statistic (F = 278.91, p<.001). The F-test is used to test the significance of $\mathcal{R}^2$, which is the same as testing the significance of the regression model as a whole. The value for $\mathcal{R}^2$ = .559 indicates that the two types of service convenience explained 55.9 % variation of the consumer behavioural intentions. The $\mathcal{R}^2_{adj.}$ = .557 also suggests that, when adjusted for degrees of freedom, the two types explain 55.7% of the variation of the consumer behavioural intentions. Also all of which satisfies the third mediating condition that direct paths were all significant at p<.001.

The Beta coefficients listed in Equation 3 (Table 5.9), identify 'benefit convenience' (Beta-value = .479, t-value = 10.74, p<.001) was found to statistically significant influence consumer behavioural intentions. This finding confirms that holding other independent variables constant, with one unit increase

from the respondents that respondents perceived a 'benefit convenience' to increase behavioural intention towards the service provider increased by .479 units. This result suggests that, consumer perception of the 'benefit convenience' has an important effect on consumer behavioural intentions toward the service providers.

The 'post-benefit convenience' component (Beta-value = .328, t-value = 7.36, p<.001) also had a statistically significant impact on consumer behavioural intentions. This means that, consumer behavioural intention increased by .328 units with a one unit increase of consumer perceptions of 'post-benefit convenience', when other variables are controlled for in the regression. This statistically significant result suggests that the greater the level of 'post-benefit convenience' perceived by consumers to health clubs, the greater the likelihood that they will repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth.

The results of Equations 1, 2 and 3 indicate that direct paths were all significant at p<.001, thus satisfying the first three mediating conditions. The fourth phase is to determine whether there is a mediating path of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction. For the fourth mediating equation, the data were analysed by multiple regression, using as regressor two types of service convenience ('benefit' and 'post-benefit') and overall consumer satisfaction all as independent variables and behavioural intentions as the dependent variable. The multiple regression result is provided in Table 5.9 and was found to be significant as indicated by the overall F-statistic (F = 234.47, p<.001).

The value for R^2 = .616 indicates that the three independent variables ('benefit convenience', 'post-benefit convenience' and overall consumer satisfaction) explain 61.6 % variation of the consumer behavioural intentions. The $R^2_{adj.}$ = .613 thus suggests that, when adjusted for degrees of freedom, the three independent variables explain 61.3% of the variation of the consumer behavioural intentions.

The Beta coefficients presented in Equation 4 (Table 5.9), identify that 'benefit convenience' (Beta-value = .352, *t*-value = 7.91, p<.001) was found to be statistically significantly and determines consumer behavioural intentions. This finding confirms that a unit agreement from the respondents that they perceived a 'benefit convenience' important, increases consumer behavioural intention towards the service provider by .352 units.

Similarly, the 'post-benefit convenience' component had statistically significant effect on consumer behavioural intentions (Beta-value = .200, *t*-value = 4.47, p<.001). This means that, consumer behavioural intention is increased by .200 units with the one unit agreement from the respondents that a 'post-benefit convenience' increases. This statistically significant result suggests that the greater the level of 'post-benefit convenience' perceived by consumers to health clubs, the greater the likelihood that they will repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth.

The overall consumer satisfaction (Beta-value = .335, *t*-value = 8.05, p<.001) was also found to be statistically significant impact on consumer behavioural intentions. The finding suggests that holding other independent variables constant, with the one unit increase of overall consumer satisfaction, behavioural intentions is also increased by .335 units.

5.3.6 Overall Consumer Satisfaction as a Mediator

As mentioned earlier, Baron and Kenny (1986) identified that the fourth mediating condition is satisfied if the direct paths from the independent variable ('benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience') to the dependent variable (behavioural intentions) become nonsignificant (i.e. full mediation) or reduced (partial mediation) when the paths from the independent variable to the mediator (overall satisfaction) are included in the model.

As can be seen in Table 5.10 below, the inclusion of the consumer overall satisfaction (mediator) in Equation 4, where the paths ('benefit convenience'→ behavioural intentions, 'post-benefit convenience' →behavioural intentions, and overall consumer satisfaction→behavioural intentions) are all still significant at p<.001. This indicates that the relationships are not entirely mediated. There are partially mediated when the direct paths from the independent variable ('benefit convenience', 'post-benefit convenience' and overall satisfaction) to the dependent variable (behavioural intentions) have decreased when the paths from the independent variable to the mediator (overall satisfaction) are included in the model. Statistical approaches to testing mediation have been devised based on the difference in coefficients (β) and products of the mediator coefficient (Olkin & Finn 1995).

Table 5.10 Comparison of coefficients of three equations, n = 443

Independent variable / Dependent variable	Equation 2 CS → BI	Equation 3 CON Component → BI	Equation 4 CS → BI	*Changes in coefficient*
Benefit →BI	----------	β = .479 t = 10.74**	β = .328↓ t = 7.36**	*-.151*
Post-benefit → BI	----------	β = .352 t = 7.91**	β = .200↓ t = 4.47**	*-.152*
CS →BI	b = .694 t = 20.22**	----------	b = .335 t = 8.05**	*-.359*

** p<.001.

* **Note: CON** = Service convenience; ***BI*** = Behavioural intentions;

　　　CS = Overall consumer satisfaction.

Source: Data analysis (2007)

In Table 5.10 it can be seen in Equation 4 that for the path between 'benefit convenience' and behavioural intentions is supported at significant at the p<.001 level, where the coefficient (β) has dropped from β = .479 in Equation 2 to β = .328 in Equation 4, as well as in the path between 'post-benefit convenience'

and behavioural intentions (from $\beta = .352$ to $\beta = .200$). Also, in the path between overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions is supported at significant at the p<.001 level, the coefficient has dropped from $b = .694$ to $b = .335$. The findings indicate that the association between the independent variable ('benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience') and the dependent variable (behavioural intentions) has been reduced by the inclusion of the mediating variable (overall consumer satisfaction) in the fourth regression. Thus, it can be concluded that there is *partially* mediating path of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction.

In light of the above, Hypothesis 3 relates to Tables 5.9 and 5.10 indicating that the consumer satisfaction construct ***partially*** mediates the effects of the two types of service convenience ('benefit' and 'post-benefit') on behavioural intentions, i.e. Hypotheses 3d and 3e are partially supported. However, the results indicate that the three other types of service convenience 'decision', 'access' and 'transaction', do not statistically significantly impact on consumer satisfaction, even though 'access convenience' had a significant direct effect on consumer behavioural intentions (see Section 5.3.3). These means that in the mediating equation three types of service convenience ('decision', 'access' and 'transaction') were omitted and not included in further analysis. Therefore, Hypotheses 3a, 3b and 3c are rejected.

The mediation role of overall consumer satisfaction in relation to service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions is discussed in more depth in the following.

5.3.7 Discussion of Results of Hypothesis 3

As discussed in Section 3.4 of Chapter Three, although the mediating relationship of consumer satisfaction in relation to service quality has been the focus of numerous studies, the mediating role of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of multiple types of service

convenience and behavioural intentions of consumers has not yet been explored. Hence, the objective of this section is to examine the effect of multiple types of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions.

The above results relate to Tables 5.9 and 5.10, suggesting that Hypothesis 3 is partially supported. Consumer perceptions of the three tpes of service convenience including 'decision', 'access' and 'transaction' were excluded from the mediating regression equations in the research, because of their insignificant contribution to the regression Equation 1. This means that no significant causal relationships were identified between these three types and overall consumer satisfaction, and the mediation effect cannot be explored. Therefore, only two of the five types of service convenience were included in the mediation effects ('benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'). The results show that consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' are partially mediated through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions. That is, Hypotheses 3d and 3e are partly supported. The results of Hypothesis 3 represent an important step forward in understanding the relationship between these constructs. The results provide clear evidence that overall consumer satisfaction has a mediating effect on the relationships between the need for providing fast and easier health club services and perceived positive behavioural intentions (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth). On the other hand, overall consumer satisfaction is found to be a useful concept for service providers whose primary strategies are focused on building more 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into service offers.

It should be noted that 'access convenience' was excluded from the mediating regression equation in Hypothesis 3, even though, the path ('access convenience' →behavioural intentions) was significant at $p < .001$ (see Hypothesis 2b). This means that consumer perceptions of 'access convenience' are not mediated through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions, but still have a direct influence on behavioural intentions towards service providers.

Therefore, service providers may still consider building 'access convenience' into service offers, as it seems to improve consumer outcomes, although it does not interact with satisfaction.

The potential explanations for lack of statistically significant results in regards to 'decision convenience', 'access convenience' and 'transaction convenience' have been discussed in Sections 5.3.2 & 5.3.4.

As expected, findings in relation to the testing of Hypothesis 3d clearly show that consumer perceptions of **Benefit Convenience** are partially mediated through satisfaction influencing behavioural intentions; therefore Hypothesis 3d is supported. This finding is similar to Thrane's (2002) study of a jazz festival context in which he found that overall festival satisfaction mediated the relationship between music quality assessment (i.e. concert program followed announced time and venue, avoiding the possibility of concert overlap) and repeat purchase intentions. This finding also supports the results of previous studies finding that consumer satisfaction is an important summary of consumer' post-purchase behaviour in relation to consumer perception of service quality (Giese & Cote 2002; Wang & Lo 2002; Spreng et al. 1996; Gnoth 1995; Fornell 1992). This means that the greater the level of 'benefit convenience' perceived by consumers for health clubs, the greater the likelihood that they will behave positively (repeat visit and spread positive word-of-mouth). To maximise the effect of consumer perceptions of the 'benefit convenience' (i.e. prompt service) on consumer future behavioural intentions towards service providers, managers could possibly enhance levels of overall consumer satisfaction by improving convenient core service attributes in their service delivery process. This could include emphasising standardisation of operation in personal services, allocating numbers of staff to a variety of programming activities, and providing convenient schedules, and clear instructions on how to use facilities and equipment so that tangible and intangible attributes are combined for the maximisation of overall consumer satisfaction.

Another point relates to the ***Post-benefit Convenience*** where results support that consumer perceptions of 'post-benefit convenience' are *partially* mediated through satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions, meaning that Hypothesis 3e is supported. In this context, Afthinos et al. (2005) found that consumers expressed a strong desire for effective after-sales service, including consumer record-keeping for identifying their desires, program renewed, and speed of response to complaints/recommendations. This finding is consistent with Wirtz and Mattila (2004) and Maxham III and Netemeyer (2002b), who indicated that satisfaction either fully or partially mediates the relationship between consumer perceptions of 'post-benefit convenience' (i.e. responding effectively to consumer comments/complaints) and future intentions. Importantly, this finding also supports the results of previous studies (i.e. Giese & Cote 2002; Wang & Lo 2002; Spreng et al. 1996; Gnoth 1995; Fornell 1992) in which consumer satisfaction was found to be an important summary of consumers post-purchase behaviours in relation to consumer perceptions of service quality. This implies that consumers may have positive future intentions towards service providers (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth) when they have positively evaluated their experience in terms of 'post-benefit convenience'. On the other hand, to increase consumers' behavioural loyalty, overall consumer satisfaction is a useful concept for service providers whose primary strategies are focused on building more 'post-benefit convenience' into service offers. Managers could possibly develop policies on how to compensate consumers who have experienced service failure, by providing effective and efficient channels to handle complaints/recommendations (i.e. feedback form in store or on web), and reminders of promotion activities in advance, as well as by establishing consumer record-keeping to identify consumers' desires to enable them to arrange their next exercise program/services with minimal effort. Managers can also empower employees to act on behalf of their organisations quickly and effectively without seeking managerial approval (Bhandari & Polonsky 2007; Lagrosen & Lagrosen 2007). Thus, the results of this thesis have implications for service firms in general, and the recreation industry in particular, as it has demonstrated that 'post-

benefit convenience' influences overall consumer satisfaction, which in turn fosters consumer loyalty towards health clubs.

In sum, the above results suggest that Hypothesis 3 is partially supported, as Hypotheses 3d and 3e were supported, but Hypotheses 3a, 3b and 3c were not supported as the first condition of a direct effect was found not to hold. Consumer perceptions of the three types of service convenience including 'decision', 'access' and 'transaction' were excluded from the mediating regression equations in the research, because of their insignificant contribution to the regression Equation 1. This means that no significant causal relationships were identified between these three types and overall consumer satisfaction. Therefore, only two of the five types of service convenience are included in the mediation effects ('benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience').

The results show that consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' are partially mediated through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions. That is, Hypotheses 3d and 3e are generally supported. The results of Hypothesis 3 represent an important step forward in understanding the relationship between these constructs. Importantly, these findings have theoretically and empirically advanced the understanding of the effect of these two types of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions for health clubs in particular. The results provide clear evidence that overall consumer satisfaction has a mediating effect on the relationships between the need for providing fast and easier health club services and perceived positive behavioural intentions (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth). In other words, these results suggest that consumers may have positive future intentions towards service providers (repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth) when they have positively evaluated their experience in terms of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' with their service provider. On the other hand, to increase consumer loyalty, overall consumer satisfaction is found to be a useful concept for service providers whose primary strategies are focused on building more 'benefit

convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into service offers. Alternatively, the higher the effects of satisfaction in 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience', the higher the likelihood that consumers' repurchase and spread of positive word-of-mouth will increase. That is, the role of overall consumer satisfaction facilitates the relationship between 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience', and consumer behavioural intentions. These results have implications for the recreation industry as they demonstrate that 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' influences overall consumer satisfaction, which in turn fosters consumer loyalty toward health clubs.

5.4 CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER FIVE

Chapter Five has reported the findings from quantitative research of the thesis in conjunction with relevant literature were discussed. The data gathered are analysed to determine if the research questions or hypotheses can be supported. The chapter presented and described the demographic characteristics of the research sample as well as the information pertaining to the respondents' profiles. The data then were examined for normality in order to determine the validity of the underlying assumptions about the data required for the various analytical techniques employed in this thesis. The assumption of normality was verified in this thesis by examining both the histogram shape (Appendix 5.1) of the data distribution and skewness and kurtosis of all items. The results demonstrated that the individual items of the main survey (i.e. 15-item of service convenience, 3-item of overall consumer satisfaction, and 4-item of behavioural intentions) are considered as normally distributed.

The reliability analysis and correlation analysis for each of the composite construct were further examined to test the construct validity. The results identify that none of the Alphas were increased if any items were removed, suggesting these seven constructs were all reliable (i.e. an Alpha of above .60) as defined and describe the domain of construct. This also indicated that the data were suitable

for exploring relationships among variables. The chapter commenced with an assessment of correlation analysis for each of the composite constructs. This research utilised correlation analysis for two purposes, firstly to examine if the presence of multicollinearity existed among the independent variables (i.e. five types of of service convenience, and consumer satisfaction variable), and secondly to explore the relationships among the constructs. The examination of bivariate Pearson product-moment correlations indicated the correlations among all the independent variables were lower than the prescribed cut-off value .80, and thus multicollinearity was not a problem at all in this thesis. The examination of the statistical assumptions (i.e. normality checks and the examination of multicollinearity) have confirmed the use of parametric techniques for data analysis. Thus, this chapter has reported the results of the testing of the hypotheses developed in Chapter Three. The discussion has focused on the outcomes of hypotheses (see Table 5.11) and research questions.

Table 5.11 Results of the testing of the hypotheses, n = 443

Subscale	Hypothesis 1	Hypothesis 2	Hypothesis 3
	Independent variables → Dependent variable		
	CON → CS	*CON → BI*	*CON + CS → BI*
a. Decision			
b. Access		**	
c. Transaction			
d. Benefit	**	**	**
e. Post-benefit	**	**	**

** p<.001.

* Note: **CON** = Service convenience; **BI** = Behavioural intentions; **CS** = Overall consumer satisfaction.

Source: Data analysis (2007)

As can be seen in Table 5.11, Hypotheses 1 is partially supported. Two types of service convenience ('benefit' and 'post-benefit') have a direct impact on consumer satisfaction, i.e. Hypotheses 1d and 1e were supported. But convenience related to 'decision', 'access' and 'transaction', were not statistically significant at p<.001, i.e. Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c were rejected. Thus, it is shown that the greater the level of service convenience perceived by consumers

on health clubs, the greater the level of consumer satisfaction, in particular in the areas of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'. The significant causal relationship of the Hypotheses 1d and 1e are consistent with those of Colwell et al. (2008), Su and Liu (2006), Heung (2000) and Levesque and McDougall (1996). The findings therefore suggest that overall consumer satisfaction will be greater if health club providers build more 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' convenience into their overall service delivery processes.

The results suggest Hypotheses 2 is partially supported, i.e. Hypotheses 2b, 2d and 2e were supported. The results therefore suggest that the likelihood that consumers will repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth will increase if health club providers or managers build more 'access convenience', 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into service offers. The results of Hypotheses 2b, 2d and 2e generated a very similar finding to those of Seiders et al. (2007), Ai-Hawari (2005), Tsaur et al. (2002), Liu et al. (2000), Bloemer et al. (1998) and Levesque and McDougall (1996). However, the results indicate that the two other types of service convenience 'decision' and 'transaction', do not statistically significantly impact on consumer behavioural intentions, i.e. Hypotheses 2a and 2c were rejected. That means insignificant causal relationships were found between consumer perceptions of 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' and consumer behavioural intentions.

Considering the results of Hypotheses 1 and 2 together, these suggest that convenience is complex incorporating more than simply time or effort savings. In this thesis, different convenience attributes appear to affect the formation of consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. Both consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions are affected by 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'. But consumer behavioural intentions are also affected by 'access convenience'. Therefore, service providers may still consider building 'access convenience' into service offers, as it seems to improve consumer outcomes, although it does not interact with satisfaction. Furthermore, it has been suggested that consumers may perceive convenience slightly differently according to the

type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). For example, certain types (i.e. transaction – waiting to pay) may be more important in contexts that involve more frequent purchases (i.e. supermarkets). On the other hand, as value of the specific aspects of convenience will differ in various settings and research is needed to understand the role of the five different types of service convenience in each service setting.

As Hypothesis 3 was examined based on Holmbeck's (1997) and Baron and Kenny's (1986) four mediation equations, the researcher needed to re-analyse the data (i.e. Hypothesis 1). The results show that Hypothesis 3 is partially supported. Consumer perceptions of the three types including 'decision', 'access' and 'transaction' were excluded from all the mediating regression equations in the research. This means that no significant causal relationships were identified between these three types and overall consumer satisfaction, and the mediation effect cannot be explored. However, the results clearly show consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' are partially mediated through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions, and thus Hypotheses 3d and 3e were supported. These results also support the findings of previous studies that consumer satisfaction is an important summary of consumer' post-purchase behaviour in relation to consumer perception of service quality (Giese & Cote 2002; Wang & Lo 2002; Spreng et al. 1996; Gnoth 1995). The findings of the Hypotheses 3d and 3e are consistent with those works of Wirtz and Mattila (2004), Maxham III and Netemeyer (2002b), and Thrane (2002). They found that satisfaction either fully or partially mediates the relationship between consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' (i.e. availability of programs), and 'post-benefit convenience' (i.e. effective responses to comments/complains) and future intentions. The results of Hypothesis 3 represent an important step forward in understanding the relationship between these constructs. The results provide clear evidence that overall consumer satisfaction has a mediating effect on the relationships between the need for providing fast and easier health club services and perceived positive behavioural intentions (repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth). Importantly,

these findings have theoretically and empirically advanced the understanding of the effect of these two types of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions, for health clubs in particular. These results suggest that consumers may have positive future intentions towards service providers (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth) when they have positively evaluated their experience in terms of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' with their service provider. On the other hand, to increase consumers' loyalty, overall consumer satisfaction is found to be a useful concept for service providers whose primary strategies are focused on building more 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into service offers. This result has implications for service firms in general, and recreation industry in particular, as it demonstrated that 'benefits convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' influence overall consumer satisfaction, which in turn foster consumer loyalty toward health clubs.

It should be noted that the 'access convenience' was excluded from the mediating regression equation in Hypothesis 3, even though, still, the path ('access convenience'→behavioural intentions) was significant at p<.001 (i.e. Hypothesis 2b). This means that consumer perceptions of 'access convenience' are not mediated through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions, but still have an direct influence behavioural intentions towards service providers.

Chapter Six continues and concludes the discussion in taking results reported here and using them to answer the research questions, as well as the implications and limitations of this thesis.

This page is intentionally blank

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.0 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER SIX

This is the concluding chapter of the thesis. The focus of this chapter is to draw the material discussed in this thesis together for the presentation of conclusions, implications and recommendations based on the result of analysis in relation to the three research questions. These are:

1) What is the impact of the five types of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction?

2) Do higher consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience affect consumer behavioural intentions? and

3) Does overall consumer satisfaction mediate the relationship of the types of service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions toward the service providers?

The following five subsections address the above questions. **Section 6.1** summarises the findings discussed in Chapter Five. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed in **Section 6.2**. **Section 6.3** identifies the limitations associated with this thesis. Directions for further research to extend this work are discussed in **Section 6.4**. Lastly, **Section 6.5** provides the final conclusions drawn based on discussion of the research findings.

6.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

In this section, the results testing the hypotheses are summarised. This thesis empirically tested Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit. These are examined as distinctive attributes of service convenience and are measured separately. The review service convenience literature (Chapter Two) identified the need to use a multiple measurement approach for service convenience. It suggests that service convenience needs to be considered as more than simply time or effort savings, but needs to consider that convenience within the overall service delivery process in which consumer evaluations of convenience vary at each stage (Berry et al. 2002; Seiders et al. 2000; Brown & McEnally 1992; Robinson & Nicosia 1991). The results broadly provide empirical support for Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience. This research, in conjunction with Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) provides a foundation for future studies into convenience by suggesting that service convenience is complex incorporating more than simply time or effort savings. It has been suggested that consumers may differ the perceived importance of the constructs slightly according to the type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). This may explain why there are differences in the model developed in the Taiwan leisure setting as compared to the Canada telecommunications context (Colwell et al. 2008) and the US retailing setting (Seiders et al. 2007). The value of the specific aspects of service convenience will differ in various settings and research is needed to understand the role of the five types of service convenience in each service setting. In addition, based on the research problems identified in Section 1.3, this thesis aims to empirically explore the effect of consumer perceptions of multiple types of service convenience as proposed by Berry et al. (2002) on overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions toward service providers. The findings of this thesis further suggest that the specific type of service convenience may also play differing roles in consumer outcomes based on the importance of service convenience to the specific encounter.

The primary objective of this thesis was to investigate the effects of the five types of service convenience on the constructs of overall consumer satisfaction (Hypothesis 1) and behavioural intentions (repeat purchase and word-of-mouth recommendation (Hypothesis 2). In this thesis, a conceptual model of the formation of consumer behavioural intentions was proposed and tested in the health club setting. In particular, the results suggest that both consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions are affected by 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'. However, the results indicate that the other three types of service convenience 'access', 'decision' and 'transaction', do not statistically impact on overall consumer satisfaction. Type of convenience related to the 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience', failed to significantly effect behavioural intentions, but consumer behavioural intentions were affected by 'access convenience'.

The second objective was to investigate the mediating effect of overall consumer satisfaction on the relationship between consumer perceptions of types of service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (Hypothesis 3). This was achieved by investigating the relationship between consumer perceptions of the types of service convenience, overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions using a mediating regression. Hypothesis 3 was examined using four phases exploring the mediation effect follow process proposed by Holmbeck (1997), and Baron and Kenny (1986). The first regression equation examined the relationships between multiple constructs of convenience and overall consumer satisfaction. The second equation examined the relationships between overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The third equation tested the causal relationship between the multiple constructs of service convenience and behavioural intentions towards service providers. These are all called direct effects. Also all of which satisfied the third mediating condition that direct paths were all significant at p<.05.

To determine whether mediation occurs, the researcher estimated a model (Equation 4) with a mediating path of service convenience through overall

consumer satisfaction. However, types of service convenience that were not statistically significant in Equation 1 were then omitted from further analysis in Equation 4. The mediation effect cannot be explored because they do not effect overall consumer satisfaction. As such, these types (i.e. 'decision', 'access' and 'transaction') were not included in further analysis (Equations 3 or 4), because of insignificant relationships in Equation 1. Mediation exists when the direct paths from the 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' to the behavioural intentions become nonsignificant (i.e. full mediation), or reduced (partial mediation) when overall satisfaction (i.e. the mediator) is added. Statistical approaches to testing mediation have been devised based on the difference in coefficients (β) and products of the mediator coefficient (Olkin & Finn 1995). It was found that when the inclusion of the consumer overall satisfaction (mediator) in Equation 4, the path between 'benefit convenience' and behavioural intentions was supported at significant at the $p<.001$ level, where the coefficient (β) in Equation 2 has dropped in Equation 4, as well as in the path between 'post-benefit convenience' and behavioural intentions. Thus, it can be concluded that there is partially mediating path of convenience through overall consumer satisfaction on two types of service convenience. The results are discussed in more details in the following sections.

6.1.1 The Impact of Service Convenience on Overall Consumer Satisfaction

As identified in Section 2.1.4, little research other than Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) have explored Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience which appeared in literature after the conceptualisation of this thesis. This thesis builds on Berry et al.'s (2002) work by examining five types of service convenience ~ decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit convenience in one service setting. In this way, this framework assesses the effect of those five types on overall consumer satisfaction with the service. Accordingly, the first hypothesis, each with five sub-components was developed to explore this issue:

Ho (1): **There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.**

Ho (1a): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of decision convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

Ho (1b): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of access convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

Ho (1c): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of transaction convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

Ho (1d): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of benefit convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

Ho (1e): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of post-benefit convenience and overall consumer satisfaction.

The data were analysed by using multiple regression, with the five types of service convenience were independent variables and consumer satisfaction was the dependent variable. This was done in order to identify the significant independent variables (five types of service convenience) that affect the level of overall consumer satisfaction (Hypothesis 1).

Overall, the results suggest that Hypothesis 1 is *partially* supported (F = 86.71, p<.001). Consumer perceptions of two types of service convenience 'benefit convenience' (β= .367, p<.001), and 'post-benefit convenience' increase satisfaction (β= .379, p<.001), i.e. Hypotheses 1d and 1e were supported. In regards to types related the 'access', 'decision' and 'transaction' convenience, failed to significantly effect overall consumer satisfaction, i.e. Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c were not supported. These findings have theoretically and empirically advanced the understanding of the effect of these two types of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction, for health clubs in particular. These results suggest that overall consumer satisfaction will be greater if health club providers build more 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' convenience into their

overall service delivery processes. The result of Hypotheis 1d is similar to Levesque and McDougall's (1996) finding into retail banking, where they found that consumers perceived core performance (i.e. prompt service and performs the service right the first time) was an important factor in determining consumer satisfaction. In regards to Hypotheis 1e, the result is consistent with Su and Liu (2006), who found that among service quality dimensions, empathy (i.e. after-sales service) significantly impacted on overall consumer satisfaction in the field of hair salon settings. Specifically, as both Hypotheses 1d and 1e were supported, these results, in conjunction with Colwell et al. (2008) provide a foundation for future studies into service convenience by suggesting that convenience is a complex construct.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that consumers may differ the perceived importance of the constructs slightly according to the type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). This may explain why there are differences in the model developed in the Taiwan leisure setting as compared to the banking sector (i.e. Ai-Hawari 2005; Moutinho & Smith 2000; Ennew et al. 1993); therefore, Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c were rejected. On the other hand, 'decision convenience', 'access convenience' and 'transaction convenience' may be less relevant in this health club context and may slightly differ in their impact on overall satisfaction. The lack of significant relationship between 'decision convenience' and overall consumer satisfaction might be the respondents in this thesis were members of health clubs who may have been no longer searching out information, and in fact had limited need to use information services. Further, this result in conjunction with Colwell et al.'s (2008) might suggest that 'decision convenience' is more influential in the purchase of tangible goods (i.e. a personal cellular phone service) than it is within a services context (i.e. health club). This may also explain why there are differences in the model developed in the Taiwan leisure setting as compared to Colwell et al.'s (2008) telecommunications context.

The lack of support for 'transaction convenience' might be that in this health club context, where members are based on long-term contracts whereby they organise to pay once and through the direct debits. Thus, they do not purchase each individual session and their purchase is relatively infrequent when compared with the most frequently consumed products, such as supermarkets (Seiders et al. 2007; Opperman 1999). Another potential explanation for the lack of relationship between 'access convenience' and overall consumer satisfaction might be that the health club is located near members' homes or workplaces. That is, people may only choose to be members of health clubs that are convenient, meaning that the issue of locational convenience only affects their initial decision and not their ongoing assessments. Here, as value of the specific aspects of service convenience will differ in various settings and more research is needed to understand the role of the five different types of service convenience in each service setting.

6.1.2 The Impact of Service Convenience on Behavioural Intentions

This section explains the results of testing the hypothesis related to the relationship between service convenience (decision, access, transaction benefit and post-benefit) and consumer behavioural intentions (i.e. repeat purchase intention and word-of-mouth). This linkage has aimed to test the second hypothesis, each with five types were developed to explore these issues:

Ho (2): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

Ho (2a): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of decision convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

Ho (2b): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of access convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

Ho (2c): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of transaction convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

Ho (2d): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of benefit convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

Ho (2e): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of post-benefit convenience and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & word-of-mouth).

The data were analysed using multiple regression, the five types of service convenience were independent variables and consumer behavioural intentions as the dependent variable. This was done in order to identify the significant independent variables (five types of service convenience) that affect their behavioural intentions toward the service providers (i.e. Hypothesis 2).

Hypothesis 2 suggests that consumer behavioural intentions towards the service providers are significant affected by their perceptions of aspects of service convenience. Specifically, from the multiple regression analysis, three types of service convenience including 'access' ($\beta = .189$, $p<.001$), 'benefit' ($\beta = .323$, $p<.001$), and 'post-benefit' ($\beta = .321$, $p<.001$) were found to be significant and

influence consumer behavioural intentions, i.e. Hypotheses 2b, 2d and 2e were supported. The other types were not statistically significant in influence outcomes (i.e. behavioural intentions), i.e. Hypotheses 2a and 2c were not supported. Thus, it can be said that Hypothesis 2 is *partially* supported (F = 125.25, p<.001). These findings have theoretically and empirically advanced the understanding of the effect of these three types of service convenience on consumer behavioural intentions, for health clubs in particular. These results suggest that health club service providers should build more 'access', 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' convenience into their overall service delivery processes, and subsequent consumers' behavioural outcomes can be increased (Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Shostack 1977).

A potential explanation for the lack of significant relationship between 'decision convenience' and consumer behavioural intentions might be the respondents in this thesis were members of health clubs who may have been no longer searching out information, and in fact had limited need to use information services. Another potential explanation for the lack of support for 'transaction convenience' might be that in this health club context, where members are based on long-term contracts and they organise to pay once and there are the direct debits. Thus, they do not purchase each session and direct payment is relatively infrequent when compared with frequent consumed products, such as supermarkets (Seiders et al. 2007; Opperman 1999). Alternatively, the results suggest that these two types of service convenience ('decision' and 'transaction') may improve how health club consumers think about their service providers, but they do not necessarily increase patronage behavioural intentions. For example, consumers may abandon their purchase if the 'transaction convenience' is low, or abandon a health club service that fails to provide 'decision convenience'. However, high levels of 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' may also fail to encourage higher levels of future behavioural intentions. As such, service providers seeking to build more 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' into their overall service offerings to increase consumer behavioural intentions may therefore be unsuccessful in increasing consumer outcomes. Finally, the findings might only

reflect Taiwanese perspectives and thus differ when other cultural groups are considered.

Considering the results of Hypotheses 1 and 2 together, these suggest that different types of service convenience affect the formation of consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. Both consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions are affected by the types of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'. But consumer behavioural intentions are also affected by component of 'access convenience'. 'Access convenience' might not play a prominent role in influencing consumer service evaluations and satisfaction with the firm, but does influence the likelihood that consumers will repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth. Therefore, service providers may still consider building 'access convenience' into service offers, as it seems to improve consumer outcomes, although it does not interact with satisfaction. Furthermore, it has been suggested that consumers may perceive convenience slightly differently according to the type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). For example, certain types (i.e. transaction – waiting to pay) may be more important in contexts that involve more frequent purchases (i.e. supermarkets). On the other hand, the value of the specific aspects of service convenience will differ in various settings and research is needed to understand the role of the five different types of service convenience in each service setting. The importance of the different attributes of service convenience could possibly enable organisations to develop better marketing and service strategies in affecting consumers' experiences positively so that consumers' loyalty can be increased. In this way they should be able to gain sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace (Colwell et al. 2008; Dube et al. 1994).

6.1.3 Mediation Effects

This section explains the results of the hypothesis related to determine whether the types of service convenience directly influence consumer behavioural intentions towards service provider or acts indirectly through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing consumer outcomes. As was discussed in Section 3.4, convenience has been identified as a key dimension of service quality (Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999). In addition, the multiple roles of consumer satisfaction in the mediating relationships of service quality, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions, have also been identified in a number of studies endeavouring to model these variables (i.e. Tina-Cole & Illum 2006; Tian-Cole & Crompton 2003; Thrane 2002; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999). For example, some researchers have indicated that service quality influences behavioural intentions only through value and satisfaction, whereas others argue that service quality directly affects behavioural intentions (Cronin et al. 2000; Gremler & Brown 1996). The mediating relationship of consumer satisfaction in relation to service quality has been the focus of numerous studies (i.e. Tina-Cole & Illum 2006; Tian-Cole & Crompton 2003; Thrane 2002; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999); however, the mediating role of overall consumer satisfaction in the relationship between consumer perceptions of multiple constructs of convenience and behavioural intentions of consumers has not yet been explored. To more fully understand consumer perceptions of service convenience and its impact on both consumer satisfaction and their future intentions, this thesis extends the literature on convenience in service settings by empirically testing the mediating effect of overall consumer satisfaction on the relationship between the five types of service convenience and behavioural intentions. These linkages have aimed to answer the third hypothesis.

Ho (3): **The effects of the consumer perceptions of each type of service convenience on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.**

Ho (3a): The effects of the consumer decision convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

Ho (3b): The effects of the consumer access convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

Ho (3c): The effects of the consumer transaction convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

Ho (3d): The effects of the consumer benefit convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

Ho (3e): The effects of the consumer post-benefit convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 was examined using four mediation equations following process proposed by Holmbeck (1997), and Baron and Kenny (1986). The data were analysed by multiple regressions, using the multiple constructs of service convenience and consumer satisfaction as independent variables and consumer behavioural intentions as the dependent variable. These were done in order to investigate the mediating effect of overall consumer satisfaction on the relationship between consumer perceptions of the types of service convenience and consumer behavioural intentions.

Service convenience types that were not statistically significant are then omitted from further analysis, because they do not effect overall consumer satisfaction. As such, these types (i.e. 'decision', 'access' and 'transaction') were not included in further analysis (Equations 3 or 4), because of insignificant relationships in Equation 1. Overall, the results suggest that Hypothesis 3 is ***partially*** supported ($F = 234.47$, $p<.001$). The path between 'benefit convenience' and behavioural intentions has been supported as significant at the $p<.001$ level, where the

coefficient (β) has dropped from $\beta = .479$ in Equation 2 to $\beta = .328$ in Equation 4, as well as in the path between 'post-benefit convenience' and behavioural intentions (from $\beta = .352$ to $\beta = .200$). The findings indicate that the association between the independent variable ('benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience') and the dependent variable (behavioural intentions) has been reduced by the inclusion of the mediating variable in the fourth regression. Thus, it can be concluded that overall consumer satisfaction partially mediates the relationships between the two types of service convenience ('benefit' and 'post-benefit') and behavioural intentions toward service providers. The results were presented in Table 5.9 and are reproduced in Table 6.1. The finding supports the results of previous studies that consumer satisfaction is an important summary of consumers post-purchase behaviours surrounding consumer perceptions of service quality (Wirtz & Mattila 2004; Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002b; Thrane 2002). Importantly, this also implies that consumers may form future intentions towards service providers when they have positively evaluated their experience in terms of 'benefit' and 'post-benefit convenience' with the service provider.

Table 6.1 Regression estimates of equations of Hypothesis 3, n = 443

Independent Variable → *Dependent Variable*	Standard coefficient Beta	t-value	Sig.	*Results*
Constant (1.531)		8.09	.000**	
Decision Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	-.059	-1.17	.243	*Ho (1a):* Not supported[†]
Access Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	.016	.29	.766	*Ho (1b):* Not supported[†]
Transaction Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	.067	1.27	.206	*Ho (1c):* Not supported[†]
Benefit Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	.367	6.46	.000**	*Ho (1d):* **Supported**
Post-benefit Convenience → *Consumer Satisfaction*	.379	7.73	.000**	*Ho (1e):* **Supported**

Equation 1

$R^2 (R^2_{adj.}) = .498 (.492)$
F-value *(df)* = 86.71**(5, 437)*

Independent Variable → *Dependent Variable*	Beta	t-value	Sig.	*Results*
Constant (1.079)		5.24	.000**	
Consumer Satisfaction → *Behavioural Intentions*	.694	20.22	.000**	Supported

Equation 2

$R^2 (R^2_{adj.}) = .481 (.480)$
F-value *(df)* = 408.67**(1, 441)*

Independent Variable → *Dependent Variable*	Beta	t-value	Sig.	*Results*
Constant (.875)		4.73	.000**	
Benefit Convenience → *Behavioural Intentions*	.479	10.74	.000**	*Ho (2d):* **Supported**
Post-benefit Convenience → *Behavioural Intentions*	.328	7.36	.000**	*Ho (2e):* **Supported**

Equation 3[†]

$R^2 (R^2_{adj.}) = .559 (.557)$
F-value *(df)* = 278.91**(2,440)*

Independent Variable → *Dependent Variable*	Beta	t-value	Sig.	*Results*
Constant (.248)		1.30	.000**	
Benefit Convenience → *Behavioural Intentions*	.352↓	7.91	.000**	*Ho (3d):* **Partially mediated**
Post-benefit Convenience → *Behavioural Intentions*	.200↓	4.47	.000**	*Ho (3e):* **Partially mediated**
Consumer Satisfaction → *Behavioural Intentions*	.335	8.05	.000**	Supported

Equation 4[†]

$R^2 (R^2_{adj.}) = .616 (.613)$
F-value *(df)* = 234.47**(3, 439)*

[†]**Note:** Consumer perceptions of the three types of service convenience components including 'Decision', 'Access' & 'Transaction' were excluded from the mediating regression equations in the research, because of their insignificant contribution to the regression Equation 1.

** p<.001.

Source: Data analysis (2007)

As can be seen in Table 6.1, to test Hypothesis 3, based on Holmbeck's (1997) and Baron and Kenny's (1986) four mediation equations, the researcher needs to re-analyse the data (i.e. Hypothesis 1). Firstly, the results of Equation 1 indicated only two types of service convenience including consumer perceptions of 'benefit convenience' (β = .367, p<.001), and 'post-benefit convenience' (β = .379, p<.001) significantly determine the level of their overall satisfaction. Other three types of service convenience were then eliminated from the regression model during the mediating regression procedure (i.e. they are not included in Equations 3 and 4) because of their insignificant contribution to the regression equation (i.e. were not significant at p<.001). Thus, Hypothesis 3 related to 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience'.

Secondly, the mediating condition of overall consumer satisfaction→behavioural intentions direct path in Equation 2 must exists and this was significant (β = .694, p<.001).

Thirdly, as mentioned earlier, the types of service convenience that were not statistically significant in Equation 1 were then omitted from further analysis (Equations 3 or 4). Thus, the two significant types identified in Equation 1, 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' were examined in the third regression equation focus on the direct paths of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' to behavioural intentions in the third regression equation. This procedure is similar as the regression procedure of Hypothesis 2, however, 'access convenience' was not included because no significant relationship was identified between the access convenience' and overall consumer satisfaction in Equation 1.

To determine whether mediation occurs, required examining regression Equation 4, this included the significant two types of service convenience ('benefit' and 'post-benefit') and overall consumer satisfaction as independent variables and behavioural intentions as the dependent variable. Mediation exists when the direct paths from the 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' to the

behavioural intentions become nonsignificant (i.e. full mediation), or reduced (partial mediation) when overall satisfaction (i.e. the mediator) is added.

In Table 6.1 it can be seen in Equation 4 that for the path between 'benefit convenience' and behavioural intentions was supported as significant at the p<.001 level, where the coefficient (β) has dropped from $\beta = .479$ in Equation 2 to $\beta = .328$ in Equation 4, as well as in the path between 'post-benefit convenience' and behavioural intentions (from $\beta = .352$ to $\beta = .200$). Also, in the path between overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions was supported as significant at the p<.001 level, the coefficient has dropped from $b = .694$ to $b = .335$. The findings indicate that the association between the independent variable ('benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience') and the dependent variable (behavioural intentions) has been reduced by the inclusion of the mediating variable in the fourth regression. Examination of the mediating role of overall consumer satisfaction, this appeared to support the conceptual model of mediation, in that overall consumer satisfaction partially mediates the relationships between the two types of service convenience ('benefit' and 'post-benefit') and behavioural intentions toward service providers (p<.001). Therefore, Hypotheses 3d and 3e were partly supported. Consumer perceptions of the three types of service convenience 'decision', 'access' and 'transaction', were excluded from the mediating regression equations and thus no significant relationships were examined between these three types and overall consumer satisfaction. Thus, it can be concluded that there is partially mediating path of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction on two types of service convenience, supports Hypotheses 3d and 3e.

The results of Hypothesis 3 represent an important step forward in understanding the relationship between these constructs. The finding supports the results of previous studies that consumer satisfaction is an important summary of consumers post-purchase behaviours surrounding consumer perceptions of service quality (Wirtz & Mattila 2004; Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002b; Thrane 2002). Importantly, these findings have theoretically and empirically advanced the

understanding of the effect of these two types of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions, for health clubs in particular. The results provide clear evidence that overall consumer satisfaction have a mediating effect on the relationships between the need for providing fast and easier health club services and perceived positive behavioural intentions (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth). This implies that consumers may form future intentions towards service providers when they have positively evaluated their experience in terms of 'benefit' and 'post-benefit convenience' with the service provider. On the other hand, to increase consumers' loyalty, overall consumer satisfaction is found to be a useful concept for service providers whose primary strategies are focused on building more 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into service offers.

Finally, hypothesised findings are summarised in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Summary of the hypothesised findings

HYPOTHESIS		RESULT
Ho (1): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of each service convenience component and overall consumer satisfaction		
Ho (1a)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of decision convenience and overall consumer satisfaction	Rejected[†]
Ho (1b)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of access convenience and overall consumer satisfaction	Rejected[†]
Ho (1c)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of transaction convenience and overall consumer satisfaction	Rejected[†]
Ho (1d)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of benefit convenience and overall consumer satisfaction	**Supported**
Ho (1e)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of post-benefit convenience and overall consumer satisfaction	**Supported**
Ho (2): There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of each service convenience component and consumer behavioural intentions (repeat purchase intention & WOM)		
Ho (2a)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of decision convenience and behavioural intentions	Rejected
Ho (2b)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of access convenience and behavioural intentions	**Supported**
Ho (2c)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of transaction convenience and behavioural intentions	Rejected
Ho (2d)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of benefit convenience and behavioural intentions	**Supported**
Ho (2e)	There is a positive relationship between consumer perceptions of post-benefit convenience and behavioural intentions	**Supported**
Ho (3): The effects of the consumer perceptions of each service convenience component on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction[†]		
Ho (3d)	The effects of the consumer benefit convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction	**Supported**
Ho (3e)	The effects of the consumer post-benefit convenience perceptions on behavioural intentions are mediated by consumer overall satisfaction	**Supported**

[†]**Note:** Because no significant relationships were identified between overall consumer satisfaction and the three types of service convenience including 'Decision', 'Access' and 'Transaction' in Ho (1), consumer perceptions of these three types were excluded from the mediating regression equations in Ho (3).

*Source: Data analysis (2007)

6.2 IMPLICATIONS

This thesis has empirically examined three hypotheses, each was subset with five types, focusing on a leisure service setting and the ramifications of the study can be discussed in terms of their relevance to theory and practice. This section examines the implications of findings in terms of: the multiple measurements of service convenience; consumer behaviour theory; and marketing practice.

6.2.1 Convenience as a Multiple-Component Construct

This thesis empirically tested Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience. The research suggests that these five types appear to be reliable and valid in the sample of health club consumers in Taiwan. The results are also consistent with Seiders et al.'s (2007) study examining US retailing consumers, as well as consistent with Colwell et al.'s (2008) study examining Canada cellular or internet service users. The Alphas, means and standard deviations for the composite items, both for those in this thesis and those used by Seiders et al. (2007) and Colwell et al. (2008) are reproduced in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 Construct Alphas

Subscale[†]	Thesis - Taiwan Health Clubs (HC) n=443			Seiders et al. (2007) - United States Service Retailing (SR) n=972			Colwell et al. (2008) - Canada Cellular or Internet (CI) n=201		
	Alpha	SD	Mean	Alpha	SD	Mean	Alpha	SD	Mean
Decision convenience	.62	0.97	4.95	.76	0.75	3.65	.66	2.73	3.54
Access convenience	.75	1.05	5.20	.83	0.81	3.71	.75	2.66	3.78
Transaction convenience	.69	0.97	5.08	.89	0.71	4.14	.67	2.03	3.97
Benefit convenience	.74	1.00	5.08	.84	0.66	4.05	.67	2.16	3.61
Post-benefit convenience	.77	1.02	4.86	.95	0.98	3.95	.79	2.87	3.46

[†]**Note:** full item description is available on Page 225.

*Source: Data analysis (2007)

Table 6.3 *(continued)* Items used in the literature

Subscale	Thesis - Taiwan Health Clubs (HC) n=443	Seiders et al. (2007) - United States Service Retailing (SR) n=972	Colwell et al. (2008) - Canada Cellular or Internet (CI) n=201
	Item	Item	Item
Decision Convenience	I spent minimal time finding the information to choose a HC.	Deciding to shop at SR is quick and easy.	The information I received from the CI service provider made it easy for me to choose what to buy.
	This HC made it easy for me to find suitable exercise programs.	I can easily determine prior to shopping whether SR will offer what I needed.	Making up my mind about what CI service I wanted to buy was easy.
	It was easy to get the information I needed to decide which HC to join.	I can quickly find information before I shop to decide if SR has what I'm looking for.	The information that I received from the service provider was very clear and easy to read.
	×	×	The service provider let me know the exact offers before I bought the CI service.
Access Convenience	It was easy to contact my HC.	I am able to get to SR quickly and easily.	The service provider was available when I needed to talk to them.
	It did not take much time to reach this HC.	SR offers convenient store hours.	The hours of operation of the service provider were convenient.
	I can easily figure out the location of this HC.	SR offers convenient parking.	The service provider is accessible through various ways (online, telephone, and in person).
	×	SR offers convenient location.	It is easy for me to contact an employee of the CI service provider if necessary.
Transaction Convenience	This HC allows diversified methods of payment.	SR makes it easy for me to conclude my transaction.	I found it easy to complete my CI service purchase with my provider.
	The method of payment provided by this HC is convenient.	It takes little time to pay for my purchase at SR.	I was able to complete the purchase of my service quickly.
	I was able to complete my purchase quickly in this HC.	I am able to complete my purchase quickly at SR.	There were no problems to deal with during the purchase that added to the purchase time.
Benefit Convenience	I could easily obtain benefits from the services provided in this HC.	The merchandise I want at SR can be located quickly.	I was able to get the benefits of the CI service with little effort.
	The services in this HC were easy to use.	It is easy to find the products I am looking at SR.	The service provider solved my CI needs without creating other problems.
	The speed of providing services in this HC met my requirements.	It is easy to evaluate the merchandise at SR.	The time required to receive the benefits of the CI service was reasonable.
	×	I can easily get product advice at SR.	×
Post-benefit Convenience	When I had a problem, this HC resolved my problem quickly.	It is easy to take care of returns and exchanges at SR.	My CI service provider quickly resolved any problems I had with the service.
	This HC enabled me to arrange my next exercise programs/plans with minimal effort.	SR takes care of product exchanges and returns promptly.	It was easy for me to obtain follow up service from the provider after my purchase.
	This HC has a good channel to handle complaints and recommendations.	Any after-purchase problems I experience are quickly resolved at SR.	When I have questions about my service, provider is able to resolve my problem.

Source: Literature review

- 225 -

It can be seen that the items for each of the five-component convenience construct have a Cronbach's alpha value greater than the cut-off value .60, suggested by Hair et al. (2006). Removal of any items did not increase the Alpha values. While the Alphas for five constructs are lower than in Seiders et al. (2007), this may be because there were only three items used (Grace 2005; Karatepe et al. 2005; Bloemer et al. 1999), whereas Seiders et al. (2007) included an additional item in two constructs and they also had a significantly larger sample size (Pallant 2005; Bloemer et al. 1999; Cohen 1988). The results of the Alphas identify that the five types are therefore reliable, confirming Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) results.

It therefore appears that the five types are reliable across at least three distinct services contexts (Telecommunications, Retailing & Health Clubs), as well as across cultural settings (Canada, US & Taiwan). This is an important first step in exploring these constructs, especially as time-scarcity is an increasing global issue in both Western and non-western societies (Marquis 2005). It would be expected that the specific definition of the convenience construct may differ the perceived importance of the constructs slightly, based on the setting and/or culture, which is often suggested in regards to assessing aspects of service quality (Tsitskari, Tsiotras & Tsiotras 2006; Papadimitriou & Karteliotis 2000; Babukus & Boller 1992; Carmen 1990). This supports that the five constructs are relevant beyond the Canada telecommunications context and the US retail context.

This research, in conjunction with Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) provides a foundation for future studies into convenience by suggesting that convenience is a complex construct incorporating more than simply time or effort savings. Organisations that build convenience into their overall offerings should be able to have sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace (Colwell et al. 2008; Dube et al. 1994). Furthermore, it has been suggested that consumers may perceive convenience slightly differently according to the type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). This may explain why there are differences in the model developed in the Taiwan

leisure setting as compared to the Canada telecommunications context and the US retailing setting. The value of the specific aspects of convenience will differ in various settings and research is needed to understand the role of the five different types of service convenience in each service setting.

6.2.2 Implications for Consumer Behaviour Theory

Convenience has been identified as a key dimension of service quality (Cronin et al. 2000; Bloemer et al. 1999). However, although the relationship between service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions are well-established in the literature (i.e. Dhurup et al. 2006; Yuksel 2001; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Moutinho & Smith 2000; Levesque & McDougall 1996), little empirical research has specifically addressed the relationship between consumer perceptions of convenience, satisfaction and behavioural intentions. This is particularly so in relation to the adoption of multiple constructs of service convenience which have not generally been explored.

Theoretically, in literature related to consumer behaviour, achieving high levels of consumer satisfaction is a major goal for most organisations (McQuilken et al. 2002). Furthermore, research has shown a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and consumer behavioural intentions toward the service provider (Mason et al. 2006; Zboja & Voorhees 2006; Wong 2004; Cronin et al. 2000; Bitner 1990), and since service convenience affects overall consumer satisfaction (i.e. Colwell et al. 2008), it should also positively influence consumer behavioural intentions (i.e. Seiders et al. 2007). Thus, in regard to the present thesis, it is assumed that building convenience into the service delivery process will not only increase consumers' levels of satisfaction with a service, but also increase the likelihood that they will repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth.

The findings of this thesis represent an important step forward in understanding the relationship between these constructs by investigating the hypothesised

relationships proposed in the conceptual model. In this, the results have shown that different types of service convenience appear to affect consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. Both consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions are found to be affected by types of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience', with consumer behavioural intentions also being affected by 'access convenience'. Therefore, service providers may still consider building 'access convenience' into service offers, as it seems to improve consumer outcomes (i.e. behavioural intentions), although it does not interact with overall satisfaction. Here, a potential explanation for the lack of relationship between 'access convenience', and overall consumer satisfaction might be that the health club is located near respondents' homes or workplaces. That is, people may only choose to be members of health clubs that are convenient, meaning that the issue of locational convenience only affects their initial decisions and not their ongoing assessments.

This research, in conjunction with Colwell et al. (2008) provides clear evidence that 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' increase satisfaction. The findings therefore suggest that overall consumer satisfaction will be greater if health club providers build more 'benefit' and 'post-benefit' convenience into their overall service delivery processes. However, there was no significant causal relationship between consumer perception of 'decision convenience' and overall satisfaction. This finding is inconsistent with Colwell et al.'s (2008) study of telecommunication settings which identified that 'decision convenience' is an important service attribute in determining consumer satisfaction. A potential explanation for the lack of relationship between 'decision convenience' and overall consumer satisfaction might be that as respondents in this thesis were members of health clubs, it might be that they are no longer searching out information and have limited needs to use information services. On the other hand, 'decision convenience' was considered less relevant than in the context of purchase of tangible goods where 'decision convenience' is more influential (i.e. Colwell et al. - a personal cellular phone service) than it is within a services context (Stokes & Lomax 2002). Past literature also suggests that many services

tend to be higher in experience qualities, as evaluated after performance of the service (Nyer & Gopinath 2005; Wirtz & Chew 2002; Christansen & Tax 2000). In contrast, some products with high search qualities (i.e. colour, style or price) are relatively easy to evaluate, since their qualities are largely evaluated by pre-purchase (Stokes & Lomax 2002). This may further explain why there are differences in the model developed in the Taiwan leisure setting as compared to Colwell et al.'s (2008) telecommunications context.

The results of this thesis found no significant causal relationships between consumer perceptions of 'transaction convenience', overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. A potential explanation for this lack of relationship might be that in the health club context of this thesis membership is based on long-term contracts that are paid for in advance or through regular direct debits. In other words, consumers purchasing a session each time they attend is relatively infrequent when compared with frequently consumed products, such as supermarkets (Seiders et al. 2007; Opperman 1999). Indeed, it might also mean that 'transaction convenience' is more influential in the frequently purchased tangible goods than it is within a services context, and that the specific of transaction is important in terms of the service.

Specifically, the results of this thesis found that both 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' not only increased consumer satisfaction but also significantly impact on consumer behavioural intentions toward the service providers. These results are therefore consistent with previous literature that states overall satisfaction is a broad concept implying an overall evaluation based on total purchase and consumption experience after consumption as a good predictor of subsequent consumer behaviours (Giese & Cote 2002; Wang & Lo 2002; Spreng et al. 1996; Gnoth 1995; Bitner & Hubbert 1994; Fornell 1992).

In light of the above review of literature, it can be assumed that the value of specific aspects of convenience will differ according to the settings, and more research is needed to understand the role of the five different types of convenience

in each service setting. Ultimately, the specific convenience types may also play differing roles in consumer outcomes, based on the importance of convenience in the specific encounter.

The multiple roles of consumer satisfaction in mediating the relationships between service quality, consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions, have been of specific interest in a number of studies (i.e. Tina-Cole & Illum 2006; Tian-Cole & Crompton 2003; Thrane 2002; Athanassopoulos 2000; Cronin et al. 2000; Chenet et al. 1999). For example, some researchers have found that service quality influences behavioural intentions only through value and satisfaction (i.e. an indirect effect); whereas others have argued that service quality directly affects behavioural intentions (Cronin et al. 2000; Gremler & Brown 1996). However, the mediating effect of overall consumer satisfaction in relationships between the multiple constructs of service convenience on the outcomes of behavioural intentions, has previously not yet been explored. As such, this thesis has attempted to explore the effect of multiple constructs of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions. To determine whether mediation occurs, the researcher estimated a model with a mediating path of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction. This linkage reflects the necessity for understanding whether multiple constructs of service convenience directly influence outcomes (i.e. behavioural intentions) or indirectly act through overall consumer satisfaction. It has been argued that consumer satisfaction is an important summary of consumers post-purchase behaviours surrounding consumer perceptions of service quality (Wirtz & Mattila 2004; Maxham III & Netemeyer 2002b; Thrane 2002). The results of this thesis therefore represent an important step forward in understanding the relationship between these constructs.

The above findings have theoretically and empirically advanced the understanding of the effect of these two types of service convenience ('benefit' and 'post-benefit') through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions, for health clubs in particular. The results have provided clear evidence

that overall consumer satisfaction has a mediating effect on the relationships between need for providing 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into overall service delivery processes, and perceived positive behavioural intentions (repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth). In other words, consumers will form positive future intentions towards service providers (repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth) when they have positively evaluated their experience in terms of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' with their service provider. Furthermore, to increase consumers' loyalty, overall consumer satisfaction is a useful concept for service providers whose primary strategies are focused on building more 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into service offers. Finally, it should be noted that the types of 'decision', 'access' and 'transaction' were excluded from the mediating regression equations in this thesis, because no significant relationships could be explored between these three types and overall consumer satisfaction, and the mediation effect cannot be explored.

6.2.3 Implications for Practice

From a practitioner point of view, this thesis highlights the importance of service providers building different types of service convenience into service offers that lead to satisfaction and the formation of positive consumer behavioural intentions (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth), for health clubs in particular. Specifically, service providers should be aware that building both 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into their overall service offerings is necessary to improve consumer service evaluations and satisfaction, as well as increase consumers' loyalty. If service firms neglect to do this, it will not be easy for them to sustain competitive advantage in the marketplace, as consumers may be aware of the benefits that other competitors offer. This is of prime importance, because the results of this thesis provide clear evidence that the greater the level of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' perceived by consumers of health clubs, the greater their level of overall

satisfaction, and the more likely they are to repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth.

In regard to **Benefit Convenience**, Levesque and McDougall's (1996) retail banking study found that consumers' perceived core performance (i.e. prompt service and performs the service right the first time) was an important factor in determining consumers' satisfaction and future intentions to their retail banking providers. Results of this thesis have also identified that consumers appear to be generally more positive about situations in which the core service (proposed under 'benefit convenience') is delivered as expected, than they are when there is a problem with the delivery process but the core service is not delivered. Specifically, health club managers need to ensure that the core service in which benefits of both consumption and process resulting in consumer development of positive service perceptions, is delivered. The present thesis suggests that this approach may provide an important focus for marketers to use in the improvement of consumer satisfaction and outcomes.

Another point relating to **Post-benefit Convenience** involves the finding that both consumer overall satisfaction and behavioural intentions are affected by such convenience. In this context, Afthinos et al. (2005) found that consumers expressed a strong desire for effective after-sales service, for example, record-keeping for identifying consumer desires, program renewals, and speed of response to complaints/recommendations. In addition, the process of dealing with dissatisfaction post-consumption and reinitiation of contact must be easy to access following a service failure that was not recognised or resolved during the service. In this latter instance, consumers need to be provided with accessible (i.e. convenient) problem solving interactions (Ramaswamy 1996; Gronroos 1990). In a restaurant setting, Wirtz and Mattila (2004) examined consumer responses to compensation, speed of recovery, and apology after a service failure. They measured recovery speed as an immediate response combined with an apology. Similarily, Lagrosen and Lagrosen (2007) included a dimension of speed of service recovery after service failure to measure service quality in the health and

fitness industry, based on a qualitative data collection. They identified speed of service recovery as an important convenience attribute of service quality.

Liu et al. (2000) found that effective service recovery increases consumers' willingness to recommend the firm to others, and concluded that service providers should set up and maintain systems for responding effectively to consumer complaints. Other studies have also suggested that consumers realise that service failures will occasionally occur, but believe that service providers should proactively resolve any such failure (Andreassen 2001; Hart et al. 1990). Results of this thesis therefore suggest that providing ongoing service exchanges including well-designed service recovery processes, effective responses to complaints/comments, and convenient after-sales service, can increase consumer satisfaction and the likelihood that consumers will behave positively (repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth). For example, service managers could establish record-keeping to identify consumers' desires. This would enable them to arrange future exercise program/services with minimal effort, and provide reminders of promotion activities in advance. On the other hand, firms could possibly develop policies on how to compensate consumers who experience service failure, to maintain theindicatir satisfaction and loyalty. Furthermore, in the complex service operations of a health club centre, Lagrosen and Lagrosen (2007) found that management cannot control all activities in detail, indicating that it is important to empower employees to act on behalf of their organisation quickly and effectively to improve consumer outcomes (i.e. behavioural intentions) without seeking managerial approval.

The thesis findings, however, indicate that 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' do not statistically impact on either overall consumer satisfaction or behavioural intentions. The potential explanation for lack of statistically significant results in regards to *Decision Convenience* might be that respondents were members of health clubs and may no longer have been searching out information so find limited need to use such services.

The lack of support for *Transaction Convenience*, might also partly relate to health club settings. That is, 'transaction convenience' may be less relevant in a health club context as membership is based on long-term contracts where consumers organise to pay once or through direct debits. In this context, they do not purchase each session, so payment is relatively infrequent when compared to most frequently consumed products such as supermarkets (Seiders et al. 2007; Opperman 1999). Indeed, it might also mean that 'transaction convenience' is more influential in the frequent purchase of tangible goods than it is within a services context, and that the transaction itself is important in terms of the service. Hence, 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' may improve how health club consumers think about their service providers, but do not necessarily increase consumer satisfaction and patronage behavioural intentions. Marketers seeking to use 'decision convenience' and 'transaction convenience' to increase visitations overall may therefore be unsuccessful in improving consumer satisfaction and increasing consumer outcomes (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth).

Nevertheless, they also should keep in mind the need to incorporate *Access Convenience* into their overall offerings, as it seems to improve consumer outcomes (i.e. behavioural intentions), even though it does not interact with overall consumer satisfaction. In this context, Yuksel (2001) suggested that service attributes of convenient location and hours of opening (proposed under 'access convenience') is the good predictor of a consumer's likelihood of seeking future contact with a service provider. Results of this thesis therefore confirm that service providers seeking to build more 'access convenience' into their overall service offerings to increase consumer behavioural intentions, may be successful in increasing loyalty. From a practitioner point of view, firms could possibly extend their trading hours, providing easy access transportation (i.e. free shuttle bus from metropolis), and present a clear map on their website.

It is important to note that service firms with the advantage of a convenient location should not rely solely on the convenient location, since this factor was

not found to influence consumer satisfaction. Firms competing with similiar service providers that have more convenient locations may benefit from reinforcing other sources of competitive advantage. For example, firms with less convenient locations may choose to emphasise service attributes such as convenient programming and schedule of activities, or free coupons to bring a friend along for a free workout session to raise overall satisfaction levels, and reduce the potential impact of a competitor's convenient location. Investing in other service attributes such as program availability and delivery and variety of sports offered, might be more beneficial to customer retention than the costly investment required to obtain a more convenient location.

Results of this thesis have implications for service firms in general, and recreation industry in particular, to consider the need for convenience within their overall service delivery processes. Hence, it has been suggested that consumers may perceive convenience slightly differently according to the type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). This may explain why there are differences in the model developed in the Taiwan leisure setting as compared to other sectors (i.e. telecommunications & retailing). As the value of specific aspects of convenience differ in various settings, an understanding of the role of the five different types of service convenience in each service setting is needed. The specific types of convenience may also play differing roles in consumer outcomes based on the importance of convenience to the specific encounter.

Furthermore, it has been confirmed by the results of this thesis that overall consumer satisfaction has a mediating effect on the relationships between the need for providing 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into overall service delivery processes and perceived positive behavioural intentions (i.e. repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth). Importantly, these findings have managerially and empirically advanced the understanding of the effect of these two types of service convenience through overall consumer satisfaction in influencing behavioural intentions, for health clubs in particular. In

other words, these results suggest that consumers will form positive future intentions towards service providers (repeat visiting and spreading positive word-of-mouth) when they have positively evaluated their experience in terms of 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' with their service providers.

This finding also supports the results of previous studies, that consumer satisfaction is an important summary of consumer post-purchase behaviour in relation to consumer perception of service quality (Giese & Cote 2002; Wang & Lo 2002; Spreng et al. 1996; Gnoth 1995). For example, Thrane (2002) found that overall festival satisfaction mediated the relationship between music quality assessment (i.e. concert program followed announced time and venue, avoiding possibility concert overlap) and repeat purchase intentions. Maxham III and Netemeyer (2002b) indicated that satisfaction either fully or partially mediates the relationship between consumer perceptions of 'post-benefit convenience' (i.e. speed of response to consumers' complaints/comments) and future intentions. On the other hand, to increase consumers' loyalty, overall consumer satisfaction is found to be a useful concept for service providers whose primary strategies are focused on building more 'benefit convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' into service offers. Therefore, managers could possibly enhance levels of overall consumer satisfaction by improving convenient core service attributes in their service delivery process, such as standardising operations of personal services, assigning staff to a variety programming activities, and providing convenient schedules and clear instructions on how to use the facilities and equipment to combine tangible and intangible attributes for the maximisation of overall consumer satisfaction. In regards to 'post-benefit convenience', service managers could possibly develop policies to compensate consumers who have experienced service failure through providing channels to handle complaints/recommendations (i.e. feedback form in store or on web) and reminders of promotion activities in advance, as well as establishing consumer record-keeping for identifying consumers' desires to enable them to arrange next exercise program/services with minimal effort. Managers could also empower employees to act on behalf of the organisation quickly and effectively without seeking managerial approval

(Bhandari & Polonsky 2007; Lagrosen & Lagrosen 2007). As these findings demonstrate that 'benefits convenience' and 'post-benefit convenience' influence overall consumer satisfaction, which in turn fosters consumer loyalty towards health clubs, the results of this thesis have implications for service firms in general, and the recreation industry in particular.

6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE THESIS

The objective of this thesis is to empirically explore the effect of Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience on overall consumer satisfaction and behavioural intention towards service providers within one service. There are several limitations that should be noted. These are described below in terms of the context of this thesis, the sample chosen, the sampling design, and the convenience constructs' measures.

This thesis empirically tested Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience, and suggests that these five types are reliable and valid for use in a particular sample of health club consumers across three locations in Taiwan and caution must be given before interpreting and generalising the findings to all leisure service experiences. Furthermore, it has been suggested that consumers may perceive convenience slightly differently, depending on the type of services they are buying or using (Colwell et al. 2008; Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002). Arguably, therefore, health clubs differ from other services. First, health clubs are businesses where consumers often select location near their homes or workplaces, meaning that *access convenience* is less an issue. In contrast, researchers of banking facilities often treat location as a core function due to its linkage with retailing services that are frequently used by consumers needing close proximity (Ai-Hawari 2005; Moutinho & Smith 2000; Bruwer 1997; Ennew et al. 1993; Leistriz et al. 1992; Hansen & Weinberg 1977). Second, memberships are generally on long term contracts in which members do not purchase each session, and thus *transaction convenience* may be more important

in contexts that involve more frequent purchases (i.e. supermarkets). As a result, the findings in this thesis might only reflect health club perspectives and thus differ when other service settings are considered. Here, as value of the specific aspects of convenience will differ in various settings, further research would be needed to understand the role of the five different types of service convenience in each one.

Another potential limitation is related to different cultural contexts may affect how consumers view convenience differently (Chang, Polonsky & Junek 2007), which is often suggested in regards to assessing aspects of service quality (Tsitskari et al. 2006; Papadimitriou & Karteliotis 2000; Babukus & Boller 1992; Carmen 1990). Therefore, as the findings might only reflect Taiwanese perspectives and thus differ when other cultural groups are considered, caution about generalising the results of this thesis might be taken.

It might also be suggested that the majority of the sample population in this thesis was composed of young and middle-aged adults at three selected health clubs, which could be considered as a limitation. However, as was discussed in Sections 4.7 and 5.1, the resulting responses are sufficient to allow valid conclusions to be drawn. As will be discussed in the Future Research Section, a higher external validity of the thesis results could be achieved by using wider sub-populations (e.g. age groups and life stages), but these are more narrowly focused in nature (Polonsky 1999).

A further limitation to this thesis is that the conceptualisation of the types of service convenience requires further validation. While results have identified that the five types are reliable (a minimum Alpha of .60 suggests appropriate), the conceptual measurement of service convenience have been measured with a relatively small number (i.e. 3 items). Furthermore, the Alpha reliability coefficient of the 'decision convenience' component (Cronbach's alpha = .62) is higher than the alpha reliability coefficient of pilot-studying (Cronbach's alpha = .57), possibly due to the increased sample size resulting in a higher degree of

internal consistency (Pallant 2005). Removal of any items did not change the Alpha values. While the Alphas for five constructs in this thesis are lower than in Seiders et al. (2007), this may be because there were only three items (Grace 2005; Karatepe et al. 2005; Bloemer et al. 1999), whereas Seiders et al. (2007) included an additional item in two constructs, and also had a significantly larger sample size. Therefore, to improve construct validity, future studies should consider the use of more indicators to measure the constructs and examine more categories of service convenience. Applications of confirmatory factor analyses would also be required to validate the theoretical components.

6.4 FUTURE RESEARCH

In addition to the limitations of this thesis which have been addressed above, this section also presents a number of future research opportunities. Importantly, some results appear to be generally consistent with both Colwell et al.'s (2008) and Seiders et al.'s (2007) studies of service convenience as viewed by Canada telecommunication users and by US retail consumers. In this regard, Berry et al.'s (2002) five types are valid across three distinct services contexts (Telecommunications, Retailing & Health Clubs), as well as across cultural settings (Canada, US & Taiwan), especially as time-scarcity is an increasingly global issue in Western societies (Marquis 2005). Therefore, this thesis, in conjunction with Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) provided guidance to explore the five constructs (Chapter Two), even though the specific definition of the convenience construct may differ slightly, depending on the setting and/or culture, which has often been suggested in regards to assessing aspects of service quality (Tsitskari et al. 2006; Papadimitriou & Karteliotis 2000; Babukus & Boller 1992; Carmen 1990). Consequently, this thesis lends support to the assertion that the constructs are relevant to contexts beyond Canada telecommunications and US retail.

As discussed above, convenience is a complex multiple measurements of services construct incorporating more than simply time or effort savings. Therefore, organisations that can build convenience into their overall offerings should be able to have sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace (Colwell et al. 2008; Dube et al. 1994). As Colwell et al. (2008), Seiders et al. (2007) and Berry et al. (2002) suggested that consumers may differ in the ways they perceive convenience; this may explain differences in the model developed in the Taiwan leisure setting when compared with the Canada telecommunications context and the US retailing setting. Clearly, values of the specific aspects of convenience will differ in various settings, and research is needed to understand the role of the five different types of service convenience in each service setting.

There are of course also ample additional opportunities to explore other aspects of service convenience, and research needs to be undertaken in multiple settings in a range of countries to explore the generalisability of types across service contexts. One setting should also be explored across countries to examine the global generalisability. As the research in this thesis, Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) all explored developed countries, it could be assumed that consumers in developing countries may view convenience differently (Gross & Sheth 1989; Berry 1979). The samples in these three studies (US, Canada & Taiwan) were potentially not comprehensive, as in Seiders et al. (2007) older US females were explored, in Colwell et al. (2008) Canadian respondents were undergraduate students, and in Taiwanese study of this thesis respondents were middle-aged males and females. Thus, it may be the case that there are differences in terms of convenience based on demographic factors, although this may also relate to the time constraints faced by different segments rather than demographics alone. More research could explore whether there are in fact demographic differences or other factors that might allow for segmentation of consumers based on types of service convenience.

The majority of the sample population in this thesis was composed of young and middle-aged adults at three selected health clubs. Therefore, a higher external

validity of the thesis results could be achieved by using wider sub-populations (e.g. age groups and life stages). For example, for older adults health benefit can be a more important motivator for engaging in regular active recreation than it is for the young (Hirvensalo, Lampinen & Rantanen 2000). For future studies, such examinations of the proposed model using more active health club consumers in actual consumption situations, and using a wider sampling range in a variety of segments of the health club industry, may complement the sampling limitation of present thesis.

In broadening the context it may be worthwhile to include additional service quality variables. For example, although convenience has been an important focus of marketing activity in many sectors, Shaheed (2004) suggested that consumers may expect more convenience coupled with quality in new convenience forms that open up opportunities for marketers in future expansion. Researchers need more integrative theories to better explain and understand service convenience in the service industry. More importantly the research did not explore any antecedence to consumers' perceptions of service convenience, which might affect how they viewed the constructs. For example, research could investigate the ways in which consumers view time as a scarce resource in relation to seeking convenience as a service attribute. Such research could also explore how integration of these multiple measures of service convenience moderate other relationships (i.e. service quality) within the service context.

Lastly, the conceptual framework of service convenience presented in Figure 3.1 in this thesis was developed on the basis of consumer behaviour issues (consumer satisfaction and consumer behavioural intentions). It might be suggested that the multiple types of service convenience could be integrated into a range of studies to allow for a better understanding of consumer behaviour within the service context. These specific types of service convenience may also play differing roles in consumer outcomes based on the importance of service convenience in a specific encounter. Thus, to better understand the role of service convenience on consumers' behaviours in the health club industry, it is recommended that other

behavioural intentions need to be included, such as switching intentions or complaining behaviours. Including actual behaviour measures in the model, such as frequency of visitation to a specific brand of health club, would improve the explanatory power of models similar to this thesis.

6.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Consumers are more constrained by time than ever before and the development of consumer perceived convenience is therefore an important marketing strategy. However, to date, service marketers have not extensively examined the role of convenience as a service/product attribute (Seiders et al. 2007; Berry et al. 2002; Brown 1990, 1989; Yale & Venkatesh 1986). This thesis empirically tested Berry et al.'s (2002) five types of service convenience and found that they hold in the service context explored.

Importantly, this research, in conjunction with Colwell et al. (2008) and Seiders et al. (2007) provides a foundation for future studies into convenience. It does suggest that convenience is a complex construct incorporating more than simply time or effort savings. Organisations that can build convenience into their overall offerings should be able to have sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace. It does need to be stated, however, that the specific definition of the convenience constructs may differ slightly, based on the setting and/or culture (Chang et al. 2007), as suggested in regards to assessing aspects of service quality (Andaleeb & Conway 2006; Olorunniwo & Hsu 2006; Tsitskari et al. 2006; Kouthouris & Alexandris 2005; Papadimitriou & Karteliotis 2000; Babukus & Boller 1992; Carmen 1990). Here, as value of the specific aspects of convenience will differ in various settings, more research is needed to understand the role of the five different types of service convenience in each service setting. The specific types of service convenience may also play differing roles in consumer outcomes based on the importance of service convenience to the specific encounter. It is believed that the proposed model of service convenience outlined

in this thesis may assist leisure service marketers and recreation practitioners to consider the need for convenience within their overall service delivery process. In this way, service firms that incorporate convenience into their overall offerings should be able to maintain sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace. Finally, it is hoped that the conceptual model tested in the Taiwan leisure setting, with particular emphasis on health clubs, will help build opportunities amongst services marketing researchers and educators to explore additional empirical evaluations in other settings across cultures to identify the generalisability of the findings.

This page is intentionally blank

REFERENCES

Absher, JD 1998, 'Customer service measure for national forest recreation', *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 31-42.

Achen, CH 1982, *Interpreting and Using Regression*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, Calif.

Afthinos, Y, Theodorakis, ND & Nassis, P 2005, 'Customers' expectations of service in Greek fitness centres – gender, age, type of sport centre, and motivation differences', *Managing Service Quality*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 245-58.

Ahire, SL, Golhar, DY & Waller, MA 1996, 'Development and validation of TQM implementation constructs', *Decision Sciences*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 23-56.

Ai-Hawari, M 2005, 'The effect of automated service quality on bank financial performance and the mediating role of customer retention', *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 228-43.

Alcaniz, EB, Garcia, IS & Blas, SS 2005, 'Relationships among residents' image, evaluation of the stay and post-purchase behaviour', *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 291-302.

Alexandris, K, Dimitriadis, N & Markata, D 2002, 'Can perceptions of service quality predict behavioural intentions? An exploratory study in the hotel sector in Greece', *Managing Service Quality*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 224-31.

Alford, BL & Sherrell, DL 1996, 'The role of affect in consumer satisfaction judgments of credence-based services', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 37, no. 1, pp. 71-84.

Altalo, MG & Hale, M 2002, *Requirements of the U.S. Requirement and Tourism Industry for Climate, Weather & Ocean Information*, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), San Diego, C.A.

American Heritage Dictionary®, 1982, 2nd edn, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, MA.

Andaleeb, SS & Conway, C 2006, 'Customer satisfaction in the restaurant industry: An examination of the transaction-specific model', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 3-11.

Anderson, AB, Basilevsky, A & Hum, DPJ 1983, 'Measurement: Theory and techniques', in PH Rossi, JD Wright & A Anderson (eds), *Handbook of Survey Research*, Academic Press, New York, pp. 231-87.

Anderson, E & Shugan, S 1991, 'Repositioning for changing preferences: The case of beef versus poultry', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 219-32.

Anderson, EW 1998, 'Customer satisfaction and word-of-mouth', *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 5-17.

Anderson, EW & Mittal, V 2000, 'Strengthening the satisfaction-profit chain', *Journal of Services Research*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 107-20.

Anderson, EW & Sullivan, MW 1993, 'The antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction for firms', *Marketing Science*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 125-43.

Anderson, JC & Gerbing, DW 1982, 'Some methods for respecifying measurement models to obtain uni-dimensional construct measurement', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 453-60.

Anderson, JWT 1971, 'Identifying the convenience oriented consumer', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 179-83.

---- 1972, 'Convenience orientation and consumption behaviour', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 48, no. 3, pp. 49-127.

Andreassen, TW 2001, 'From disgust to delight: Do customers hold a grudge?' *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 39-49.

Antonides, G, Verhoef, PC & Aalst, MV 2002, 'Consumer perception and evaluation of waiting time: A field experiment', *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 193-202.

Armstrong, T, Bauman, A & Davies, J 2000, *Physical Activity Patterns of Australian Adults: Results of the 1999 National Physical Activity Survey*, Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, Canberra.

Athanassopoulos, A 2000, 'Customer satisfaction cues to support market segmentation and explain switching behaviour', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 47, no. 3, pp. 191-207.

Athanassopoulos, A, Gounaris, S & Stathakopoulos, V 2001, 'Behavioural responses to customer satisfaction: An empirical study', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 35, no. 5, pp. 687-707.

Azzalini, A 2005, 'The skew-normal distribution and related multivariate families', *Board of the Foundation of the Scandinavian Journal of Statistics*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 159-88.

Babakus, E & Boller, GW 1992, 'An empirical assessment of the SERVQUAL scale', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 253-68.

Babin, BJ, Lee, YK, Kim, EJ & Griffin, M 2005, 'Modelling consumer satisfaction and word-of-mouth restaurant patronage in Korea', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 133-9.

Backman, SJ & Crompton, JL 1991, 'The usefulness of selected variables for predicting activity loyalty', *Leisure Sciences*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 205-20.

Badri, MA, Davis, D & Davis, D 1995, 'A study of measuring the critical factors of quality management', *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 36-53.

Bagozzi, RP, Baumgartner, J & Yi, Y 1989, 'An investigation into the role of intentions as mediators of the attitude-behaviour relationship', *Journal of Economic Psychology*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 35-62.

Bagozzi, RP, Wong, N, Abe, S & Bergami, M 2000, 'Cultural and situational contingencies and the theory of reasoned action: Application to fast food restaurant consumption', *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 97-106.

Baker, DA & Crompton, JL 2000, 'Quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions', *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 785-804.

Baker, J & Cameron, M 1996, 'The effects of the service environment on affect and consumer perception of waiting time', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 338-49.

Balmer, JMT & Stotvig, S 1997, 'Corporate identity and private banking: A review and case study', *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 5, pp. 169-84.

Baron, RM & Kenny, DA 1986, 'The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations', *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, vol. 51, no. 6, pp. 1173-82.

Barsky, J 1992, 'Customer satisfaction in the hotel industry: Meaning and measurement', *The Hospitality Research Journal*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 20-41.

Bejou, D & Palmer, A 1998, 'Service failure and loyalty: An exploratory empirical study of airline customers', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 7-22.

Bellante, D & Foster, AC 1984, 'Working wives and expenditure on services', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 700-7.

Bellenger, DN & Korgaonkar, PK 1980, 'Profiling the recreational shopper', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 56, no. 3, pp. 77-92.

Bendall-Lyon, D & Powers, TL 2004, 'The impact of structure and process attributes on satisfaction and behavioural intentions', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 114-21.

Benway, S, Grover, R, Brott, J, Foust, D, Atchison, SD & Eklund, C 1987, 'Presto! The convenience industry: Making life a little simpler', *Business Week*, April 27, pp. 86-94.

Berk, RA 2004, *Regression Analysis: A Constructive Critique*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Berry, LL 1979, 'The time-buying consumer', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 55, no. 4, pp. 58-69.

Berry, LL & Cooper, LR 1990, 'Competing with time-saving service', *Business*, vol. 40, no. 2, pp. 3-7.

Berry, LL & Parasuraman, A 1991, *Marketing Services: Competing through Quality*, The Free Press/Macmillan, New York.

Berry, LL, Seiders, K & Grewal, D 2002, 'Understanding service convenience', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 66, no. 3, pp. 1-17.

Berry, WD & Feldman, S 1985, *Multiple Regression in Practice*, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, Calif.

Bhandari, MS & Polonsky, MJ 2007, 'The effects of differential methods of compensation and employee empowerment on customer satisfaction and loyalty in service recovery', paper presented to Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference (ANZMAC), University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, 3-5 December.

Biehal, G & Chakravarti, D 1986, 'Consumers use of memory and external information in choice: Macro and micro perspectives', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 382-405.

Bitner, MJ 1990, 'Evaluating service encounters: The effects of physical surroundings and employee responses', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 54, no. 2, pp. 69-82.

Bitner, MJ, Booms, BH & Tetreault, MS 1990, 'The service encounter: Diagnosing favourable and unfavourable incidents', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 54, no. 1, pp. 71-84.

Bitner, MJ & Hubbert, AR 1994, 'Encounter satisfaction versus overall satisfaction versus quality: The customer's voice', in RT Rust & RL Oliver (eds), *Service Quality: New Directions in Theory & Practice*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California, pp. 72-94.

Bittman, M & Wajcman, J 2000, 'The rush hour: The character of leisure time and gender equity', *Social Forces*, vol. 79, no. 1, pp. 165-89.

Blalock, HMJ 1970, 'Estimating measurement error using multiple indicators and several points in time', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 101-11.

Bloemer, J & de Ruyter, K 1998, 'On the relationship between store image, store satisfaction and store loyalty', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 32, no. 5/6, pp. 499 - 513.

Bloemer, J, de Ruyter, K & Peeters, P 1998, 'Investigating drivers of bank loyalty: The complex relationship between image, service quality and satisfaction', *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, vol. 16, no. 7, pp. 276-86.

Bloemer, J, de Ruyter, K & Wetzels, M 1999, 'Linking perceived service quality and service loyalty: A multi-dimensional perspective', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 33, no. 11/12, pp. 1082 - 106.

Bloemer, J, Odekerken-Schroder, G & Kestens, L 2003, 'The impact of need for social affiliation and consumer relationship proneness on behavioural intentions: An empirical study in a hairdresser's context', *Journal of Retailing & Consumer Services*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 231-40.

Bodey, K & Grace, D 2006, 'Segmenting service 'complainers' and 'non-complainers' on the basis of consumer characteristics', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 178-87.

Bone, PF 1995, 'Word-of-mouth effects on short-term and long-term product judgements', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 213-23.

Boshoff, C & Gray, B 2004, 'The relationships between service quality, customer satisfaction and buying intentions in the private hospital industry', *S. Afr.J.Bus.Management*, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 27-37.

Boulding, W, Kalra, A, Staelin, R & Zeithaml, VA 1993, 'A dynamic process model of service quality: From expectations to behavioural intentions', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 7-27.

Bowen, DE, Gilliland, SW & Folger, GR 1999, 'HRM and service fairness: How being fair with employees spills over to customers', *Organisational Dynamics*, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 7-23.

Bowen, JT & Shoemaker, S 1998, 'Loyalty: A strategic commitment', *Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 12-25.

Boyd, L & Nielsen, CC 1989, 'Factors affecting health club attendance: A comparison of simple and elaborate settings', *J Sports Med Phys Fitness*, vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 310-3.

Bray, JH & Maxwell, SE 1985, *Multivariate Analysis of Variance*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills.

Bright, AD 2003, 'Preferences for recreation facility development: A within-subjects/multiple behaviour alternatives analysis of the theory of reasoned action', *Leisure Science*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 327–40.

Brislin, RW 1980, 'Translation and content analysis of oral and written material', in HC Triandis & JW Berry (eds), *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Ally & Bacon, Boston, vol. 2, pp. 389-444.

---- 1986, 'The wording and translation of research instruments', in WJ Lonner & JW Berry (eds), *Field Methods in Cross-Cultural Research*, Sage, Beverly Hills, CA.

Bristor, JM 1990, 'Enhanced explanations of word-of-mouth communications: The power of relationships', in EC Hirschman (ed.), *Research in Consumer Behaviour*, JAI Press, Greenwich, CT, pp. 51-83.

Brown, LG 1989, 'The strategic and tactical implications of convenience in consumer product marketing', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 13-9.

---- 1990, 'Convenience in services marketing', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 53-9.

Brown, LG & McEnally, MR 1991, 'Exploring the construct of convenience', in LK Robert (ed.), *Developments in Marketing Science*, vol. 14, pp. 41-5.

---- 1992, 'Convenience: Definition, structure and application', *The Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 47-56.

Bruwer, J 1997, 'Solving the ideal tenant mix puzzle for a proposed shopping centre: A practical research methodology', *Property Management*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 160-72.

Bryman, A 1989, *Research Methods and Organisation Studies*, Unwin Hyman, London.

Budhwar, K 2004, 'Understanding the success factors for independent restaurants in the Delhi/Gurgaon region: An analysis of the gap between management perceptions and customer expectations', *Journal of Services Research*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 7-44.

Burns, R, Graefe, AR & Absher, JD 2003, 'Alternative measurement approaches to recreational customer satisfaction: Satisfaction-only versus gap scores', *Leisure Sciences*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 363-80.

Butcher, K, Sparks, B & O'Callaghan, F 2002, 'Effect of social influence on repurchase intentions', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 16, no. 6, pp. 503-14.

Buttle, FA 1998, 'Word-of-mouth: Understanding and managing referral marketing', *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 241-54.

Campbell, DT & Fiske, DW 1959, 'Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix', *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 56, no. 2, pp. 81-105.

Canada Fitness Survey, 1983, Factors that would Encourage Activity, Fitness & Amateur Sport, Ottawa.

Candel, M 2001, 'Consumers' convenience orientation towards meal preparation: Conceptualisation and measurement', *Appetite*, vol. 36, no. 1, pp. 15-28.

Carmen, JM 1990, 'Consumer perceptions of service quality: An assessment of the SERVQUAL dimensions', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 66, no. 1, pp. 33-55.

Carmon, Z, Shanthikumar, JG & Carmon, TF 1995, 'A psychological perspective on service segmentation models: The significance of accounting for consumers' perceptions of waiting and service', *Management Science*, vol. 42, no. 11, pp. 1806-15.

Carrigan, M & Szmigin, I 2004, 'Time, uncertainty and the expectancy experience: An interpretive exploration of consumption and impending motherhood', *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 20, no. 7/8, pp. 771-98.

Casado Diaz, AB & Mas Ruiz, FJ 2002, 'The consumer's reaction to delays in service', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 118-40.

Cavana, R, Delahaye, B & Sekaran, U 2001, *Applied Business Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*, John Wiley & Sons Australia, Qld.

Cavusgil, ST & Das, A 1997, 'Methodological issues in empirical cross-cultural research: A survey of the management literature and a framework', *Management International Review*, vol. 37, no. 1, pp. 71-96.

Centre for Population Health 1998, Promoting Physical Activity, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Champaign, IL.

Chandon, P & Wansink, B 2002, 'When are stockpiled products consumed faster? A convenience-salience framework of postpurchase consumption incidence and quantity', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 321-35.

Chang, Y-W, Polonsky, MJ & Junek, O 2007, 'A preliminary examination of Berry, Seiders and Grewal's (2002) five dimensional measure of convenience in a service setting', paper presented to Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference (ANZMAC), University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, 3-5 December.

Chelladurai, P 1992, 'A classification of sport and physical activity services: Implications for sport management', *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 38-51.

Chenet, P, Tynan, C & Money, A 1999, 'Service performance gap: Reevaluation and redevelopment', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 133-47.

Cherry, JAL 2000, *A Research Primer for the Helping Professions: Methods, Statistics, and Writing*, Wadsworth, Brooks/Cole, CT.

Chiang, CS 2000, *Fitness Centre's Facility and Management Study*, National Council on Physical Fitness & Sports, Taipei.

Choi, JP 2001, 'The influence of service quality on customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions at fitness clubs in South Korea', Doctoral thesis, The University of New Mexico.

Choi, S & Mattila, AS 2003, 'Hotel revenue management and its impact on customers' perceptions of fairness', *Journal of Revenue & Pricing Management*, vol. 2, no. 4, pp. 303-14.

Christansen, T & Tax, SS 2000, 'Measuring word-of-mouth: The questions of who and when', *Journal of Marketing Communications*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 185-99.

Christchurch City Council, 2002, Physical Recreation & Sport Strategy, Christchurch, NZ.

Chung, MYC 2000, 'How positively do they talk? An investigation on how self-promotion motive induces consumers to give positive word-of-mouth', Doctoral thesis, University of British Columbia (Canada).

Churchill, JrGA 1979, 'A paradigm for developing measures of marketing constructs', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 282-9.

Churchill, JrGA & Iacobucci, D 2004, *Marketing Research: Methodological Foundations*, 9th edn, Thomson South-Western, Mason, Ohio.

Churchill, JrGA & Surprenant, C 1982, 'An investigation into the determinants of customer satisfaction', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 491-504.

Coakes, SJ, Steed, LG & Price, J 2007, *SPSS Analysis Without Anguish*, John Wiley & Sons Australia, Milton, Qld.

Cohen, J 1988, *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioural Science*, 2nd edn, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, N.J.

Colwell, SR, Aung, M, Kanetkar, V & Holden, AL 2008, 'Toward a measure of service convenience: Multiple-item scale development and empirical test', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 160-9.

Converse, JM & Presser, S 1986, *Survey Questions: Handcrafting the Standardised Questionnaire*, SAGE Publications, Inc., Newbury Park, California.

Copeland, MT 1923, 'Relation of consumers' buying habits to marketing methods', *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 282-9.

Crick, D & Chaudhry, S 1996, 'Export behaviour of Asian and indigenous-owned SEMs in the UK clothing industry: A research note', *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 77-84.

Crompton, JL & MacKay, KJ 1989, 'Users' perceptions of the relative importance of service quality dimensions in selected public recreation programs', *Leisure Sciences*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 367-75.

Cronin, JrJJ, Brady, MK & Hult, GT 2000, 'Assessing the effects of quality, value and customer satisfaction on consumer behavioural intentions in service environments', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 76, no. 2, pp. 193-212.

Cronin, JJ & Taylor, SA 1992, 'Measuring service quality: A re-examination and extension', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 56, no. 3, pp. 55-68.

---- 1994, 'SERVPERF versus SERVQUAL: Reconciling performance-based and perception-minus-expectations measurement of service quality', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 58, no. 1, pp. 125-31.

Crossley, JC, Jamieson, LM & Brayley, RE 2001, *Introduction to Commercial Recreation and Tourism: An Entrepreneurial Approach*, 4th edn, Sagamore Pub., Champaign, Ill.

Danaher, PJ & Haddrell, V 1996, 'A comparison of question scales used for measuring customer satisfaction', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 4-26.

Danaher, PJ & Mattsson, J 1994, 'Customer satisfaction during the service delivery process', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 28, no. 5, pp. 5-16.

Darian, JC & Cohen, J 1995, 'Segmenting by consumer time shortage', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 32-44.

Davis, MM & Heineke, J 1998, 'How disconfirmation, perception and actual waiting times impact customer satisfaction', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 64-73.

Davis, MM & Vollmann, TE 1990, 'A framework for relating waiting time and customer satisfaction in a service operation', *The Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 61-9.

Day, GS 1969, 'A two-dimensional concept of brand loyalty', *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 29-35.

---- 1971, 'Attitude change, media and word-of-mouth', *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 11, no. 6, pp. 31-40.

Day, RL 1977, 'Extending the concept of consumer satisfaction', *Advance in Consumer Research*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 149-54.

de Ruyter, KD, Wetzels, M, Lemmink, J & Mattsson, J 1997, 'The dynamics of the service delivery process: A value-based approach', *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 231-43.

de Vasconcellos, MTL, do Nascimento Silva, PL & Szwarcwald, CL 2005, *Sampling Design for the World Health Survey in Brazil*, Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, Cad Saude Publica. , Rio de Janeiro.

De Vaus, DA 2002, *Surveys in Social Research*, 5th edn, Allen & Unwin, St. Leonards, N.S.W.

Dellaert, B & Kahn, BE 1999, 'How tolerable is delay? Consumers' evaluations of Internet web sites after waiting', *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 41-54.

DeVellis, RF 2003, *Scale Development: Theory and Applications*, 2nd edn, vol. 26, Sage Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, California.

Devlin, SJ, Dong, HK & Brown, M 1993, 'Selecting a scale for measuring quality', *Marketing Research*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 12-7.

Dhurup, M, Singh, C & Surujlal, J 2006, 'Application of the health and fitness service quality scale (HAFSQ) in determining the relationship among service quality, satisfaction and loyalty in the service industry', *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation & Dance (AJPHERD)*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 238-51.

Dick, AS & Basu, K 1994, 'Customer loyalty: Towards and integrated framework', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 99-113.

Dillon, WR, Madden, TJ & Firtle, NH 1993, *Essentials of Marketing Research* Irwin, Homewood, IL.

Dishman, RK 2001, 'The problem of exercise adherence: Fighting sloth in nations with market economies', *QUEST: The Academy Papers*, vol. 53, no. 3, pp. 279-84.

Douglas, SP 1976, 'Cross-national comparisons and consumer stereotypes: A case study of working and non-working wives in US and France', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 12-20.

Dube-Rioux, L, Schmitt, BH & Leclerc, F 1989, 'Consumers' reaction to waiting: When delays affect the perception of service quality', *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 59-63.

Dube, L, Renaghan, LM & Miller, JM 1994, 'Measuring customer satisfaction for strategic management', *Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 39-47.

Duhan, DF, Johnson, SD, Wilcox, JB & Harrell, GD 1997, 'Influences on consumer use of word-of-mouth recommendation sources', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 283-95.

Durrande-Moreau, A & Usunier, JC 1999, 'Time styles and the waiting experience', *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 173-86.

East, R, Hammond, K, Lomax, W & Robinson, H 2005, 'What is the effect of a recommendation? ' *The Marketing Review*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 145-57.

Economist 2003, 'Make it convenient', *Economist*, vol. 369, no. 8354, pp. 1-3.

Ennew, CT, Reed, GV & Binks, M 1993, 'Importance-performance analysis and the measurement of service quality', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 59-70.

Ettenson, R & Turner, K 1997, 'An exploratory investigation of consumer decision making for selected professional and nonprofessional services', *The Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 91-104.

Etgar, M 1978, 'The household as a production unit', in NS Jagdish (ed.), *Research in Marketing*, JAI Press, Greenwich, CT, vol. 1, pp. 79-98.

Evans, M, Patterson, M, O'Malley, L & Mitchell, S 1997, 'Consumer reactions to database-based supermarket loyalty schemes', *Journal of Database Marketing*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 307-20.

File, KM, Judd, BB & Prince, RA 1992, 'Interactive marketing: The influence of participation on positive word-of-mouth referrals', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 5-14.

Fine, SH 1981, 'Beyond money: The concept of social price', in JH Donnelly & WR George (eds), *Marketing of Services*, AMA: American Marketing Association, Chicago, pp. 113-6.

Fink, A 2006, *How to Conduct Interviews: A Step-by-Step Guide*, Sage Publications, London.

Fishbein, M & Ajzen, I 1975, *Belief, Attitude, Intention, and Behaviour: An Introduction to Theory & Research*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.

Fitness of Australians 1992, Pilot Survey of the Fitness of Australians, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

Flavian, C, Torres, E & Guinaliu, M 2004, 'Corporate image measurement: a further problem for the tangibilisation of Internet banking services', *The International Journal of Bank Marketing*, vol. 22, no. 5, pp. 366-84.

Fornell, C 1992, 'A national customer satisfaction barometer: The Swedish experience', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 56, no. 1, pp. 6-21.

Fraenkel, JR & Wallen, NE 2006, *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*, 6th edn, McGraw-Hill, Boston.

Fram, EH & DuBrin, A 1988, 'The time guarantee in action: Some trends and opportunities', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 53-60.

Franklin, JC 1997, 'Industry output and employment projection to 2006', *Monthly Labour Review*, vol. 120, no. 11, pp. 39-57.

Gail, T & Scott, L 1995, 'Waiting time delays and customer satisfaction in supermarkets', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 9, no. 5, pp. 20-9.

Gandhi-Arora, R & Shaw, RN 2002, 'Visitor loyalty in sport tourism: An empirical investigation', paper presented to Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference (ANZMAC), Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia, 2-4 December.

Gehrt, KC & Yale, LJ 1993, 'The dimensionality of the convenience phenomenon: A qualitative re-examination', *Journal of Business & Psychology*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 163-80.

Gehrt, KC, Yale, LJ & Lawson, DA 1996, 'The convenience of catalog shopping: Is there more to it than time?' *Journal of Direct Marketing*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 19-28.

Geissler, GL 2002, 'Targeting a niche market of pet owners: Consumer evaluation of a mobile veterinarian's service concept', *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 74-84.

Gerbing, DW & Anderson, JC 1988, 'An updated paradigm for scale development incorporating unidimensionality and its assessment', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 186-92.

Gerrard, P & Cunningham, TB 2004, 'Consumer switching behaviour in the Asian banking market', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 215-23.

Getty, JM & Thompson, KN 1994, 'The relationship between quality, satisfaction and recommending behaviour in lodging decision', *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 3-22.

Giese, JJ & Cote, JA 2002, 'Defining consumer satisfaction', *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, vol. 2000, no. 1, pp. 1-24.

Gitelson, RJ & Crompton, JL 1984, 'Insights into the repeat vacation phenomenon', *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 199-217.

Gliem, JA & Gliem, RR 2003, 'Calculating interpreting, and reporting Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for Likert-type scales', paper presented to Midwest Research to Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing & Community Education.

Gnoth, J 1995, 'Quality of service and tourist satisfaction', in SF Witt & L Moutinho (eds), *Tourism Marketing & Management Handbook*, [Student] edn, Prentice Hall, London, pp. 243-54.

Gottlieb, J, Grewal, D & Brown, SW 1994, 'Consumer satisfaction and perceived quality: Complementary or divergent constructs', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 79, no. 6, pp. 875-85.

Grace, D 2005, 'Consumer disposition toward satisfaction (CDS): Scale development and validation', *Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 20-31.

Grace, D & O'Cass, A 2004, 'Examining service experiences and post-consumption evaluations', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 18, no. 6, pp. 450-61.

Gratton, C & Jones, I 2004, *Research Methods for Sport Studies*, Rutledge, New York.

Green, S & Boshoff, C 2002, 'An empirical assessment of the relationships between service quality, satisfaction and value: A tourism study', *Management Dynamics*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 1-16.

Greenacre, L, Burke, PF & Denize, S 2006, 'Important information in word-of-mouth communication: Acquisition vs. dissemination', paper presented to Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC), Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia, 4-6 December.

Gremler, DD & Brown, SW 1996, 'Service loyalty: Its nature, importance, and implications', in B Edvardsson (ed.), *Advancing Service Quality: A Global Perspective*, Service Quality Association, pp. 171-80.

Gremler, DD, Gwinner, KP & Brown, SW 2001, 'Generating positive word-of-mouth communication through customer-employee relationships', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 44-59.

Gronroos, C 1990, *Service Management and Marketing: Managing the Moment of Truth in Service Competition*, Lexington Books, Lexington, MASS.

Gross, BL 1987, 'Time scarcity: Interdisciplinary perspectives and implications for consumer behaviour', in JN Sheth & EC Hirschman (eds), *Research in Consumer Behaviour*, JAI Press Inc. , Greenwich, CT, vol. 2, pp. 1-54.

Gross, BL & Sheth, JN 1989, 'Time-oriented advertising: A content analysis of United States magazine advertising 1980-1988', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 53, no. October, pp. 76-83.

Gruen, TW, Osmonbekov, T & Czaplewski, AJ 2006, 'eWOM: The impact of customer-to-customer online know-how exchange on customer value and loyalty', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 59, no. 4, pp. 449-56.

Guillard, MC 2006, 'A visual essay: International labour market comparisons', *Monthly Labour Review*, vol. 129, no. 4, pp. 33-40.

Gunn, WJ & Rhodes, IN 1981, 'Physician response rates to a telephone survey: Effects of monetary incentive level', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 109-15.

Gur-Arie, R 1992, 'The importance of the appropriate segmentation approach and strategic fit between users and clubs in the health club industry: A theoretical framework and an empirical examination ', Doctoral thesis, University of Illinois.

Haahti, A & Yavas, U 2005, 'The effects of customer satisfaction with leisure services on behavioural intentions: A study of visitors to SantaPark in Lapland', *Services Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 1-12.

Hair, JE, Black, WC, Babin, BJ, Anderson, RE & Tatham, RL 2006, *Multivariate Data Analysis*, 6th edn, Pearson Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

Haksever, C, Render, B, Russell, RS & Murdick, RG 2000, *Service Management and Operations*, Prentice-Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

Halstead, D, Hartman, D & Schmidt, SL 1994, 'Multi-source effects on the satisfaction formation process', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 114-29.

Hambleton, RK 1993, 'Translating achievement tests for use in cross-national studies', *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 57-68.

Hanlan, J & Kelly, S 2005, 'Image formation, information sources and an iconic Australia tourist destination', *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 163-77.

Hansen, M & Weinberg, C 1977, 'Retail market share in a competitive market', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 55, no. 1, pp. 37-46.

Hart, CWL, Hesket, J & Sasser, WE 1990, 'The profitable art of service recovery', *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 68, no. 4, pp. 148-56.

Haywood, KM 1989, 'Managing word-of-mouth communications', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 55-67.

Heath, C 1996, 'Do people prefer to pass along good or bad news? Valence and relevance of news as predictors of transmission propensity', *Organisational Behavioural & Human Decision Processes*, vol. 68, no. 2, pp. 79-94.

Hede, A-M 2004, 'A conceptual and empirical investigation of the determinants of consumer satisfaction within the context of special events: Attribute and value-based perspectives', Doctoral thesis, Victoria University.

Hellier, PK, Geursen, GM, Carr, RA & Rickard, JA 2003, 'Customer repurchase intention: A general structural equation model', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 37, no. 11/12, pp. 1762-800.

Henkel, RE 1976, *Tests of Significance*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, Calif.

Henricks, M 1998, 'Spread the word', *Entrepreneur Magazine*, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 120-5.

Herr, PM, Kardes, FR & Kim, J 1991, 'Effects of word-of-mouth and product-attribute information on persuasion: An accessibility-diagnosticity perspective', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 454-62.

Heskett, JL, Sasser, WEJ & Schlesinger, LA 1997, *The Service Profit Chain*, The Free Press, New York.

Heung, VCS 2000, 'Satisfaction levels of mainland Chinese travellers with Hong Kong hotel services', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, vol. 12, no. 5, pp. 308-15.

Hightower, R, Brady, MK & Baker , TL 2002, 'Investigating the role of the physical environment in hedonic service consumption: An exploratory study of sporting events', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 55, no. 9, pp. 697-707.

Hill, HD 2003, *Time, Gender, and Distrust: Why Couples Argue about Leisure*, Northwestern University, Boston, Massachusetts.

Hirvensalo, M, Lampinen, P & Rantanen, T 2000, 'The continuity of physical activity – a retrospective and prospective study among older people ', *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 37 - 41.

Holloway, RJ 1967, 'An experiment on consumer dissonance', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 31, no. 1, pp. 39-43.

Holmbeck, GN 1997, 'Toward terminological, conceptual, and statistical clarity in the study of mediators and moderators: Examples from the child-clinical and pediatric psychology literatures', *Journal of Clinical & Consulting Psychology*, vol. 65, no. 4, pp. 599-610.

Hom, W 2000, 'An overview of customer satisfaction models', paper presented to 38th Annual RP Group Conference, CA.

Hornik, J 1984, 'Subjective vs. objective time measures: A note on the perception of time in consumer behaviour', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 615-8.

---- 1993, 'The role of affect in consumers' temporal judgments', *Psychology & Marketing*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 239-55.

Huang, CH & Smith, K 1996, 'Complaint management: Customer's attributions regarding service disconfirmation in restaurants', *Journal of Restaurant & Foodservice Marketing*, vol. 1, no. 3/4, pp. 121-34.

Hudson, S, Hudson, P & Miller, GA 2004, 'The measurement of service quality in the tour operating sector: A methodological comparison', *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 42, no. 3, pp. 305-12.

Hui, MK, Thakor, MV & Gill, R 1998, 'The effect of delay type and service stage on consumers' reactions to waiting', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 469-79.

Hui, MK & Tse, DK 1996, 'What to tell consumers in waits of different lengths', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 60, no. 2, pp. 81-90.

Hunt, HK 1977, 'CS/D: Overview and future research directions', in *Conceptualisation and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction*, Marketing Science Institute, Cambridge, MA, pp. 455-88.

International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) 2005, viewed 17 September 2006, <http://cms.ihrsa.org/IHRSA/>.

J.D. Power & Associates, 2006, In-Person Transaction Experience Drives Customer Satisfaction with Retail Banking, Westlake Village, Calif.

Jaccard, J & Turrisi, R 2003, *Interaction Effects in Multiple Regression*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Jayanti, R & Jackson, A 1991, 'Service satisfaction: An exploratory investigation of three models', *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 603-10.

Jobber, D & Sanderson, S 1983, 'The effects of a prior letter and coloured questionnaire paper on mail survey response rates', *Journal of the Market Research Society*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 339-49.

Johnston, R & Fern, A 1999, 'Service recovery strategies for single and double deviation scenarios', *The Service Industries Journal*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 69-82.

Jones, MA, Mothersbaugh, DL & Beatty, SE 2000, 'Switching barriers and repurchase intentions in services', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 70, no. 2, pp. 259-74.

---- 2003, 'The effects of locational convenience on customer repurchase intentions across service types', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 17, no. 7, pp. 701-12.

Jones, MA & Suh, J 2000, 'Transaction-specific satisfaction and overall satisfaction: An empirical analysis', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 147-59.

Jones, P & Peppiatt, E 1996, 'Managing perceptions of waiting times in service queues', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 7, no. 5, pp. 47-61.

Jones, TO & Sasser, JWE 1995, 'Why satisfied customers defect', *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 73, no. 6, pp. 88-99.

Kandampully, J & Suhartanto, D 2000, 'Customer loyalty in the hotel industry: The role of customer satisfaction and image', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, vol. 12, no. 6, pp. 346-51.

Karatepe, O, Yavas, U & Babakus, E 2005, 'Measuring service quality of banks: Scale development and validation', *Journal of Retailing & Consumer Services*, vol. 12, no. 5, pp. 373-83.

Katz, KL, Larson, BM & Larson, RC 1991, 'Prescription for waiting-in-line blues: Entertain, enlighten and engage', *Sloan Management Review*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 44-53.

Kaufman, BE 1986, *The Economics of Labour Markets and Labour Relations*, The Dryden Press, Chicago.

Kaufman, CJ 1990, 'Usage verse ownership: Suggestions', *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 23-30.

Keaveney, SM 1995, 'Customer switching behaviour in service industries: An exploratory study', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 59, no. 2, pp. 71-82.

Keller, E & Kite, J 2006, *When Words Speak Louder than Actions: The Power of Conversation and How to Measure it*, The Keller Fay Group MediaVest.

Kelley, EJ 1958, 'The importance of convenience in consumer purchasing', *The Journal of Marketing*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 32-8.

Kinnear, TC & Taylor, JR 1996, *Marketing Research: An Applied Approach* 5th edn, McGraw-Hill, New York.

Ko, YJ 2000, 'A multi-dimensional and hierarchical model of service quality in the participant sport industry', Doctoral thesis, The Ohio State University.

Kotler, P & Zaltman, G 1971, 'Social marketing: An approach to planned social change', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 35, no. 3, pp. 3-12.

Kouthouris, C & Alexandris, K 2005, 'Can service quality predict customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions in the sport tourism industry? An application of the SERVQUAL model in an outdoors setting', *Journal of Sport Tourism*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 101-11.

Kraus, R 2001, *Recreation and Leisure in Modern Society*, 6th edn, Jones & Bartlett Publishers, Boston.

Kumar, P 2005, 'The competitive impact of service process improvement: Examining customers' waiting experiences in retail markets', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 81, no. 3, pp. 171-80.

Kumar, P, Kalwani, MU & Dada, M 1997, 'The impact of waiting time guarantees on consumer waiting experiences', *Marketing Science*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 295-314.

LaBarabera, PA & Mazursky, D 1983, 'A longitudinal assessment of customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction: The dynamic aspect of the cognitive process', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 393-404.

Laflin, L 1999, 'Planning a successful research project', *Marketing News*, vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 21-.

Lagrosen, S & Lagrosen, Y 2007, 'Exploring service quality in the health and fitness industry', *Managing Service Quality*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 41-53.

Lam, D & Mizerski, D 2005, 'The effects of locus of control on word-of-mouth communication', *Journal of Marketing Communications*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 215-28.

Larsson, R 1993, 'Case study methodology: Quantitative analysis of patterns across case studies', *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 36, no. 6, pp. 1515-64.

Leclerc, F, Schmitt, BH & Dube, L 1995, 'Waiting time and decision making: Is time like money?' *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 110-9.

Lee, YH & Chen, TL 2006, 'A Kano two-dimensional quality model in Taiwan's hot spring hotels service quality evaluations', *The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 301-6.

Leistriz, L, Ayres, J & Stone, K 1992, 'Revitalising the retail trade sector in rural communities lessons from three Midwestern states', *Economic Development Review*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 49-54.

Levesque, T & McDougall, GHG 1996, 'Determinants of customer satisfaction in retail banking', *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, vol. 14, no. 7, pp. 12-20.

Levine, JH 1993, *Exceptions are the Rule: An Inquiry into Methods in the Social Science*, Westview Press, Boulder.

Lewis-Beck, MS 1980, *Applied Regression: An Introduction*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, Calif.

Liljander, V & Strandvik, T 1997, 'Emotions in service satisfaction', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 148-69.

Liu, BS, Sudharshan, D & Hamer, LO 2000, 'After-service response in service quality assessment: A real-time updating model approach', *Journal of Service Marketing*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 160-77.

Liu, BS, Furrer, O & Sudharshan, D 2001, 'the relationships between culture and behavioural intentions toward services', *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 118-29.

Lovelock, CH 1984, *Services Marketing*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Lovelock, CH, Patterson, PG & Walker, RH 1998, *Services Marketing: Australia and New Zealand*, Prentice Hall, Sydney.

Luqmani, M, Yavas, U & Quraeshi, ZA 1994, 'A convenience-oriented approach to country segmentation: Implications for global marketing', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 29-41.

Madrigal, R 1995, 'Cognitive and affective determinants of fan satisfaction with sporting event attendance', *Journal of Leisure Research*, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 205-27.

Maister, DH 1985, 'The psychology of waiting lines', in JA Czepiel, MR Solomon & CF Surprenant (eds), *The Service Encounter*, Lexington Books, Lexington, MA, pp. 113-23.

Malhotra, N, Hall, J, Shaw, M & Oppenheim, P 2005, *Marketing Research : An Applied Orientation* 3_{rd} [Australian] edn, Pearson/Prentice Hall, Frenchs Forest, N.S.W.

Marney, J 1995, 'Selling in tongues', *Marketing Magazine*, vol. 100, no. 38, p. 14.

Marquis, M 2005, 'Exploring convenience orientation as a food motivation for college students living in residence halls', *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 55-63.

Martilla, JA & James, JC 1977, 'Importance-performance analysis', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 77-9.

Mason, DM, Tideswell, C & Roberts, E 2006, 'Guest perceptions of hotel loyalty', *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 191-206.

Mason, J 2002, *Qualitative Researching*, 2nd edn, Sage, London.

---- 2006, 'Mixing methods in a qualitatively driven way ', *Qualitative Research*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 9-25.

Mattila, A 2004, 'The impact of service failures on customer loyalty: The moderating role of affective commitment', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 134-49.

---- 2005, 'Relationship between seamless use experience, customer satisfaction and recommendation', *Problems & Perspectives in Management*, vol. 2005, no. 1, pp. 96-108.

Maxham III, JG & Netemeyer, RG 2002a, 'A longitudinal study of complaining customers' evaluations of multiple service failures and recovery efforts', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 66, no. 4, pp. 57-71.

---- 2002b, 'Modelling customer perceptions of complaint handling over time: The effects of perceived justice on satisfaction and intent', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 78, no. 4, pp. 239-52.

McColl, R, Callaghan, B & Palmer, A 1998, *Services Marketing: A Managerial Perspective*, McGraw-Hill Book Company Australia Pty Limited, NSW.

McCollough, MA & Gremler, DD 2004, 'A conceptual model and empirical examination of the effect of service guarantees on post-purchase consumption evaluations', *Managing Services Quality*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 58-74.

McGill, AL & Lacobucci, D 1992, 'The role of post-experience comparison standards in the evaluation of unfamiliar services', *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 570-8.

McLain, A 2006, *Convenience Guarantees Customers, Not Loyalty*, Vox, Inc.

McQuilken, L, Breth, R & Shaw, RN 2002, 'Satisfaction, complaining behaviour and repurchase: An empirical study of a subscription service', paper presented to Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference (ANZMAC), Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia, 2-4 December.

Mehmetoglu, M 2004, 'Quantitative or qualitative? A content analysis of nordic research in tourism and hospitality', *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 176-89.

Michel, S 2001, 'Analysing service failures and recoveries: A process approach', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 20-33.

Miller, JA 1977, 'Studying satisfaction, modifying models, eliciting expectations, posing problem, and making meaningful measurements', in HK Hunt (ed.), *Conceptualisation and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction*, School of Business, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, pp. 72-91.

Mitra, K, Reiss, MC & Capella, LM 1999, 'An examination of perceived risk, information search and behavioural intentions in search, experience and credence services', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 208-28.

Mittal, V & Kamakura, WA 2001, 'Satisfaction, repurchase intent and repurchase behaviour: Investigating the moderating effect of customer characteristics', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 38, no. 1, pp. 131-42.

Mittal, V, Kumar, P & Tsiros, M 1999, 'Attribute-level performance, satisfaction and behavioural intentions over time: A consumption system approach', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 63, no. 2, pp. 88-101.

Mols, NP 1998, *IT-Based Distribution Channels in Retail Banking*, University of Aarhus, Aarhus C. Denmark.

Morais, D, Kerstetter, D, Lin, YS & Mowen, AJ 2006, 'Resource investments made between customers and provider: A study of teenagers' loyalty to a summer camp', *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 1-12.

Morganosky, MA 1986, 'Cost- versus convenience-oriented consumers: Demographic lifestyle and value perspectives', *Psychology & Marketing*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 35-46.

Moutinho, L & Smith, A 2000, 'Modelling bank customer satisfaction through mediation of attitudes towards human and automated banking', *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 124-34.

Mudie, P & Cottam, A 1999, *The Management and Marketing of Services*, 2nd edn, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.

Mullen, MR 1995, 'Diagnosing measurement equivalence in cross-national research', *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 573-96.

Mullet, GM & Karson, MJ 1985, 'Analysis of purchase intent scales weighted by probability of actual purchase', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 93-6.

Murphy, PE & Enis, BM 1986, 'Classifying products strategically', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 50, no. 3, pp. 24-42.

Murray, KB 1991, 'A test of services marketing theory: Consumer information acquisition activities', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 55, no. 1, pp. 10-25.

Murray, KB & Schlacter, JL 1990, 'The impact of services versus goods on consumers' assessment of perceived risk and variability', *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 51-65.

Nam, S, Manchanda, P & Chintagunta, PK 2006, 'The effects of service quality and word-of-mouth on customer acquisition, retention and usage for a new technology', paper presented to INFORMS Marketing Science Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.

Nelson, E 2000, 'Big retailers try to speed up check out lines', *The Wall Street Journal*, p. B1.

Neuman, WL 2006, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 6th edn, Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, Boston.

Ngobo, PV 2004, 'Drivers of customers' cross-buying intentions', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 38, no. 9/10, pp. 1129-57.

Nicholls, JAF, Gilbert, GR & Roslow, S 1998, 'Parsimonious measurement of customer satisfaction with personal service and the service setting', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 239-53.

Nickols, SY & Fox, KD 1983, 'Buying time and saving time: Strategies for managing household production', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 197-208.

Nunnally, JC & Bernstein, IH 1994, *Psychometric Theory*, 3$_{rd}$ edn, McGraw-Hill, Inc., New York.

Nyer, PU & Gopinath, M 2005, 'Effects of complaining versus negative word-of-mouth on subsequent changes in satisfaction: The role of public commitment', *Psychology & Marketing*, vol. 22, no. 12, pp. 937-53.

Nykiel, RA 2001, 'Technology, convenience and consumption', *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 79-84.

O'Shaughnessy, J 1987, *Why People Buy*, Oxford University Press, New York.

Odekerken-Schröder, G, van Birgelen, M, Lemmink, J, de Ruyter, K & Wetzels, M 2000, 'Moments of sorrow and joy: An empirical assessment of the complementary value of critical incidents in understanding customer service evaluations', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 34, no. 1/2, pp. 107 – 25.

Oh, H 2005, 'Measuring affective reactions to print apparel advertisements: A scale development' *Journal of Fashion Marketing & Management*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 283-305.

Okada, EM & Hoch, SJ 2004, 'Spending time versus spending money', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 31, no. 2, pp. 313-23.

Oliver, RL 1980, 'A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 46-9.

---- 1987, 'An investigation of the interrelationship between consumer (dis)satisfaction and complaint reports', *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 218-22.

---- 1993a, 'A conceptual model of service quality and service satisfaction: Compatible, goals, different concepts', in TA Swartz, DE Bowen & SW Brown (eds), *Advances in Services Marketing and Management: Research & Practice*, JAI Press, Greenwich, CT, vol. 2, pp. 65-85.

---- 1993b, 'Cognitive, affective and attribute bases of the satisfaction response', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 418-30.

---- 1997, *Satisfaction: A Behavioural Perspective on the Consumer*, Irwin/McGraw-Hill, New York.

---- 1999, 'Whence consumer loyalty?' *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 63, no. 4, pp. 33-44.

Oliver, RL & Desarbo, WS 1988, 'Response determinants in satisfaction judgements', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 495-507.

Oliver, RL & Winer, RS 1987, 'A framework for the formation and structure of consumer expectations: Review and propositions', *Journal of Economic Psychology*, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 469-99.

Olkin, I & Finn, JD 1995, 'Correlations redux', *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 118, no. 1, pp. 155-64.

Olorunniwo, F & Hsu, MK 2006, 'A typology analysis of service quality, customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions in mass services', *Managing Service Quality*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 106-23.

Olorunniwo, F, Hsu, MK & Udo, GJ 2006, 'Service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions in the service factory', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 59-72.

Oppermann, M 1999, 'Predicting destination choice: A discussion of destination loyalty', *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 51-65.

---- 2000, 'Tourism destination loyalty', *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 78-84.

Page, C & Meyer, D 2000, *Applied Research Design for Business and Management*, Irwin/McGraw-Hill, Sydney.

Pallant, J 2005, *SPSS Survival Manual: A Step by Step Guide to Data Analysis Using SPSS*, 2nd edn, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, Australia.

Papadimitriou, DA & Karteliotis, K 2000, 'The service quality expectations in private sport and fitness centres: A re-examination of the factor structure', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 158-64.

Parasuraman, A, Zeithaml, VA & Berry, LL 1994, *Moving Forward in Service Quality Research: Measuring Different Customer-Expectation Levels, Comparing Alternative Scales, and Examining the Performance-Behavioural Intentions Link*, 94-114, Cambridge, MA.

Patterson, PG & Spreng, RA 1997, 'Modelling the relationship between perceived value, satisfaction and repurchase intentions in a business-to-business, services context: An empirical examination', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 8, no. 5, pp. 414-34.

Petrick, JF 2002, 'Development of a multi-dimensional scale for measuring the perceived value of a service', *Journal of Leisure Research*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 119-34.

Petrick, JF & Backman, SJ 2002, 'An examination of the determinants of golf travellers' satisfaction', *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 40, no. 3, pp. 252-8.

Pham, K-QV & Simpson, M 2006, 'The impact of frequency of use on service quality expectations: An empirical study of Trans-Atlantic airline passengers', *The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 1-6.

Pizam, A & Ellis, T 1999, 'Customer satisfaction and its measurement in hospitality enterprises', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, vol. 11, no. 7, pp. 326-39.

Polonsky, MJ 1998, 'Incorporating ethics into business students' research projects: A process approach', *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 17, no. 11, pp. 1227-41.

Polonsky, MJ 1999, 'Applicability of the stakeholder strategy matrix to marketing', Doctoral thesis, Australian Catholic University.

Polonsky, MJ & Waller, DS 2005, *Designing and Managing A Research Project: A Business Student's Guide*, Sage Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Pritchard, MD, Howard, DR & Havitz, ME 1992, 'Loyalty measurement: A critical examination and theoretical extension', *Leisure Sciences*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 155-64.

Pruyn, A & Smidts, A 1998, 'Effects of waiting on the satisfaction with the service: Beyond objective time measures', *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 321-34.

Ramaswamy, R 1996, *Design and Management of Service Processes: Keeping Customers for Life*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., MA.

Ranaweera, C & Prabhu, J 2003, 'On the relative importance of customer satisfaction and trust as determinants of customer retention and positive word-of-mouth', *Journal of Targeting, Measurement & Analysis for Marketing*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 82-90.

Randy, S 1991, 'Customer service: A waiting game', *Marketing*, 11 March, pp. 1-3.

Ravichandran, T & Rai, A 2000, 'Total quality management in information systems development: Key constructs and relationships', *Journal of Management Information Systems*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 119-55.

Reilly, M 1982, 'Working wives and convenience consumption', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 407-18.

Reimers, V & Clulow, V 2000, *Shopping and Convenience: A Model for Retail Centres*, Monash University, Melbourne.

---- 2004, 'Retail concentration: A comparison of spatial convenience in shopping strips and shopping centres', *Journal of Retailing & Consumer Services*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 207-21.

Reynolds, N, Diamantopoulos, A & Schlegelmilch, B 1993, 'Pre-testing in questionnaire design: A review of the literature and suggestions for further research', *Journal of the Market Research Society*, vol. 35, no. 2, pp. 171-82.

Rhoades, DL & Jr.Waguespack, B 2004, 'Service and safety quality in US airlines: Pre- and post- September 11th', *Managing Service Quality*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 307 - 16.

Richard, FF & Sasser, WE 1990, 'Zero defections: Quality comes to services', *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 68, no. 5, pp. 105-11.

Robinson, JO & Nicosia, FM 1991, 'Of time, activity and consumer behaviour: An essay on findings, interpretations and needed research', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 171-86.

Roscoe, JT 1975, *Fundamental Research Statistics for the Behavioural Sciences*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York.

Rosen, LD, Karwan, KR & Scribner, LL 2003, 'Service quality measurement and the disconformation model: Taking care in interpretation', *Total Quality Management*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 3-14.

Rowe, K 2006, *The Measurement of Composite Variables from Multiple Indicators: Applications in Quality Assurance & Accreditation Systems-Childcare*, Australian Council for Educational Research, Victoria.

Ryan, C 1999, 'From the psychometrics of SERVQUAL to sex: Measurements of tourist satisfaction', in A Pizam & Y Mansfeld (eds), *Consumer Behaviour in Travel & Tourism*, The Haworth Hospitality Press, NY, pp. 267-86.

Sachdev, SB & Verma, HV 2004, 'Relative importance of service quality dimensions: A multisectoral study', *Journal of Services Research*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 93-116.

Samson, A 2006, 'Understanding the buzz that matters: Negative vs. positive word-of-mouth', *International Journal of Market Research*, vol. 48, no. 6, pp. 647-57.

Santos, J & Boote, J 2003, 'A theoretical exploration and model of consumer expectations, post-purchase affective states and affective behaviour', *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 142-56.

Saraph, JV, Benson, PG & Schroeder, RG 1989, 'An instrument for measuring the critical factors of quality management', *Decision Sciences*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 810-29.

Sathye, M 1999, 'Adoption of internet banking by Australian consumers: An empirical investigation', *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, vol. 17, no. 7, pp. 324-34.

Sawyer, TH & Smith, O 1999, *The Management of Clubs, Recreation, and Sport: Concepts & Applications*, Sagamore Publishing, Champaign, Ill.

Schaninger, C & Allen, C 1981, 'Wife's occupational status as a consumer behaviour construct', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 189-96.

Schneider, B & Bowen, D 1999, 'Understanding customer delight and outrage', *MIT Sloan Management Review*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 35-45.

Scholderer, J & Grunert, KG 2005, 'Consumers, food and convenience: The long way from resource constraints to actual consumption patterns', *Journal of Economic Psychology*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 105-28.

Seiders, K & Berry, LL 1998, 'Service fairness: What it is and why it matters', *Academy of Management Executive*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 8-21.

Seiders, K, Berry, LL & Gresham, LG 2000, 'Attention, retailers! How convenient is your convenience strategy?' *Sloan Management Review*, vol. 43, no. 3, pp. 79-89.

Seiders, K, Voss, GB, Godfrey, AL & Grewal, D 2007, 'SERVCON: Development and validation of a multi-dimensional service convenience scale', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 144-56.

Sethi, V & King, WR 1991, 'Construct measurement in information systems research: An illustration in strategic systems', *Decision Sciences*, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 455-63.

Shaheed, A 2004, 'How convenience has changed the nation', *Brand Strategy*, vol. May, no. 182, pp. 44-6.

Shammout, AB, Polonsky, MJ & Edwardson, M 2007, 'Relational bonds and loyalty: The bonds that tie', paper presented to Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC), University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, 3-5 December.

Sheppard, BH, Hartwick, J & Warshaw, PR 1988, 'The theory of reasoned action: A meta-analysis of past research with recommendations for modifications and future research', *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 325-43.

Sheu, C, McHaney, R & Babbar, S 2003, 'Service process design flexibility and customer waiting time', *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, vol. 23, no. 8, pp. 901-17.

Shoemaker, S & Lewis, RC 1999, 'Customer loyalty: The future of hospitality marketing', *Hospitality Management*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 345-70.

Shostack, GL 1977, 'Breaking free from product marketing', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 73-80.

Silverman, D 2005, *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook* 2$_{nd}$ edn, Sage, London.

---- 2006, *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*, 3$_{rd}$ edn, SAGE, London.

Silverman, G 1997, 'Harnessing the power of word-of-mouth', *Potentials in Marketing*, vol. 30, no. 9, pp. 14-6.

---- 2001a, *The Secrets of Word-of-Mouth Marketing: How to Trigger Exponential Sales through Runaway Word-of-Mouth*, AMACOM, New York.

---- 2001b, 'The power of word-of-mouth', *Direct Marketing*, vol. 64, no. 5, pp. 47-52.

Smidts, A & Pruyn, A 1994, 'How waiting affects customer satisfaction with the service: The role of subjective variables', paper presented to Management of Services: A Multidisciplinary Approach: Proceedings of the 3rd International Research Seminar in Service Management, University of Marseille, France.

Smith, AK, Bolton, RN & Wagner, J 1999, 'A model of customer satisfaction with service encounters involving failure and recovery', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 356-72.

Soberon-Ferrer, H & Dardis, R 1991, 'Determinants of household expenditures for services', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 385-97.

Soderlund, M 2006, 'Measuring customer loyalty with multi-item scales: A case for caution', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 76-98.

Soderlund, M & Rosengren, S 2007, 'Receiving word-of-mouth from the service customer: An emotion-based effectiveness assessment', *Journal of Retailing & Consumer Services*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 123-36.

Soderlund, M & Vilgon, M 1999, *Customer Satisfaction and Links to Customer Profitability: An Empirical Examination of the Association between Attitudes and Behaviour*, SSE/EFI Working Paper Series in Business Administration, Stockholm School of Economics.

Soderlund, M, Vilgon, M & Gunnarsson, J 2001, 'Predicting purchasing behaviour on business-to-business markets', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 35, no. 1/2, pp. 168-81.

Spector, PE 1992, *Summated Rating Scale Construction: An Introduction*, Sage Publications, Inc, Newbury Park, Calif.

Southerton, D, Shove, E & Warde, A 2001, *Harried and Hurried: Time Shortage and Co-ordination of Everyday Life*, The University of Manchester & UMIST, UK.

Spreng, RA, Harrell, GD & Mackoy, RD 1995, 'Service recovery: Impact on satisfaction and intentions', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 15-23.

Spreng, RA, Mackenzie, SB & Olshavsky, BW 1996, 'A re-examination of the determinants of consumer satisfaction', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 60, no. 3, pp. 15-22.

Stokes, D & Lomax, W 2002, 'Taking control of word-of-mouth marketing: The case of an entrepreneurial hotelier', *Journal of Small Business & Enterprise Development*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 349-57.

Strober, M & Weinberg, C 1977, 'Working wives and major family expenditures', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 141-7.

---- 1980, 'Strategies used by working and nonworking wives to reduce time pressures', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 338-48.

Su, SC & Liu, YS 2006, 'The modelling of the customers' satisfaction in Taiwan's hair saloons', paper presented to International Conference on Business & Information, Singapore.

Sudman, S 1976, *Applied Sampling*, Academic Press, New York.

Sullivan, JL & Feldman, S 1979, *Multiple Indicators: An Introduction*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, Calif.

Swan, JE & Trawick, FI 1980, 'Satisfaction related to predictive vs. desired expectation: A field study', in RL Day & HK Hunt (eds), *New Findings on Consumer Satisfaction & Complaining*, School of Business, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, pp. 15-22.

Swanson, RS & Davis, CJ 2003, 'The relationship of differential loci with perceived quality and behavioural intentions', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 202-19.

Swanson, SR & Kelley, SW 2001, 'Service recovery attributions and word-of-mouth intentions', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 35, no. 1/2, pp. 194-211.

Sweeney, JC, Soutar, GN & Mazzarol, T 2005, 'The differences between positive and negative word-of-mouth: Emotion as a differtiator?' paper presented to Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC), University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia, 5-7 December.

---- 2006, 'A word-of-mouth scale in a services context', paper presented to Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC), Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia, 4-6 December.

Tabachnick, BG & Fidell, LS 2007, *Using Multivariate Statistics*, 5th edn, Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, Boston.

Tai, YC 2002, 'Health club member's participation as a function of motivation, expectation, constraints, experience and satisfaction ~ based on the Alexander health club', Master thesis, Taiwan National of Chiayi University.

Taiwan National Policy Foundation (NPF) Research 2003, Survey on Taiwan's Social Development Trend, Directorate General of Budget Accounting & Statistics, viewed 16 July 2005, <www.dgbasey.gov.tw/census~n/three.HT433.html>.

Taiwan Sports Affairs Council, Executive Yuan, 2005, Sports & Recreation, viewed 8 September 2006, <http://www.sac.gov.tw/>.

Tam, JLM 2004, 'Customer satisfaction, service quality and perceived value: An integrative model', *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 20, no. 7/8, pp. 897-917.

Tax, SS, Brown, SW & Chandrashekaran, M 1998, 'Customer evaluations of service complaint experiences: Implications for relationship marketing', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 62, no. 2, pp. 60-75.

Taylor, S 1994, 'Waiting for service: The relationship between delays and evaluation of service', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 58, no. 2, pp. 56-69.

---- 1997, 'Assessing regression-based importance weights for quality perceptions and satisfaction judgements in the presence of higher order and/or interaction effects', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 73, no. 1, pp. 135-59.

Taylor, SA & Baker, TL 1994, 'An assessment of the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the formation of consumers' purchase intentions', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 70, no. 2, pp. 163-78.

Thrane, C 2002, 'Music quality, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions within a jazz festival context', *Event Management*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 143-50.

Tian-Cole, S & Crompton, JL 2003, 'A conceptualisation of the relationships between service quality and visitor satisfaction and their links to destination selection', *Leisure Studies*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 65-80.

Tian-Cole, S, Crompton, JL & Willson, VL 2002, 'An empirical investigation of the relationships between service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions among visitors to a wildlife refuge', *Journal of Leisure Research*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 1-24.

Tina-Cole, ST & Illum, SF 2006, 'Examining the mediating role of festival visitors' satisfaction in the relationship between service quality and behavioural intentions', *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 160-73.

Toy, D, Rager, R & Guadagnolo, F 1989, 'Strategic marketing for recreational facilities: A hybrid conjoint analysis approach', *Journal of Leisure Research*, vol. 21, no. 4, pp. 276-96.

Tribe, J 2001, 'Research paradigms and the tourism curriculum', *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 442-8.

Tsaur, SH, Chiu, YC & Huang, CH 2002, 'Determinants of guest loyalty to international tourist hotel - A natural network approach', *Tourism Management*, vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 397-405.

Tse, DK & Wilton, PC 1988, 'Models of consumer satisfaction formation: An extension', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 204-12.

Tsitskari, E, Tsiotras, D & Tsiotras, G 2006, 'Measuring service quality in sport services', *Total Quality Management*, vol. 17, no. 5, pp. 623-31.

van Eijck, K & Mommaas, JT 2004, 'Leisure, lifestyle, and the new middle class', *Leisure Sciences*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 373-92.

Veal, AJ 2006, *Research Methods for Leisure and Tourism*, 3$_{rd}$ edn, Financial Times Prentice Hall, New York.

Veloutson, C, Gilbert, GR, Moutinho, LA & Goode, MMH 2005, 'Measuring transaction-specific satisfaction in services: Are the measures transferable across cultures?' *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 39, no. 5/6, pp. 606-28.

Voli, PK 1998, 'The Convenience Orientation of Service Consumers: An Empirical Examination', Doctoral thesis, Old Dominion University.

Voss, GB & Parasuraman, A 1995, *Pre-purchase Preference and Post-purchase Satisfaction in Service Exchange*, 95-113, Marketing Science Institute, Cambridge, Massachusetts Avenue.

Wakefield, KL & Blodgett, JG 1996, 'The effect of the servicescape on customers' behavioural intentions in leisure service settings', *The Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 10, no. 6, pp. 45-61.

Waller, DL 1999, *Operations Management: A Supply Chain Approach*, International Thomson Business, London.

Wang, Y & Lo, HP 2002, 'Service quality, customer satisfaction and behaviour intentions: Evidence from China's telecommunication industry', *Information*, vol. 4, no. 6, pp. 50-60.

Wangenheim, F & Bayon, T 2004a, 'Satisfaction, loyalty and word-of-mouth within the customer base of a utility provider: Differences between stayers, switchers and referral switchers', *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 211-20.

Wangenheim, FV & Bayon, T 2004b, 'The effect of word-of-mouth on services switching', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 38, no. 9/10, pp. 1173-85.

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary®, 1983, Merriam-Webster, Springfield, Mass.

Westbrook, RA 1987, 'Product/consumption-based affective responses and post-purchase processes', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 258-70.

Westbrook, RA & Oliver, RL 1981, 'Developing better measures of consumer satisfaction: Some preliminary results', in KB Monroe (ed.), *Advances in Consumer Research*, Association for Consumer Research, MI, pp. 94-9.

Westbrook, RA & Reilly, MD 1983, 'Value-percept disparity: An alternative to the disconfirmation of expectations theory of consumer satisfaction', in RP Bagozzi & AM Tybout (eds), *Advances in Consumer Research*, Association for Consumer Research, Ann Arbor, MI, pp. 256-61.

White, C & Yu, Y-T 2005, 'Satisfaction emotions and consumer behavioural intentions', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 19, no. 6, pp. 411-20.

Whitt, W 1999, 'Improving service by informing customers about anticipated delays', *Management Science*, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 192-207.

Wirtz, J & Chew, P 2002, 'The effects of incentives, deal proneness, satisfaction and tie strength on word-of-mouth behaviour', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 141-62.

Wirtz, J & Mattila, A 2004, 'Consumer responses to compensation, speed of recovery and apology after a service failure', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 150-66.

Wong, A 2004, 'The role of emotional satisfaction in service encounters', *Managing Service Quality*, vol. 4, no. 5, pp. 365-76.

Woodside, AG, Frey, LL & Daly, RT 1989, 'Linking service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioural intention', *Journal of Health Care Marketing*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 5-17.

World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) 2006, Progress & Priorities 2006/07, viewed 15 January 2007, <http://www.wttc.org/eng/About_WTTC/index.php>.

Wrenn, B 1997, 'The market orientation construct: Measurement and scaling issues', *Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 31-54.

Yale, L & Venkatesh, A 1986, 'Toward the construct of convenience in consumer research', *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 403-8.

Yi, Y 1991, 'A critical review of consumer satisfaction', in VA Zeithaml (ed.), *Review of Marketing*, American Marketing Association, Chicago, IL, pp. 68-123.

Yi, Y & La, S 2004, 'What influences the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention? Investigating the effects of adjusted expectations and customer loyalty', *Psychology & Marketing*, vol. 21, no. 5, pp. 351-73.

Yoon, Y & Uysal, M 2005, 'An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: A structural model', *Tourism Management*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 45-56.

Youngdahl, WE & Kellogg, DL 1997, 'The relationship between service customers' quality assurance behaviours, satisfaction, and effort: A cost of quality perspective', *Journal of Operations Management*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 19-32.

Yu, CH, Chang, HC & Huang, GL 2006, 'A study of service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty in Taiwanese leisure industry', *The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 126-32.

Yuksel, A 2001, 'Managing customer satisfaction and retention: A case of tourist destinations, Turkey', *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 153-68.

Zboja, JJ & Voorhees, CM 2006, 'The impact of brand trust and satisfaction on retailer repurchase intentions', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 20, no. 6, pp. 381-90.

Zeithaml, VA, Berry, LL & Parasuraman, A 1996, 'The behavioural consequences of service quality', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 60, no. 2, pp. 31-46.

Zikmund, WG 2003, *Business Research Methods*, 7th edn, Thomson/South-Western, Cincinnati, OH.

This page is intentionally blank

Victoria University
PO Box 14428
MELBOURNE VIC 8001
Australia

City Flinders Campus
301 Flinders Lane
Melbourne

Telephone:
(03) 9919 1070
Facsimile:
(03) 9919 1064
Email:
yiwei.chang@live.vu.edu.au

Miss Yi-Wei Chang
Victoria Graduate
School of Business

**VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY**

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND LAW

【Information for Participants in the Perceptions of Health Club Survey】

8 September, 2006

Dear Potential Participant,

We would like to invite you to be part of a study into:

The impact of consumer perceptions of service convenience on behavioural intentions: A study of health clubs in Taiwan

This study is part of a Doctor of Business Administration degree. The objective of this is to establish an understanding of consumer perceptions of convenience in your health club. Your participation is completely voluntary and all information obtained will be completely anonymous and confidential. We will establish only an anonymous data file, so no individual's opinions will be identified. There will be no negative consequences if you choose not to participate, as we will not be mentioning any individuals in the thesis.

With your permission we would like you to answer each question as reliably as you can. There are no right or wrong answers. This questionnaire is about your perceptions of convenience in this health club in relation to what you feel about the convenience and how you purchase the service. It should take you around 10 to 15 minutes to complete the entire questionnaire. 180 consumers will be collected from each participating health club.

Thank you for choosing to take part in this research. If you have any questions in relation to our study please contact my supervisor **Professor Michael Polonsky** (michael.polonsky@vu.edu.au or ☎+61 3 9919 4625) or myself at the above mentioned contact. Should you have any concerns with the operation of this survey please contact the secretary of the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee (tina.jeggo@vu.edu.au or ☎+61 3 9919 1549).

Thank you for your assistance in this research,

Principal Investigator: Professor Michael Jay Polonsky
Melbourne Airport Chair in Marketing
School of Hospitality, Tourism & Marketing

Student Researcher: Yi-Wei Chang
Doctor of Business Administration Candidate

This page is intentionally blank

~ Survey of Perceptions of Your Health Club ~   **VICTORIA UNIVERSITY**

Dear Participant,

This survey is part of a Doctor of Business Administration degree aimed at establishing an understanding of convenience in a health club. The following questionnaire is about the way you purchase services in this club, and your perceptions of its convenience in relation to your personal needs. Your participation is completely voluntary and all information obtained will be completely anonymous and confidential. An anonymous data file will be established so that no individual's opinions will be identifiable. Please answer each question as reliably as you can. There are no right or wrong answers. It should take you approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete the entire questionnaire.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding this study, or if you would like a summary of the general results when this study is completed, please contact **Miss Yi-Wei Chang** at yiwei.chang@live.vu.edu.au ☎ (61 3) 9919 1070, Graduate School of Business◆Victoria University; or **Professor Michael Polonsky** at michael.polonsky@vu.edu.au ☎ (61 3) 9919 4625, School of Hospitality, Tourism & Marketing◆Victoria University◆Melbourne, Australia.

Section 1:

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by ticking the appropriate number on the scale provided on the right. If you strongly disagree with the statement, tick number 1; if you strongly agree with the statement, tick number 7. Use the numbers in between to describe variations between these extremes. Please tick ☑ ONE box for each question.

Statement	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	Neutral 4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
1. I spent minimal time finding the information to choose a health club.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. This health club made it easy for me to find suitable exercise programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. It was easy to get the information I needed to decide which health club to join.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. It was easy to contact my health club.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. It did not take much time to reach the health club.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I can easily figure out the location of this health club.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. This health club allows diversified methods of payment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. The method of payment provided by this health club is convenient.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

↰ Please Turn Over

Section 1: *Continued...*

Statement	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	Neutral 4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
9. I was able to complete my purchase quickly in this health club.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. I could easily obtain benefits from the services provided in this health club.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. The services provided by this health club were easy to use.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. The speed of providing services in this health club met my requirements.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. When I had a problem, this health club resolved my problem quickly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. This health club enabled me to arrange my next exercise programs/services with minimal effort.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. This health club has a good channel to handle complaints and recommendations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 2: Please indicate your level of overall satisfaction with each of the following statements.
Please tick ☑ ONE box for each question.

Statement	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	Neutral 4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
1. I am satisfied with my decision to be a member of this club.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I think I made the right choice when I decided to join this health club.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. The health club provides services suitable for my needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 3: Please indicate your response to each of the following statements.
Please tick ☑ ONE box for each question.

Statement	Very Unlikely 1	2	3	Neutral 4	5	6	Very Likely 7
1. I say positive things about this health club to others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I encourage my friends and co-workers to go to this health club.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I recommend this health club to someone who seeks my advice.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I consider this health club as my first choice.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please Turn Over

Section 4: Personal Information

Please tick ☑ ONE box only in each question

1. Gender:
   ₁☐ Male   ₂☐ Female

2. Age:
   ₁☐ 18-20   ₂☐ 21-34   ₃☐ 35-44   ₄☐ 45-54   ₅☐ 55 and above

3. Marital state:
   ₁☐ Single   ₂☐ Married   ₃☐ Married but single

4. Education level:
   ₁☐ Secondary school or below   ₂☐ Senior high school,
   ₃☐ College or university   ₄☐ Postgraduate and above

5. Occupation:
   ₁☐ Home duties   ₂☐ Business and industry   ₃☐ Self-employed
   ₄☐ Government agency   ₅☐ Retired   ₆☐ Student
   ₇☐ Other, please specify_____

6. Monthly income:
   ₁☐ Below NT20,000   ₂☐ NT20,001 – NT40,000   ₃☐ NT40,001 – NT60,000
   ₄☐ NT60,001 – NT800,000   ₅☐ NT80,001 - NT100,000   ₆☐ NT100,001 and above

7. Hours of work per week:
   ₁☐ 20 hours or below   ₂☐ 21 - 25 hours   ₃☐ 26 – 30 hours   ₄☐ 31 – 35 hours
   ₅☐ 36 – 40 hours   ₆☐ 41 hours and above

8. I have enough time to do exercise in my health club:
   ₁☐ Strongly disagree   ₂☐ Disagree   ₃☐ Neutral
   ₄☐ Agree   ₅☐ Strongly Agree

9. Each week I participate in the health club:
   ₁☐ Less than once   ₂☐ 1 - 2 times   ₃☐ 3 - 4 times
   ₄☐ 5 - 6 times   ₅☐ 7 times and above

- 291 -

Section 4: *Continued...*

10.My <u>most</u> frequent time to visit the health club is:
  ₁□ 9:00AM or before ₂□ 9:01 – 12:00AM ₃□ 12:01 – 14:00 PM
  ₄□ 14:01 – 17:00PM ₅□ 17:01 – 21:00PM ₆□ 21:01PM and after

11.I travel to this health club by:
  ₁□ own transportation ₂□ public transportation ₃□ walking
  ₄□ friend's/ partner's car ₅□ other, please specify_____

12.When I visit the health club, I usually stay:
  ₁□ less than 1 hour ₂□ 1 - 1.5 hours ₃□ 1.5 - 2 hours
  ₄□ 2 - 2.5 hours ₅□ 2.5 - 3 hours ₆□ 3 hours and above

13.The most important reason I chose this health club was: (Please tick ☑ ONE box only)
  ₁□ health club's image ₂□ club regulations (such as low fees and refund policy, etc.)
  ₃□ facilities / equipment ₄□ convenience (such as usage of service or transportation)
  ₅□ good service quality ₆□ other, please specify_____

14.I have been a member of <u>this</u> health club for:
  ₁□ less than 1 year ₂□ 1 - 2 years ₃□ 2 - 3 years
  ₄□ 3 - 4 years ₅□ 4 - 5 years ₆□ 5 years and above

𝄞 Concerning Health Club membership, is there anything else that you would like to add?

_____
_____
_____

❋⛉ -End of Survey- ⛉❋

Thank you very much for your participation!!

This page is intentionally blank

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
澳洲　　墨爾本

親愛的朋友，您好：

這是一份關於『服務便利、顧客滿意度與顧客行為取向之相關研究--以休閒健身俱樂部為例』之問卷，您的寶貴意見將對本研究有極大的貢獻。本研究是博士學位研究的一部份。您的參與是完全自願性的以及所有取得訊息將是完全不具名且不公開的。本研究將只建立統整性且不具名資料，所以沒有任何個人觀點將會被呈現出來。本問卷並沒有正確的答案，請儘以您實際的感知回答本問卷。本問卷大概將花您十至十五分鐘來填寫。

如對本問卷有任何問題或建議，或者您想要知道本研究之結果，請聯絡：**Miss Yi-Wei Chang**（張鈫崴）電子信箱 yiwei.chang@live.vu.edu.au ☎+61 3 9199 1070，維多利亞大學 ◇ 商學院 ；或是指導教授： **Professor Michael Polonsky** 電子信箱 michael.polonsky@vu.edu.au ☎+61 3 9199 4625，墨爾本機場✈行銷會議主席，維多利亞大學 ◇ 餐旅觀光行銷學院。並在此祝您：

<div align="center">

健康愉快　事事順心

</div>

Office use only (訪員專用):
Name of Health Club:
北　　　　中　　　　南
Date: ＿＿＿／＿＿＿／ 2006
Time: 早　　　　中　　　　晚
Name of Interviewer: ＿＿＿＿

第一部分

請根據下列各問項就您所同意的程度，在右欄 ☑勾選合適的意見。（請單選）

問項項目	非常 不同意 1	2	3	普通 4	5	6	非常 同意 7
1. 我可以用最短的時間取得此健身俱樂部之相關資訊。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. 我可以容易地決定我要參加此健身俱樂部的那一些課程。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. 我可以容易地取得此健身俱樂部所提供的相關資來決定是否要參加此健身俱樂部。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. 我可以輕而易舉的與此健身俱樂部取得聯繫。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. 我不用花太多的時間抵達此健身俱樂部。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. 我可以迅速地找到此健身俱樂部的地點。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. 此健身俱樂部提供多元化的結帳付款方式。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. 在此健身俱樂部，我可以快速地完成付款手續。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

第一部分 *請繼續勾選*

請根據下列各問項就您所同意的程度，在右欄 ☑ 勾選合適的意見。（請單選）

問項項目	非常 不同意 1	2	3	普通 4	5	6	非常 同意 7
9. 在此健身俱樂部，我可以快速地完成付款手續。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. 我可以輕鬆地獲得此健身俱樂部各項服務之效益。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. 使用此健身俱樂部的各項服務是很容易的。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. 此健身俱樂部的服務速度符合我的需求。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. 此健身俱樂部能夠快速地處理我服務上的相關問題。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. 此健身俱樂部可以快速地協助我擬定下一步的運動課程或者後續的服務。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. 此健身俱樂部的申訴與建議管道暢通。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

第二部分

請根據下列各問項就您所同意的程度，在右欄 ☑ 勾選合適的意見。（請單選）

問項項目	非常 不同意 1	2	3	普通 4	5	6	非常 同意 7
1. 我很滿意我選擇成為此健身俱樂部的會員。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. 我認為我做了正確的選擇成為此健身俱樂部的會員。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. 此健身俱樂部所提供的服務適合我的需要。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

第三部分

請在右欄中針對每一問項 ☑ 勾選一個適切的水準。（請單選）

問項項目	非常 不可能 1	2	3	普通 4	5	6	很有 可能 7
1. 我會將此健身俱樂部的優點告訴其它人。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. 我會推薦此健身俱樂部給我的朋友和同事。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. 如果有人想要參加健身俱樂部，我會建議他們到此家俱樂部。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. 在我下次的俱樂部選擇上，我把此家健身俱樂部視為我的優先選擇。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

第四部份、個人資料（請單選☑）

1. 性別：
1□ 男　　　　　2□ 女

2. 年齡：
1□ 18 ~ 20 歲　　2□ 21 ~ 34 歲　　3□ 35 ~ 44 歲
4□ 45 ~ 54 歲　　5□ 55 歲以上

3. 婚姻狀況：
1□ 未婚　　　2□ 已婚　　　3□ 已婚但單身（含離婚,鰥,寡）

4. 教育程度：
1□ 國中或以下　　2□ 高中職　　3□ 大專院校　　4□ 研究所以上

5. 職業：
1□ 家庭主婦/夫　2□ 工商業　3□ 自由業　4□ 公務人員（含軍公教警）
5□ 退休人員　　6□ 學生　　7□ 其他，請說明_____

6. 我平均月收入為：
1□ 新台幣 20,000 元以下　　2□ 新台幣 20,001 ~ 40,000 元
3□ 新台幣 40,001 ~ 60,000 元　4□ 新台幣 60,001 ~ 800,000 元
5□ 新台幣 80,001 ~ 100,000 元　6□ 新台幣 100,001 元以上

7. 我平均每 週 上班時數為：（請單選）
1□ 20 個小時以下　　2□ 21 ~ 25 個小時　　3□ 26 ~ 30 個小時
4□ 31 ~ 35 個小時　　5□ 36 ~ 40 個小時　　6□ 41 個小時以上

8. 我每次可運用在這家健身俱樂部的時間充足：
1□ 非常不同意　2□ 不同意　3□ 有點不同意　4□ 普通
5□ 有點同意　　6□ 同意　　7□ 非常同意

9. 我平均每 週 使用這家家俱樂部的次數為：（請單選）
1□ 不到 1 次　　2□ 1 ~ 2 次　　3□ 3 ~ 4 次
4□ 5 ~ 6 次　　5□ 7 次以上

10. 我 最常 使用這家家俱樂部的時段為：（請單選）
1□ 上午 9:00 以前　2□ 上午 9:01 ~ 12:00　3□ 下午 12:01 ~ 14:00
4□ 下午 14:01 ~ 17:00　5□ 晚上 17:01 ~ 21:00　6□ 晚上 21:01 以後

11. 我 **通常** 來這家健身俱樂部是藉由：（請單選）

₁☐ 自己的交通工具　　₂☐ 大眾運輸工具　　　₃☐ 走路

₄☐ 搭計程車　　₅☐ 搭朋友/家人的便車

₆☐ 其他，請說明＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

12. 當我 **每次** 來使用這家健身俱樂部時，通常會待上：（請單選）

₁☐ 少於一個小時　　₂☐ 1 個小時（含）~ 1.5 個小時

₃☐ 1.5 個小時 ~ 2 個小時　　₄☐ 2 小時 ~ 2.5 小時

₅☐ 2.5 小時 ~ 3 小時　　₆☐ 3 個小時（含）以上

13. 我選擇這家健身俱樂部 **最重要** 的原因是：（請單選）

₁☐ 健康俱樂部的形象　　₂☐ 合理的收費

₃☐ 硬體設備　　₄☐ 便利性（例如交通或是使用上的方便）

₅☐ 良好的服務品質　　₆☐ 其他，請說明＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

14. 我在 **這家** 健身俱樂部的會員年資為：

₁☐ 不到一年　　₂☐ 一年（含）以上，二年之內

₃☐ 二年以上，三年之內　　₄☐ 三年以上，四年之內

₅☐ 四年以上，五年之內　　₆☐ 五年（含）以上

✏ **請留下您其他的寶貴意見：**

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

ഛഛ 本問卷到此結束 ❖ 感謝您的協助 ഛഛ

This page is intentionally blank

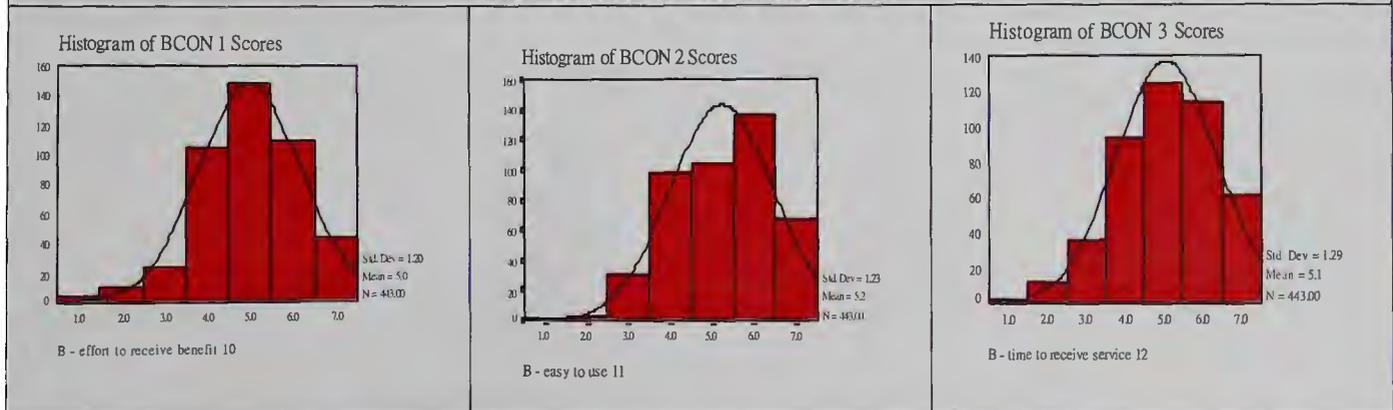# Assessment of Normality of the Data – Final survey (n = 443)

Decision Convenience

Histogram of DCON 1 Scores — D - minimal time to choose 1

Histogram of DCON 2 Scores — D - easy to find programs 2

Histogram of DCON 3 Scores — D - information to decide to use 3

Access Convenience

Histogram of ACON 1 Scores — A - easy to contact 4

Histogram of ACON 2 Scores — A - much time to reach 5

Histogram of ACON 3 Scores — A - location quickly 6

Transaction Convenience

Histogram of TCON 1 Scores — T - effort to pay 7

Histogram of TCON 2 Scores — T - payment is convenient 8

Histogram of TCON 3 Scores — T - complete purchase quickly 9

Benefit Convenience

Histogram of BCON 1 Scores — B - effort to receive benefit 10

Histogram of BCON 2 Scores — B - easy to use 11

Histogram of BCON 3 Scores — B - time to receive service 12

(Continued)

Post-benefit Convenience

Histogram of PCON 1 Scores
Std. Dev = 1.21
Mean = 4.9
N = 443.00
P - resolve problem quickly 13
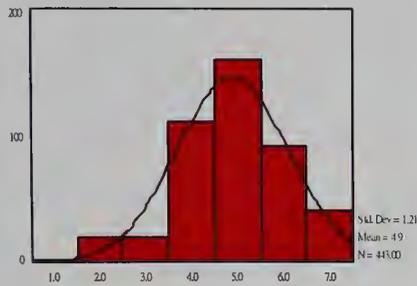
Histogram of PCON 2 Scores
Std. Dev = 1.25
Mean = 4.9
N = 443.00
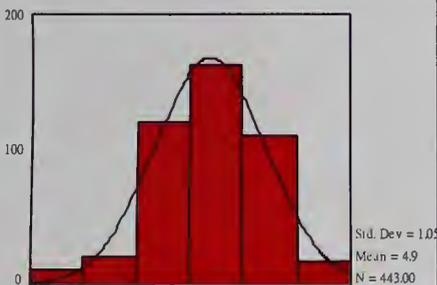P - arrange follow up 14
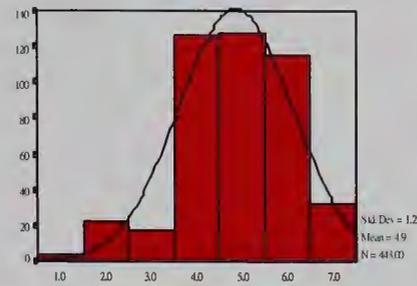
Histogram of PCON 3 Scores
Std. Dev = 1.25
Mean = 4.8
N = 443.00
P - easy to express comments 15
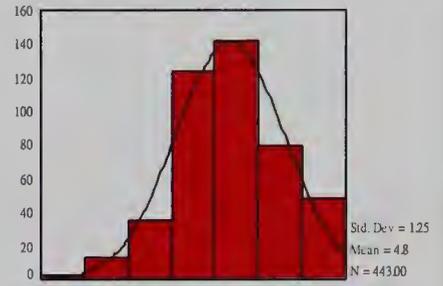
* *Source*: Data analysis (2007)

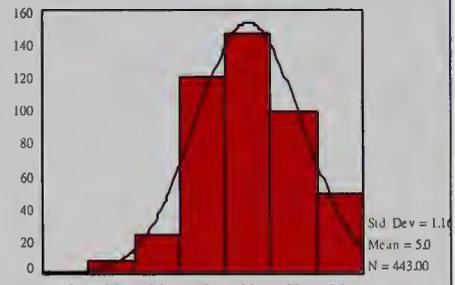## Overall Consumer Satisfaction

Histogram of CS 1 Scores
Std. Dev = 1.05
Mean = 4.9
N = 443.00
CS1

Histogram of CS 2 Scores
Std. Dev = 1.09
Mean = 5.0
N = 443.00
CS2

Histogram of CS 3 Scores
Std. Dev = 1.10
Mean = 5.0
N = 443.00
CS3

* *Source*: Data analysis (2007)

Behavioural Intentions

Histogram of BI 1 Scores
Std. Dev = 1.25
Mean = 5.3
N = 443.00
say positive things
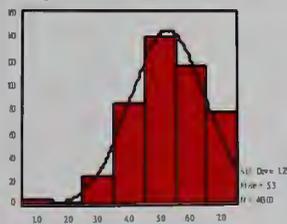
Histogram of BI 2 Scores
Std. Dev = 1.15
Mean = 5.2
N = 443.00
friends & co-workers
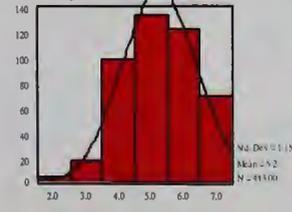
Histogram of BI 3 Scores
Std. Dev = 1.1
Mean = 5.1
N = 443.00
first choice
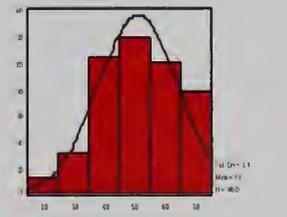
Histogram of BI 4 Scores
Std. Dev = .98
Mean = 5.1
N = 443.00
recommend who seek
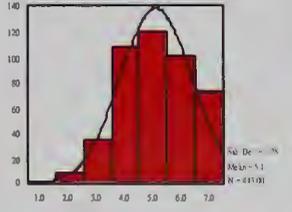
* *Source*: Data analysis (2007)