

## **Degree Project**

Level: Master's

### **Tourism in Football: Exploring Motivational Factors and Typologies of Groundhoppers**

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#### **An example of a German Groundhopper Online Community**

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Waldershof, January 19, 2019

## **Abstract**

This thesis aims to examine the motivational factors and to explore possible typologies of groundhoppers. Groundhopping as a special form of sports tourism which has grown rapidly over the last couple of decades. Given the fact, that there has been a lot of research in the field of sports tourism it is quite interesting to see that up to this day, there is hardly any in-depth research about groundhopping in particular. Groundhoppers are a very interesting group to both sport and tourism industry. For the latter, groundhoppers might be a potential target group especially when it comes to the promotion and marketing of certain destinations. Just like other types of tourists, groundhoppers bring money to the destinations, spend it at different occasions and hence contribute to the destinations' development.

Having an exploratory character, this quantitative research wants to contribute to the lack in current literature, focussing on a German groundhopper online community and its members. A web-based questionnaire has been conducted which had a total number of 909 respondents. Demonstrating the outcomes of the survey, this thesis looks into the individual statistics of the questionnaire and visualises the answers with descriptive tables. Furthermore, with the use of an exploratory factor analysis and a two-step cluster analysis, three potential groups of groundhoppers could be explored.

The findings from this study should be seen as a starting point, an inspiration for further research, as groundhopping is likely to keep growing in numbers. While quantitative studies like this thesis can contribute to get an overall picture, qualitative research will also be required to get an insight on the more individual and personal level of groundhopping. This again could lead to new ideas and concepts for advanced quantitative research. Until then, groundhopping will remain a mostly unknown niche in the field of sports tourism.

**Keywords:** Groundhopping, Serious Leisure, Sport Tourism, Tourist Motivation, Football.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Research Background

Sport Tourism is a growing industry and still, in research there are many things unknown about the relation between sports and tourism (Hinch & Higham, 2004). Sports and tourism are two of the biggest industries in Germany. Hence, there are many touching points between those two fields. This research looks at a small, often unknown and only very weakly researched sub-category of sport tourism: groundhopping. It aims to contribute to the research of groundhoppers since there is currently a lack of research regarding this interesting and complex group of sport tourists.

Today, football is a global industry. Over the years, commercialisation has made football become bigger and bigger. Several television and broadcasting rights worth billions of Euros, as well as national, international and intercontinental championships and competitions contributed to the enormous development of football in today's society, especially in Europe (Crisp et al., 2007). Growing popularity of course results in a growing number of spectators and supporters. Today, there are billions of football fans worldwide. They all share their passion for the sport itself but there exist many different categories of football fans. One of them are the so-called groundhoppers.

The term *groundhopping* (fusion of the words *ground* and *to hop*) dates back to the late 1980's when the phenomena groundhopping first came up in Great Britain or England respectively. Generally, groundhoppers are football fans who usually have a neutral opinion regarding football clubs and try to attend as many football games in as many football stadiums or venues as possible, seeing the whole process as a leisure activity (Bauckham, 2013; Kren, 2013). With football being the national sport in Germany and German people being known for their willingness to travel, groundhopping eventually also arrived and grew there as well.

But what motivates groundhoppers to do what they are doing, and can they be assigned in specific categories of groundhoppers? What separates them from usual football fans? According to Connell (2017), groundhoppers tend to demonstrate fandom in an extreme fashion. Still they cannot be generalised. Kren (2013) on the other hand argues that there are influences on the daily lives of groundhoppers while traveling is their main reason to follow this *hobby* as he calls it. Fairley and Gammon (2005) mention nostalgia as a driver for sport tourists in general. This is also often mentioned in the context of groundhopping (Bauckham, 2013; Kren, 2013).

## **1.2 Research Rationale**

Groundhopping is a special form of sports tourism and grew rapidly over the last couple of decades. Given the fact, that there has been a lot of research in the field of sports tourism it is quite interesting to see that up to this day, there is hardly any in-depth research about groundhopping. This is surprising as groundhoppers are a very interesting group to both sport and tourism industry. For the latter, groundhoppers might be a potential target group especially when it comes to the promotion and marketing of certain destinations. Just like other types of tourists, groundhoppers bring money to the destinations, spend it at different occasions and hence contribute to the destinations' development. Therefore, being partly exploratory, this research wants to contribute to the described lack in current literature by looking at the main motivational factors of groundhoppers and a possible typology of groundhoppers. It is believed that this thesis will contribute to both the research of sports tourists or in this case groundhoppers in particular. The findings of this research should encourage other researchers to take this topic further and add knowledge to the low state in current groundhopping research.

## **1.3 Research Aim**

Focusing on groundhopping in football, a special form of sports tourism, this research aims to examine the motivational factors and to explore possible typologies of groundhoppers. To achieve this aim, this quantitative research approach focuses on a German groundhopper online community and its members.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

- 1) What are the motivational factors of German football groundhoppers?
- 2) What are possible typologies of German football groundhoppers?

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Sports Tourism**

Tourism and sports are known to be related fields for a long time now and over the last years it became an interesting field of research among academics (Gibson et al. 2003; Hinch & Higham, 2004). Both tourism and sports are very diverse, and they are influenced by the ongoing changes on different levels such as for example on a social or economic scale, leading to the circumstance that sports and tourism continue experiencing an increasing interest in many people's lives (Hadzik et al., 2011). Another reason for the tight relation between sports and tourism is the rising interest in traveling for sports-related activities, the so-called sports tourism. This gained attention in research, resulting in an increase of studies in sports tourism.

Generally, there is no absolute definition for the term sports tourism, but many researchers tried to define it from different point of views or angles. Being one of the early researchers about this topic, Gibson (1998) for example defines sports tourism as "leisure-based travel that takes individuals temporarily outside of their home communities to play, watch physical activities or venerate attractions associated with these activities" (p.10). In addition, Kurtzman and Zauhar (2005) state that "spectatorship, over the last few decades, has emerged as a significant tourism experience. This has been enhanced by technological advances, urbanization, mobility, interpersonal competition and media coverage" (p.22).

Similar to Gibson is the definition from Standeven and De Knop (1999) who already considered sports tourism being "all forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organized way for non-commercial or business/commercial reasons, that necessitate travel away from home and work locality" (p.12). The latter is a more general and universal definition which is therefore also cited by other researchers. It basically suggests that a "sporting activity" could be anything from a FIFA World Cup to a local or regional football game for example, if the attendees are required to leave their home and travel in order to visit the event. Specific definitions of the term sports tourism might be different but at some point, they all agree on the facts that sport tourists participate or watch the sport event they are visiting. Hence, they can be active or passive participants.

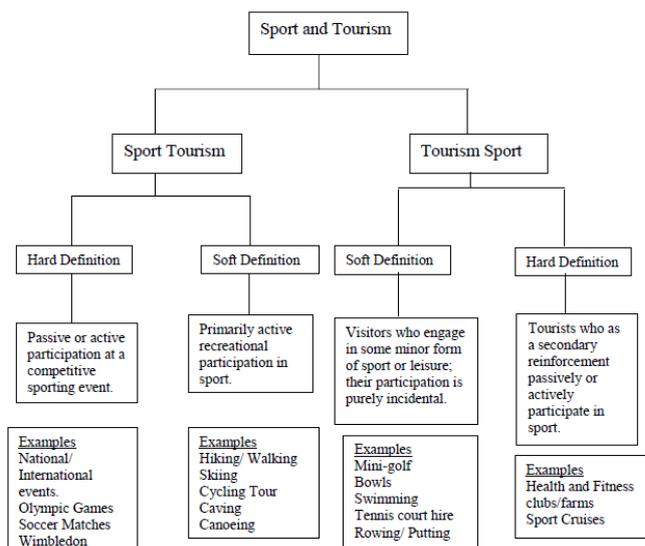
According to Gibson (1998), active sports tourists are characterised by actively participating in sporting activities while being on vacation. Gibsons mentions golf, skiing, cycling and scuba diving as some examples. Important to mention about Gibson's research is

that he found a relation between age of the sports tourists and their likelihood of active participation, which decreases with growing age. This may lead to a transformation from an active to a passive sports tourist.

Passive sports tourists on the other hand describes everything but active sportive participation. Ritchie and Adair (2004) mention spectating events in stadiums for example or visiting sport museums or sport facilities as typical passive sports tourism activities. For passive sport tourists it could be either that their intention to travel is linked to attending sporting events or venues from the very beginning or that they travel for other purposes and decide on-site and on short notice to experience passive sports tourism (Ritchie & Adair, 2002).

Gibson (1998) divides sports tourism slightly different as he distinguishes between (a) the already mentioned active sports tourists who travel for the purpose of active sports participation, (b) event sports tourists who travel to passively attend or spectate a certain sport event and (c) nostalgia sports tourists who are looking for a stronger experience towards outside elements such as experiencing stadium atmosphere, stadia themselves or sports museums (Gibson, 1998).

According to Robinson and Gammon (2004), sports tourism can also be divided into hard and soft sports tourism (see Figure 1). First, they distinguish between sports tourism and tourism sports, with the latter describing the mentioned tourists, who decide to participate in sports on short notice while they are already traveling. This may also be divided into hard and soft tourism sports, depending to what extent their participation takes place. For this thesis however, sports tourism is more relevant than tourism sports. Gammon and Robinson define hard sports tourism as "passive or active participation at a competitive sporting event" (p.23) and mention Olympic Games, football games and Wimbledon as examples. The definition for



soft sports tourism as "primarily active recreational participation in sport" (p.23) like hiking, skiing or canoeing leads to the conclusion that for groundhopping one can consider it as hard sports tourism according to the definitions of Gammon and Robinson.

Figure 1: Classification of sport and tourism (adapted) (Source: Robinson & Gammon, 2004)

## 2.2 Football Tourism

Football tourism refers to a special category of sports tourism. Crisp et al. (2007) mention that football has always been one of the largest and most popular sports worldwide and is still growing and expanding regarding its popularity. In Germany alone, every weekend hundreds of thousands of people are spectating football games during match days in stadiums or at smaller amateur football grounds and millions follow the top divisions' games on Pay-TV (DFB, 2018). However, over the years the forms of football fans and spectators have changed and so has the intensity of football fandom (Giulianotti, 2002).

Commercialisation in today's (professional) football turned numerous leagues and clubs into global brands. Hence, there is also a continuous increase in football tourism as football became a rapidly growing part in people's daily lives because of the increase of global marketing and branding in the football industry and people want to travel places to attend certain games. Nevertheless, today the traditional culture of football is shrinking in Europe. According to Duke (2002), the football industry is getting 'McDonaldized' or it puts higher importance on financial benefits than the game itself and is neglecting or even losing the game's original culture. This must be seen in the context of professional football, especially in the biggest leagues in terms of financial expenditure (e.g. England, Spain, Germany, Italy, France). In addition to this 'McDonaldization', Giulianotti and Robertson (2012) mention that despite or because of this trend of commercialisation, football is a fast-growing part in people's everyday lives and millions of people all around the globe are reached and influenced by football and its global marketing and branding. Hence, there is an increase in numbers of multinational corporations spending money on football teams making them global brands (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2012).

A transnational movement of Europe with football clubs of various European countries competing is described by Brand and Niemann (2012). With the world football association FIFA and its European subsidiary association UEFA putting more and more importance on expanding football competitions on an international level, the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Europa League (formerly known as UEFA Cup) have been established to have a competition between Europe's best football clubs (Izzo et al., 2011). King (2004) states that in the time after establishing the competitions, UEFA increased the number of participating teams making it the biggest competition in football on club level. Furthermore, the increasing number of teams and therefore the increasing number of games being played, resulted also in growing

European connections and integration between participating football teams, fans and their cities of Europe's countries (King, 2004).

## 2.3 Groundhopping

The above-mentioned loss of culture in nowadays commercialised football industry might be one reason for the growth of groundhopping, a special type of football tourism. There have been numerous studies, books and papers about fandom in sports in general or football in particular (e.g. Redhead, 1997; Giulianotti, 2002; Hopkins & Treadwell, 2014; Nishio, 2016) which mostly focus on categorising fans or discuss their role towards special events like for example the FIFA World Cup. Although existing since the late 1980's, groundhopping however has not gained too much attention in research and only a few studies have been published yet (e.g. Bauckham, 2013; Connell, 2017; Kren, 2013). According to Connell (2017), groundhopping can be seen as some kind of lifestyle, which consists of more than just traveling as many different places as possible. It combines travel, serious leisure, collecting and nostalgia at the same time (Connell, 2017).

*Groundhopping* (fusion of the words *ground* and *to hop*) goes back to the late 1980's when groundhopping first came up in Great Britain or England respectively. Groundhopping people, usually referred to as *groundhoppers* or just *hoppers* are football fans who usually have a neutral opinion regarding football clubs and try to attend as many football games in as many football stadiums or venues as possible (*grounds*), seeing the whole process as a leisure activity (Bauckham, 2013; Kren, 2013). In the case of Germany, groundhopping is an even younger phenomenon. With football being the national sport in Germany and German people being known for their willingness to travel, groundhopping eventually also arrived and grew among German football fans as well (Kren, 2013).

Generally, groundhopping is not officially organised. With "Club 92" and "38 Club" in Great Britain and "VdGD" in Germany, there are existing official clubs for groundhoppers (Kren, 2013) but they seem to fulfil more of a symbolic role than an organizational one. Groundhoppers usually organize themselves as a group of friends or through online forums or social media (e.g. Facebook) in particular. Other groundhoppers do not organise with others at all and visit grounds alone by themselves.

## 2.4 Typologies of Football Fans

Giulianotti's (2002) well-known study on spectators in football resulted in four different types of football fans which he divides into supporters, followers, fans and flâneurs (see Figure 2).

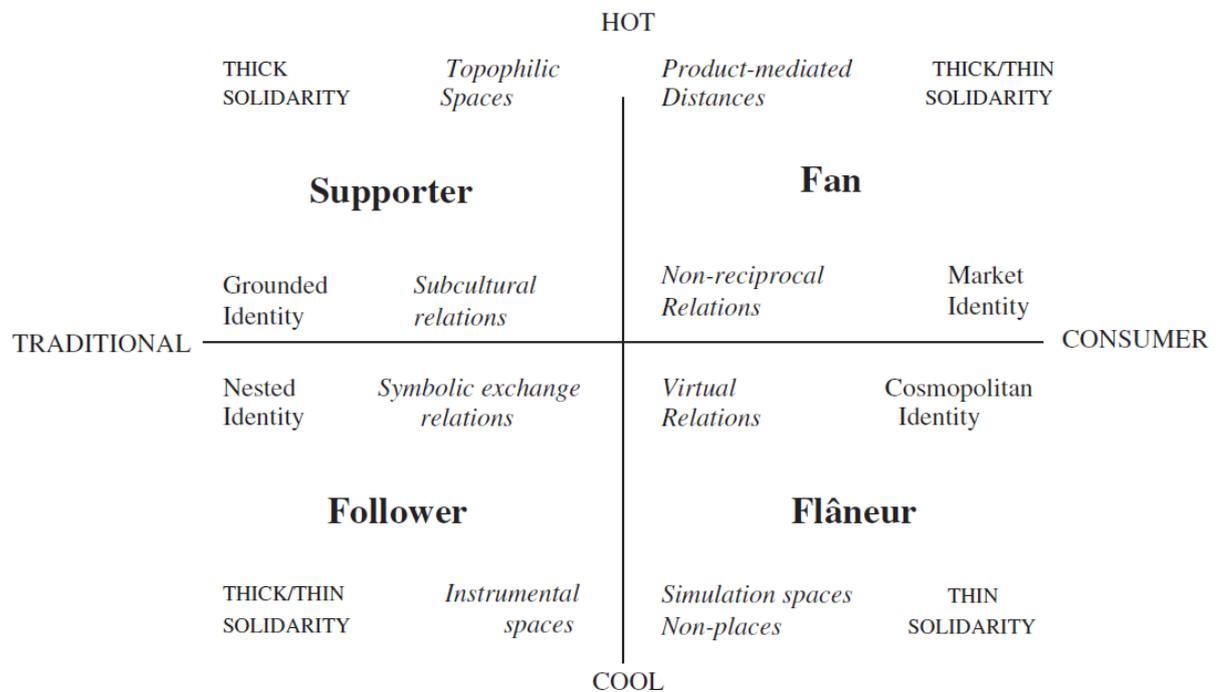


Figure 2: Types of Football Spectators (Source: Giulianotti, 2002, p.31)

Giulianotti (2002) claims that the most important criterion for determining specific types of supporters is their individual attitude towards or identification with a certain club. As seen in Figure 2 above, Giulianotti uses two scales or oppositions to classify football spectators: traditional-consumer and hot-cool. Hence, there are four types resulting from this model: traditional/hot (supporter), traditional/cool (follower), consumer/hot (fan) and consumer/cool (flâneur). The traditional-consumer opposition measures the individual investment of spectators in a specific club. According to Giulianotti, “traditional spectators will have a longer, more local and popular cultural identification with the club, whereas consumer fans will have a more market-centered relationship to the club as reflected in the centrality of consuming club products” (Giulianotti, 2002, p. 31). On the other hand, the hot-cool opposition measures the extent to which the club plays a central role towards the individual’s project of self-formation. “Hot forms of loyalty emphasize intense kinds of identification and solidarity with the club; cool forms denote the reverse” (Giulianotti, 2002, p. 31).

If one wants to break it down to the four individual groups, traditional/hot spectators are defined as supporters of a certain football club. “The classic supporter has a long-term personal and emotional investment in the club” (Giulianotti, 2002, p.33). This can include various things, such as the purchase of shares in the club and merchandise. Generally, the supporter is emotionally tied to the club and shows financial support. Supporters usually have their origin in the club’s surrounding community. Often, supporters are local supporters with a close geographical proximity to the club’s home ground. Supporters tend to visit almost every home game and have a certain routine around a match day (Giulianotti, 2002).

Traditional/cool spectators are defined as followers by Giulianotti. They are not necessarily followers of a club but of the general developments within a certain field of football in which the follower is interested in. This may be a certain league or club. Affection for specific clubs might occur through ideological attractions or other interesting facts. “For followers, football places may be mere practical resources with few symbolic meanings: a stage upon which favored players and officials might pitch up to perform before moving on” (Giulianotti, p.36).

With hot/consumer spectators, defined as fans by Giulianotti, he describes a more modern type of football fan. These spectators are primarily fans of certain clubs, their players or celebrities. “The fan develops a form of intimacy or love for the club or its specific players, but this kind of relationship is inordinately unidirectional in its affections” (Giulianotti, 2002, p. 36). ‘Hot’ therefore refers to the level of identification. However, the overall relationship towards the club is rather distant compared to the supporter category.

When talking about flâneurs, Giulianotti (2002) refers to the cool/consumer spectators. According to Giulianotti, “the flaneur acquires a postmodern spectator identity through a depersonalized set of market-dominated virtual relationships, particularly interactions with the cool media of television and the Internet” (Giulianotti, 2002, p.38). He further claims that flâneurs are more likely to watch football on television or follow it through online media. Nevertheless, flâneurs are not only restricted to that. They also attend games on-site, but with less overall passion than followers, fans or supporters. Football flâneurs are considered being the main target group of international football-related marketing campaigns of sponsors in the football industry. (Giulianotti, 2002).

Looking at groundhoppers as a subculture of football fans, Donnelly (2007) compares the belonging to a certain subdivision as being situated within an accumulation of five concentric circles representing different strengths of commitment. Regarding groundhopping, the central circle describes the groundhoppers who are trying to attend a football game when

and wherever it is possible, even if it requires them to travel very long distances and a big logistic (and financial) effort in general, while the outer circle represents occasional participants in groundhopping with just a slight understanding of the culture and the meanings that are linked to the subculture of groundhopping (Donnelly, 2007). The remaining circles between the extremes represented by outer and inner circle respectively, can be considered being dynamic, allowing shifting in both directions. In conclusion, to break down groundhoppers in typologies one might consequently end up with the two most obvious ones being on one hand, groundhoppers who first of all collect and count grounds for the purpose of completing leagues and/or countries and who have to witness the football game as a whole, and on the other hand, groundhoppers who are more interested in social motives like taking photographs or discovering foreign cultures. Those people might not even be interested in the score or the football game itself, they just do it for the sake of the visit in general (Bauckham, 2013).

## **2.5 Travel Motivation**

For this research, it is necessary to understand different approaches towards travel motivation as groundhopping is always linked to traveling and tourism. Also, with exploring motivational factors of groundhoppers being one of the reasons to conduct the survey of this thesis, this chapter summarises existing theories and studies regarding travel motivation.

The simple question why people are traveling has been subject to research many times before. Probably the most classic approach towards needs is the hierarchy of needs by Maslow (1954). Looking at it, one will see an arrangement of levels in pyramidal form arranged by their importance. First, people try to fulfil the most necessary needs in order to satisfy the higher needs. At the lowest level, the base of the pyramid, there are physiological needs that can be expressed for example with hunger, thirst and sleep. Based on this, safety needs follow, such as personal and financial security, followed by social needs such as love, friendship and intimacy. This is followed by the need for esteem, which is reflected in recognition and status. At the top is the self-actualization. This means that one finds his self-fulfilment by realizing his possibilities and abilities (Maslow, 1954).

Mayo and Jarvis (1981) interpret the theory of Maslow in a tourism context. Regarding the need for respect, vacation can be a high prestige value and represent a symbol of success and achievement. Generally, travel is a great way to forget every day's life and thus once forget about lower needs and leave them behind and instead meet higher needs like self-efficacy or

intellectual needs. But even Maslow assumes that only few people experience self-realisation. Therefore, it can be assumed that only few people travel due to the need for self-realization (Krammer, 2009). Mayo and Jarvis (1981) assume that during vacation, the needs are not dealt with in the usual way, as described by Maslow. Hence, physiological and security needs move to the background to accommodate intellectual needs instead. The tourist wants to experience something new, to better understand his own world, to pursue aesthetic needs and to learn from his surroundings. This may even lead to make tourists feel the urge or need to travel and explore new things, as well as the need for love, security or appreciation (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981). The authors point out that few travelers can fulfill the need for self-realisation on a journey. Maslow himself has been of the same opinion among many experts (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981).

In today's society, the basic physiological and safety needs are usually met, so the upper levels are much more relevant to tourism. Therefore, marketers are also trying to focus on the prestige and the status of a particular journey (Dettmer et al., 1999). One must keep in mind that the journey itself is often associated with success and achievement of a goal and thus can pursue the need for appreciation. This is especially the case when traveling to more remote areas. Young adults in particular seem to have a strong prestige for overseas travel if they are still in their vocational training and do not consider themselves fully recognised (Braun, 1993). Generally spoken, health and leisure travel can be associated with physiological and social needs, educational trips are linked to the need for appreciation, and finally, spiritual journeys target the self-updating mentioned above (Pearce, 1982).

To understand the consumption behaviour of tourists or groundhoppers, travel motivation needs to be examined as it is "the driving force behind all behaviour" (Fodness, 1994, p.555). Snepenger et al. (2006) discuss Iso-Ahola's motivation theory in a tourism context and confirm the existence of four dimensions and they state that "motivations may serve as a useful area for segmenting tourists and positioning tourism and recreation experiences" (p.148). Iso-Ahola (1980) states that two motivations simultaneously provide what is done in leisure and tourism. On the one hand avoidance or escaping: meaning that one wants to flee from every day's environment, which is usually accompanied by problems. On the other hand, there is approach or seeking: in doing so, there are intrinsic rewards by setting activities that contrast with every day's life. In theory, a distinction is made between personal daily environment (personal difficulties) and interpersonal daily environment (e.g. colleagues), but also between personal reward (competence, recreation) and interpersonal reward (interaction with fellow travellers).

The importance of the components depends on the situation and on other people (Iso-Ahola, 1980).

According to Jang and Cai (2002), there are six push and five pull factors influencing travel decisions. They mention novel experiences, escape, knowledge seeking, fun and excitement, rest and relaxation, and togetherness with family and friends as push factors. As pull factors the authors list natural and historical environments, cleanliness and safety, easy access, outdoor activities, and sunny and exotic atmosphere (Jang & Cai, 2002). Like Maslow's (1970) theory, travelling together with family and friends is mentioned (Jang & Cai, 2002).

Research tries to master the multiple well-known motives regarding tourism by making classifications. As an example, McIntosh et al. (1995) try to categorize different travel motives into categories to structure a rather complex list of motives. They subdivide them into four categories:

- Physical motives: recreation, relaxation, sports, beach recreation, health considerations
- Cultural motives: desire to get to know other cultures, their art, religion, folklore, music, dances, etc.
- Interpersonal motives: focus on the desire to make new friends, but also to visit friends and relatives or, on the contrary, to have distance from the family or the neighbors
- Status and prestige motives: looking for recognition, high reputation and attention

(McIntosh et al., 1995)

Trail and James (2001) developed a Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC) and evaluated its accuracy and appropriateness for the measurement of the motivation of sport tourists. Factors mentioned in the MSSC are achievement, acquisition of knowledge, aesthetics, drama/eustress, escape, family, physical attractiveness of participants, quality of the physical skills of participants and social interaction (Trail & James, 2001). The MSSC is an interesting scale because it refers to factors from two related scales: Wann's Sport Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS) (1995) and Milne and McDonald's Motivations of the Sport Consumer scale (1999). The MSSC has been developed to incorporate the new factors of acquisition of knowledge and physical attraction of participants. The MSSC is different from earlier scales since it measures the psychological motivations regarding sport fan consumption.

Using Trail and James' (2001) MSSC for sport tourist motivations, one can split the factors into push and pull categories that have different influences on fans' travel decisions. With 'achievement', 'drama' and 'physical attractiveness of players' being pull factors, the 'acquisition of knowledge', 'escape', 'family' and 'social interaction' are considered being push factors.

## **2.6 Casual and Serious Leisure**

When it comes to groundhopping, bird watching or similar leisure activities, there might be discussions about to what extent this is a casual hobby or leisure activity or if it is more than just that. The terms serious leisure and casual leisure have been objectives of research in rather recent years. This chapter gives an overview about these studies to demonstrate the possible linkages towards groundhopping.

There has been quite some research on serious leisure (Stebbins, 2007; Bauckham, 2013; Veal, 2017). Bauckham (2013) claims that groundhopping is generally a subculture of serious leisure but lacks a clear definition or structure. Bauckham also suggests further research to define different groups within the pool of groundhoppers. Veal (2017) however discusses serious leisure in general and critically evaluates Stebbins' Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP), a theory/typology which divides leisure activities in different forms.

Stebbins (2007) is probably the most famous researcher when it comes to serious leisure. Stebbins' initial research on serious leisure date to 1982, meaning that he has studied and published articles and books about serious leisure for over 35 years. He also established a homepage about the Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP) with many useful bibliographies and other information about serious leisure (The Serious Leisure Perspective, n.d.).

In his SLP framework, Stebbins defines leisure itself as "un-coerced, contextually framed activity engaged in during free time, which people want to do, using their abilities and resources, actually do in either a satisfying or a fulfilling way (or both)" (The Serious Leisure Perspective, n.d.). He defines the three main forms of leisure which are; serious leisure, casual leisure and project-based leisure (see Figure 3). Research on serious leisure is very recent with studies on the other two forms of leisure; casual leisure and project-based leisure being consistent. The concept of casual leisure according to Robert Stebbins "is immediately intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to enjoy it" (Stebbins, 1997, p.18). According to Stebbins (1997), casual leisure can

be a form of leisure referring to people who, after a work day, seek physical and psychological regeneration in a conversation with friends or in a series marathon in front of a television.

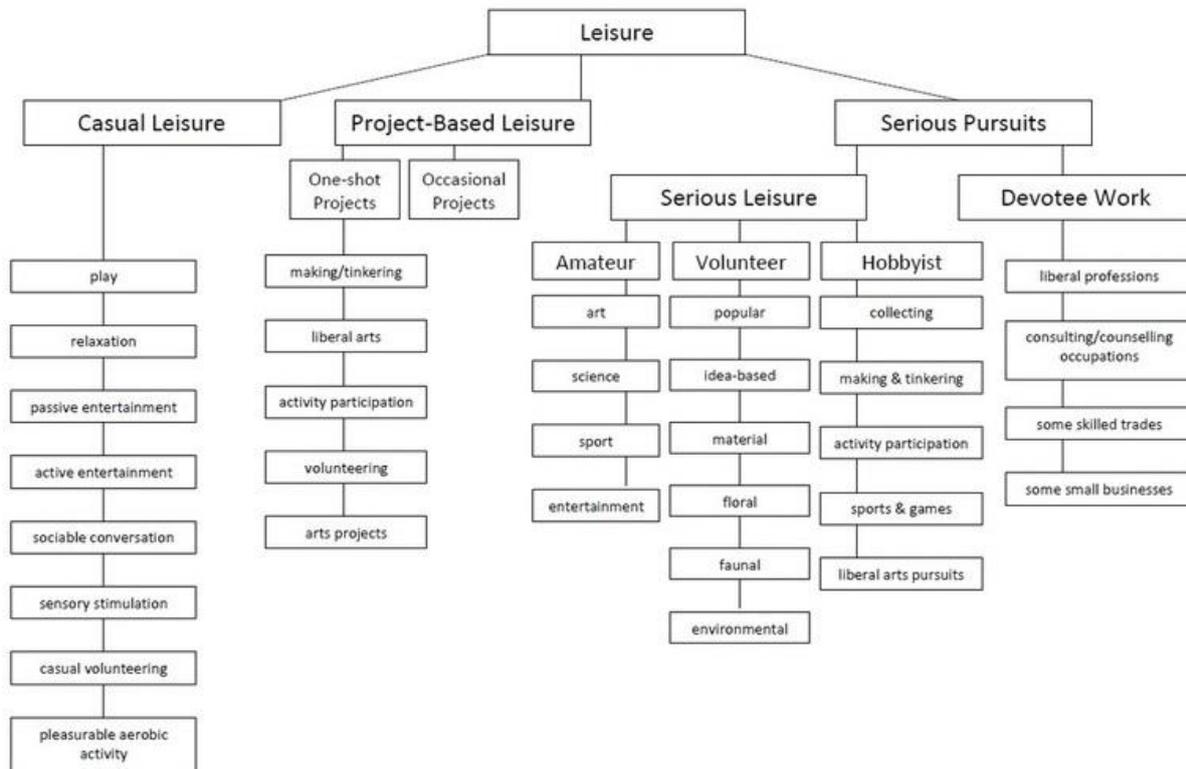


Figure 3: The Serious Leisure Perspective (Source: The Serious Leisure Perspective, n.d.)

In another article, Stebbins (2001) writes that despite its hedonistic characteristics, casual leisure also generates a considerable number of benefits and is therefore not a trivial form of leisure. Furthermore, the benefits and costs are recognized in its various forms. Among the benefits, Stebbins (2001) defines creativity and discovery, the state of "Serendipity", which is the typical form of informal experimentation, accidental discovery, and spontaneous invention, edutainment, which comes from participating in mass entertainment activities such as watching movies and TV shows, listening to music and reading books/articles of a rather popular character (visits to theme parks and museums are also considered as forms of edutainment), relaxation or entertainment, interpersonal relationships among participants, well-being and quality of life, benefits inherent to casual leisure activities. Costs resulting from not realizing the benefits described above can consequently lead to situations of annoyance, caused by moments without well-being or moments with low life quality, causing disinterest and a loss of pleasure and satisfaction by the activities of casual leisure. Another associated cost is the lack of identification with the leisure activity, among the practitioners, who by its ephemeral

character, does not generate a special identification. Another associated cost, according to Stebbins (2001), is the idea that participation in casual leisure activities leaves a short time to practice serious leisure activities and therefore deprive the individuals of an optimized leisure time in their lives. Moreover, Stebbins refers to casual leisure's limited contribution to increase self-esteem, personal development, and community development, while the casual leisure contribution of volunteers is being retained (Stebbins, 2001).

Generally, according to Stebbins (2001), casual leisure is less substantial and offers no career possibility as it might do in serious leisure. Basically, the individuals do whatever they feel like doing. Despite its trivial nature, casual leisure is not less important for the individuals' personal and social lives and requires further exploratory studies (Stebbins, 2001).

Stebbins distinguishes serious leisure with six qualities which are primarily found herein from casual leisure: “(1) need to persevere at the activity, 2) availability of a leisure career, 3) need to put in effort to gain skill and knowledge, 4) realization of various special benefits, 5) unique ethos and social world, and 6) an attractive personal and social identity” (The Serious Leisure Perspective, n.d.). Many different studies have already been developed from the Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP) in various recreational activities both in the area of sport, as well as in other leisure areas such as especially birdwatching (Connell, 2009) and volunteering (Stebbins, 1996) in which the six qualities of serious leisure defined by Stebbins were validated. Stebbins suggests that the serious leisure theory can apply to cultural tourism if tourism combined with the pursuit of recreational leisure activities may manifest characteristics of serious leisure. (Stebbins, 1996). Tsung-Chiung et al. (2012) proposed a study, based on the serious leisure theory to analyse the profile of serious leisure in relation to aboriginal tourism, in order to segment these tourists in subgroups "expert", "interested", "apathetic" and consequently and provide management suggestions for aboriginal tourism.

Serious leisure involves the “systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer core activity that people find so substantial, interesting and fulfilling that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a (leisure) career centred on acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge, and experience” (Stebbins, 2007, p. 5). Furthermore, Stebbins discusses the personal and social gains of participating in serious leisure pursuits. Despite the ‘seriousness’ of serious leisure, Stebbins explains that exciting activities make a crucial part of this reward system and contribute without any doubt to “the motivation to stick with the pursuit in the hope of finding similar experiences again and again” (Bauckham, 2013, p. 444).

Green and Jones (2005) approve that sports tourism shows the six qualities of serious leisure presented by Stebbins and they also claim that *serious sports tourism*, what is explained

as traveling in order to participate in serious leisure, might contribute to the individual's development of a positive attitude towards social identity (Green & Jones, 2005).

## **2.7 Collecting**

Collecting is a major characteristic of groundhopping (Connell, 2017; Kren, 2013) and therefore clearly worth looking at regarding this research. Bammel and Bammel (1995) argue that tourism in general can be defined as a process of collecting experiences. Considering this thought, one will see the connection to groundhopping as a majority of groundhoppers has a similar interest or motivation in collecting football grounds. Thinking of tourism in general, one would think of certain destinations people want to visit. In the case of groundhopping the different grounds are therefore the destinations. Apart from the psychological collection of football grounds, there may also happen a more physical collection by purchasing various artefacts, like for example matchday magazines, badges, scarfs or other merchandise, and photographs linked to each specific travel to a new football ground. In today's online communities it is obvious that many groundhoppers take pictures and/or videos to keep record of their visits and share them with their community.

McIntosh and Schmeichel (2004) describe collecting in their study as “pervasive behaviour in our culture” (p.85) and suggest that collecting is an interesting topic as it is often linked or subject to traits like for example self-identity. Furthermore, McIntosh and Schmeichel propose that the collector in general is considered to collect tangible objects which give a clear and positive feedback of achievement to increase his or her self-identity. Connecting this to groundhoppers, it is the football grounds which are going to be collected by the collectors or groundhoppers. The interesting part for them in this case is the desire to go on a trip to a certain football ground and collect it eventually. (McIntosh & Schmeichel, 2004). The authors divide the collecting process into eight stages: (1) goal formation: deciding to collect something, (2) gathering information, (3) planning and courtship, (4) the hunt, (5) acquisition, (6) post-acquisition, (7) manipulation/display/cataloguing, (8) return to stage 1 or 3 (McIntosh & Schmeichel, 2004).

*“Fortunately, recent advances in technology provide convenient and inexpensive access to millions of potential research participants who engage in collecting behavior. Internet auction sites such as Ebay and collectors’ news groups and chat rooms on the Internet are filled with people who love to collect, and most are more*

*than happy to answer questions about their hobby. Indeed, answering questions about collecting affords them the opportunity to affirm their identity as collectors, to exhibit expertise, and to be a good citizen of the collecting community. [...] This is one of the main reasons people collect.”*

(McIntosh & Schmeichel, 2004)

## **2.8 Sport Fan Motivation Scale**

Over the last few years, different scales have been developed for measuring the motives of sports recipients. One of the first scales in this regard is the frequently cited Sport Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS) by Wann (1995), which includes the following eight factors or motives: (1) eustress, (2) self-esteem, (3) entertainment, (4) escape, (5) aesthetic, (6) economic, (7) group affiliation, (8) family needs. The entertainment factor proved to be the strongest motive, while the reception of the economic motives (e.g. sports betting) has received the least importance (Wann, 1995). In order to further improve the quality of the Sport Fan Motivation Scale, Wann et al. (1999) conducted studies with heterogeneous subject groups and compared different sports. There were motivational differences between the respondents regarding certain types of sports. For instance, the subject of aesthetics in non-aggressive individual sports has in comparison to team sports, a higher importance, while the factors tension and escape in the latter showed a greater influence (Wann et al., 1999).

Taking a closer look at each of the motives of Wann’s Sport Fan Motivation Scale, eustress (positive stress) also describes experiencing the thrilling atmosphere when attending a live sports event at a certain sporting venue. According to Wasserberg (2009), this is “creating a feeling of psychological wellbeing” (p.13). Wann et al. (1999) also state that it increases the value of joy and entertainment and that the striving for excitement from the sports event is very important for the sports fan who is motivated by positive stress or eustress.

The motive of self-esteem is to give people a sense of accomplishment and increase their self-esteem when their specific team or sport in general is doing well (Wann et al., 1999). Sports fans also have the opportunity to keep a positive self-concept. This is described by Wasserberg (2009) as “basking in reflected glory” (p. 14). Moreover, fans who are not visiting sports events on a regular base, feel motivated to participate if their club or athlete succeeds and wins (Hunt et al., 1999).

The entertainment factor will encourage sports fans to follow or pursue sports events to watch a competition that will ideally become a success for the athlete or team they support.

The desire is usually to be entertained by the event or the participating athletes respectively (Wasserberg, 2009).

Also, Wann et al. (1999) show that the motive *escape* adapts very tight to the entertainment motive, as it offers individuals the opportunity to break away from their everyday lives and to devote themselves to something in the past or to a hobby.

The aesthetic motive for sports consumption is the “high level of skill and competence” (Agas et al., 2012, p. 114) shown by teams and players. Wann et al. (1999) state that individuals in certain sports such as ballet or gymnastics are attracted by grace and beauty.

With the economics motive, Wann (1995) refers to benefits that are offered by actions such as gambling or sports betting. According to Wann, those are the reason some people turn into active sports fans. However, research also figured that people who are highly motivated regarding economic benefits are not fans of the sport, which means they do not identify with the athletes or actively support their favorite team (Wann et al., 2008).

Wasserberg (2009) describes group affiliation as the need to “strengthen and maintain social links through shared experience of attending sports events” (p. 15). The desire of spending time with friends or a certain social group is possibly the main reason for sports consumption.

Family motives are the need to spend time with family members and here sport consumption is the tool or reason to meet that wish. Activities like strengthen family ties and spending free time with family members could be a great motivation for families especially with young kids (Wann et al., 2008).

Since the popularity of sports and other leisure activities is increasing and their impact on the society and the economy is growing as well, it is also important to the tourism industry to understand the importance of today’s sports fans. Grouping and categorizing sports fans in particular groups like Giulianotti (2002) did it for example with supporters, followers, fans and flâneurs is crucial because it distinguishes a special group of costumers and a certain target market. Therefore, a good understanding will empower sports associations to develop and apply corresponding strategies in order to attract sports events fans and eventually make them purchase merchandise articles such as sports equipment and team kits or general sportwear.

### **3. Methodology**

This chapter shows the methodological approach of primary research and how the research questions of this thesis - to determine the motivational factors and possible typologies of German football groundhoppers – have been approached. In order to achieve the research aim and answer the research questions, a deductive research approach has been chosen (Sirakaya-Turk, 2017; Saunders et al., 2009).

#### **3.1 Population and Sampling**

According to Raithel, a population is defined by having a common trait or a common combination of traits (Raithel, 2008). Sirakaya-Turk et al. (2017) state that the sample should be representative and therefore chosen in a random way. Knowing only an estimated number of the total population and with limited time for the research project, it seems reasonable to draw a non-probability sample instead. With the two biggest German Facebook groups about groundhopping counting each approximately 3,000 members (possibility of overlap), it is believed that a representative sample can be achieved using this method. Hence, for this quantitative research, the original target population consisted of every active German groundhopper but since this population is hard to define and somewhat unknown and therefore difficult to research, this thesis focusses on the accessible population as target population. To rule out the possible overlapping of the two Facebook groups, the target population for this research are therefore German groundhoppers, who are part of the bigger German Facebook group (“Groundhopping”) about groundhopping only. Being part of the entire German groundhopper population, the sample statistically fulfils the population’s characteristics and traits (Diekmann, 2011). As mentioned before, for this thesis, the sample will be taken from the accessible “online” population.

As mentioned by Veal, when using a sample two questions arise: What procedures must be followed to ensure representativeness and how large should the sample be (Veal, 2006)? If the sample can be used to generalize regarding the whole population is determined by the level of statistical significance. Therefore, a confidence interval of 95% and a standard error of 5% are usually considered as being acceptable (Veal, 2006). Veal states, that it is important to define the population and the margin of error. As mentioned, usually a margin of error of 5% is tolerable as it would represent the population with a 95% probability. Veal (2006) and Saunders et al. (2009) both use the same table (see Figure 4) to determine sample sizes using the 95% confidence level. Before the survey process started the researcher took into

consideration that since the number of German groundhoppers is estimated with around 5,000 in total (Naumann, 2014) and given the accessible population of approximately 3,000, a sample size of around 370 should be representative for the entire population. After deciding to make the Facebook group the population of this survey, Figure 4 shows that a sample of 357 respondents would result in representativeness for the whole population. The sample size may also be calculated with Yamane’s (1967) formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} = 353 \text{ respondents}$$

$n$  = the sample size

$N$  = the population size

$e$  = the acceptable sampling error

95% confidence level and  $p = 0.5$  are assumed

Population	Margin of error			
	5%	3%	2%	1%
50	44	48	49	50
100	79	91	96	99
150	108	132	141	148
200	132	168	185	196
250	151	203	226	244
300	168	234	267	291
400	196	291	343	384
500	217	340	414	475
750	254	440	571	696
1 000	278	516	706	906
2 000	322	696	1091	1655
5 000	357	879	1622	3288
10 000	370	964	1936	4899
100 000	383	1056	2345	8762
1 000 000	384	1066	2395	9513
10 000 000	384	1067	2400	9595

Figure 4: Sample sizes for different sizes of population at 95% confidence level, Source: Saunders et al. (2009)

### 3.2 Sampling Method

Because of a missing precise definition of the population and an unclear total number of people within the entire groundhopping population in Germany it has been pointed out already that the biggest German Facebook groundhopper community will be the population of this research. Considering Saunders et al. (2009) and Veal’s (2006) theories about sampling, it has been decided to choose non-probability and convenience sampling methods for this research.

With no given database of the population, it is most convenient to contact the German groundhopping community directly through their Facebook group.

The Facebook group (“Groundhopping”) contacted for this thesis is by far the largest and most active German groundhopping community. It is a closed group, members need to be verified by the administrators to join the community. After contacting them and explaining the reason for joining the group, the researcher has been granted membership in the community in order to conduct the survey. The research tool has been placed in this community in form of a web link to the survey’s homepage and the members responded on a self-selection basis, which results in a decrease of representativeness. Initially, before sharing the tool with the community, the researcher has been thinking of asking the members to share the questionnaire with friends and family members who are groundhoppers and not part of the community. This way the researcher could have been able to use snowballing as a tool to reach out to more people. With self-selection already being a limitation, the researcher decided to not use snowballing as it might lead to the participation of people outside the actual population. A filter question has been considered in order to hold down negative effects of the used methods but has not been used as a filter in the end (see 4.1).

### **3.3 The Research Tool**

Reaching out to collect a huge amount of data in a short period of time and with this research being both exploratory and descriptive, an internet-mediated questionnaire has been chosen. Ideally, the outcome of the collected data can help future research to develop or establish new ideas and theories about the field of groundhopping in general (Saunders et al., 2009).

Following Veal’s (2006) questionnaire design, the questionnaire was designed using the research questions and objectives to make sure the research aim is going to be achieved. Therefore, questions that were directly linked to the objectives have been formulated in a closed way to receive valuable data. However, there was also a use of open-ended questions in form of “other” as a possible answer to allow the community to give specific input where necessary. In general, pre-coded questions save time, which was an advantage given the limited time frame of this research and they also increase validity (Veal, 2006). Since the questionnaire was carried out in German it is worth mentioning that the participants have been addressed with the informal version of “you” regarding the juvenile and easy-going nature of groundhoppers.

A German online survey tool named “Umfrage Online” has been used for this questionnaire. The link to the actual survey has been shared with the groundhopping community in their Facebook group “Groundhopping” on Monday, April 30, 2018 and was available to the participants until Sunday, May 6, 2018. After the initial sharing and description of the survey on Monday, there has been one additional reminder on Friday, May 4, 2018 telling the community that the questionnaire will close after the weekend.

### **3.4 Pilot Test**

To test run the questionnaire before conducting the actual survey, a pilot test has been held. The main goal of the pilot test was to ensure layout, sequencing and wording of the questions (Veal, 2006). Therefore, the questionnaire was given to a limited number of personal contacts of the researcher who are active groundhoppers. Results and feedback of this test run resulted in only minor changes towards the final version of the questionnaire. There were no comprehensive difficulties towards the vocabulary in the questionnaire. Mostly layout and user friendliness have been improved after the pilot test. Since question 9 used to be a ranking question at first, it seemed that almost every participant of the pilot test had – although understanding the task – problems with the functionality especially of the mobile version of the survey tool. The question has therefore been changed to a Likert scale type of question to ensure that the question works throughout the actual survey.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

After the questionnaire had been taken offline, the received answers have been downloaded from the research tool in a Microsoft Excel spread sheet and imported into the statistical software IBM SPSS 25 for further assessment. Due to the exploratory traits of the research project, bis parts of the analysis consist of descriptive statistics. Tables stating frequencies and percentages of the respondents’ answers in the questionnaire had been used to gain insights in a topic with a low amount of previous research – not just about groundhopping in general but especially about German groundhoppers and their motivational factors and possible typologies in particular. To support the descriptive part of the study and in order to detect possible linkages, correlation analysis had been run using Spearman’s rho. Furthermore, in order to explore groupings within the sample factor analysis and cluster analysis have been conducted.

### **3.6 Reliability, Validity and Objectivity**

To ensure the quality of this study and its contribution to research, the researcher had to aim for high reliability, validity and objectivity (Veal, 2006). Following specific procedures and explaining the process in detail results in an acceptable level for the three categories. Therefore, each problem shall be covered in this chapter. In addition, the limits of the methodology are being discussed. Other limitations are listed in chapter 3.7.

In order to prove that the methodology is being valid, this section discusses aspects that have influenced the validity of this thesis. Krauth (2000) wrote about the validity of the content and associated it to the suitability of a certain method. Veal (2006) gives advantages or benefits of conducting an online survey in the form of a web-based questionnaire. Considering the timeframe for this study and all the above discussed variables, such as the vague and only estimated amount of groundhoppers in the entire population and the therefore online-limited access to the sample, a questionnaire seemed to be the most appropriate approach for this research project. According to Fisseni (2004), test properties must represent the characteristics of the population.

Therefore, a sample size has been chosen that is considered being representative. Fisseni (2004) is also concerned that the behaviour of a participant in completing a questionnaire may differ from their normal behavior and thereby reducing its validity. Unfortunately, Veal (2006) states that this effect is evident in most qualitative and quantitative research methods, and sometimes even partially in observation methods. As a result, it is hard to avoid it and it is also hard to prove. In order to increase the validity of the research, the methodology was explained in detail (Krauth, 2000). Each stage of the research process is described throughout this thesis to make it possible for other researchers to repeat it. The cross-lingual issue of this research is also a factor that influences its validity (Temple & Young, 2004). The written language of this study is English but since the population was basically entirely German or German speaking, the questionnaire has been held in German language. With the researcher being a native German speaker and being familiar with the groundhopping phenomena and its terminology, it did not influence the quality of the research in this regard. Moreover, the validity of the thesis was less affected as the researcher stayed as objective as possible throughout the whole research process (Temple and Young, 2004).

While validity refers to about what was subject of the study, reliability is about how the research has been done. According to Veal (2006), reliability can be compared to accuracy of the research. Reducing errors and making sure of the reproducibility of the research therefore

makes the reliability stronger. For a better reliability of the research, the author described in detail the concept and every stage of the thesis process. Hence, it is possible to repeat the study and possibly result in the same outcomes. However, the used method for spreading the survey and the time period the questionnaire has been online to collect the data could possibly reduce the reliability.

The objectivity is influenced by the three following factors: execution, scoring and the interpretation of the research. The research tool should be standardized, and social interaction should be minimized. Execution increases the reliability, interpretation the bias and thus increases the reproducibility (Veal, 2006). For Sica (2006), bias is a systematic error that distorts scientific measuring. With a detailed explanation of the research tool and interpretation of the answers, the researcher can increase the reliability and to have a positive impact on objectivity. In order to reduce the bias, the questions have been created in a personal but neutral manner. It has been avoided to ask suggestive questions and the comprehensibility of every question has been tested in a pilot test, as has the whole design of the questionnaire. Also, the researcher's knowledge of the groundhopping community without being an active groundhopper himself may have affected the objectivity. As mentioned already before, the author was aware of that and took a neutral point of view.

To summarize, avoiding limitations and distortions were the main reason why this research methods have been used. Nevertheless, some limitations are impossible to completely resolve, it has been tried to reduce them as much as possible. With describing the process of data collection in detail, the researcher is trying to make it valid and reliable. There was a constant aim for objectivity to minimize the negative impact on the research's reliability.

### **3.7 Limitations**

Apart from the limitation that there has not been a lot of previous research on groundhopping or groundhopping in Germany in particular so far, self-selection of the survey participants was considered one of the most obvious limitations in this research as the researcher did not have influence on who is going to answer the questionnaire and who is not. Question 6 was included to confront the participants with the Serious and Casual Leisure concept without giving any information about it to the participants. This was intended, to see how the groundhoppers decide by just reading the terms. The results are not very helpful. It is considered that the translation into German might play a role here as the terms "casual" and "serious" do not have the same strong separation in the German language.

## 4. Results and Discussion

This chapter provides an overview of the received data and the findings resulting from the participants' answers. A total of 1,041 responses have been collected with the web-based survey within one week. However, 132 participants did not completely and entirely answer the survey and have therefore been neglected. Following this, this research is based on 909 respondents. According to Gaskin (2017), unengaged respondents can also be neglected. The term 'unengaged respondents' describes survey participants who might enter the same value for every single question. The given data has therefore been screened for possible unengaged participants, but none could have been detected.

This chapter will show and discuss the outcomes of the conducted survey. Therefore, subchapters will deal with descriptive statistics regarding the sample of the survey, the groundhoppers' main motivational factors and the question, if there are existing typologies or certain groups of groundhoppers. In most parts, this study is mainly of an exploratory and descriptive character, as there has not been similar previous research on German groundhoppers, their motivation and their possible typologies. Therefore, descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages), Spearman correlations factor analysis and cluster analysis have been chosen to evaluate the results of the conducted survey.

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Due to the exploratory character of this research, this chapter lists the individual results and statistics for each of the 18 used questions in the conducted survey.

**Q1 - Would you consider yourself a groundhopper?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	194	21,3	21,3	21,3
	Yes	715	78,7	78,7	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

*Table 1: Results Question 1*

Question 1 about whether the respondent considers himself or herself a groundhopper was initially created as a possible filter question to eliminate those from the research that would have answered 'no'. The intention to use it as a filter question has been discarded because of a missing clear definition about when somebody is a groundhopper. Nevertheless, the question

has been kept in the questionnaire as the researcher wanted to see if people who did not consider themselves as groundhoppers did really answer or act differently from the people who consider themselves as groundhoppers. Also, given the fact that the sample is an online German groundhopper community it might be interesting to see if all of them are even active groundhoppers. Overall, for 78.7% of the respondents the latter has been the case as they replied with ‘yes’. Accordingly, the remaining 21.3% do not consider themselves as groundhoppers.

**Q2 - Do you mostly attend football games of the same club?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	520	57,2	57,2	57,2
	Yes	389	42,8	42,8	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 2: Results Question 2

Question 2 focussed on the question if the respondents mostly attend football games of the same club. The question is interesting because there is disagreement within the groundhopping communities whether somebody is a groundhopper if he attends mostly (home and away) games of the same club or if he is just a passionate supporter of that club who also follows their games wherever they may take place in Europe or even in the world. Although a slight majority (57.2%) of the respondents stated that they do not focus on a certain club’s games, for the researcher 42.8% is a surprisingly high number of participants who do mostly attend the games of the same club. Of course, even if one acts like this is does not prevent him or her from travelling to games that are not linked to this one club.

**Q3 - Do you have one specific favorite club?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	32	3,5	3,5	3,5
	Yes	877	96,5	96,5	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 3: Results Question 3

Question 3 about whether the respondent has a specific favorite football club is somewhat related to question 2. Groundhoppers often are considered not supporting or having a favorite club as they visit various kinds of games in different divisions. The fact that 96.5%

do have a favorite club is an unexpectedly high number. It is important to mention that the existence of a personal favorite club does not automatically make the person live watch the games. This support may also take place in form of checking the results or watching the games on TV without groundhopping being involved. However, the small amount of 3.5% not having a favorite club also shows that most people being passionate about football do also identify with a certain club.

**Q4 - When attending football games, I prefer traveling \_\_\_\_\_.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	by myself	137	15,1	15,1	15,1
	with friends	742	81,6	81,6	96,7
	with my family	30	3,3	3,3	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 4: Results Question 4

Question 4 deals with the kind of companionship the respondents prefer traveling with when groundhopping. The big majority (81.6%) prefers traveling with friends, while the remaining part prefers traveling either alone (15.1%) or with their family (3.3%). While most groundhoppers probably do not consistently follow this way of traveling, the main focus regarding this question was about what they prefer. Looking at the given statistic, one might conclude that many (but not all) groundhoppers do prefer traveling with friends in first instance but do not mind visiting games on their own if they do not find company. The low percentage of respondents traveling with family leads to the assumption that groundhopping for most people is not considered an option for family activities.

**Q5 - Which type of transportation do you usually use when attending a football game?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Car	321	35,3	35,3	35,3
	Bus	28	3,1	3,1	38,4
	Train	153	16,8	16,8	55,2
	Plane	12	1,3	1,3	56,5
	Combination of more than one	389	42,8	42,8	99,3
	Other	6	,7	,7	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 5: Results Question 5

Question 5 asked about at the type of transportation the respondents are usually using when attending a football game. Most participants (42.8%) use combinations of more than just one type of transportation. In case of attending higher division games this usually includes the individual getting to the city of the venue by car, train or plane and then the use of public transport to reach the stadium. The sole use of car (35.3%), train (16.8) or bus (3.1%) might apply to both long distance and short distance travel. The sole use of plane (1.3%) and other transportation (0,7%) do not appear being of any big relevance and/or importance to groundhoppers.

**Q6 - Choose what applies most to you: "Personally, I consider groundhopping as \_\_\_\_\_."**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	casual leisure	513	56,4	56,4	56,4
	serious leisure	396	43,6	43,6	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 6: Results Question 6

Question 6 was created to make the respondent choose if he or she personally considers groundhopping as casual or serious leisure. Regarding this question, it is important to remember that the questionnaire has been conducted in German language. The terms casual leisure and serious leisure therefore have been translated into German. Besides, there is a high chance of almost all respondents not being aware of the studies or even the terminologies regarding casual and serious leisure. To the researcher, the question was still important as it gives an insight about how the participants personally reflect upon what role groundhopping plays in their lives. Therefore, one can assume that people considering groundhopping being a 'normal' hobby to them answered with casual leisure (56.4%) and those considering groundhopping as more than just a regular hobby, as some kind of lifestyle, answered with serious leisure (43.6%). One must be very careful of using these results directly towards the casual and serious leisure perspective studies. Instead, the answers are rather useful in terms of self-reflection of the respondents and if there might be different behavioural patterns between people choosing casual or serious leisure.

**Q7 - Approximately, how many football games within Germany did you attend in the last four weeks?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	43	4,7	4,7	4,7
	1 - 3 games	186	20,5	20,5	25,2
	4 - 6 games	304	33,4	33,4	58,6
	7 - 9 games	174	19,1	19,1	77,8
	10 or more games	202	22,2	22,2	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

*Table 7: Results Question 7*

Question 7 focusses on how many football games the respondent has attended in Germany within the last four weeks. The table above shows the individual numbers for each category. 95.3% of the respondents have at least attended one game in Germany in the last four weeks. 74.7% have attended at least four games and 41.3% attended at least seven games within Germany in the last four weeks. Considering that football games in Germany – especially in lower divisions - usually take place on Saturday and Sunday with some exceptions during the week, one can already guess from these numbers that most of the respondents attends multiple games per week.

**Q8 - Approximately, how many football games outside Germany did you attend in the last four weeks?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	363	39,9	39,9	39,9
	1 - 3 games	322	35,4	35,4	75,4
	4 - 6 games	130	14,3	14,3	89,7
	7 - 9 games	37	4,1	4,1	93,7
	10 or more games	57	6,3	6,3	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

*Table 8: Results Question 8*

Question 8 on the other hand focusses on how many football games the respondent has attended outside Germany within the last four weeks. The fact that the numbers shown above indicate a lower attendance of games comes naturally as attending games abroad always requires a higher invest of time and money. However, 60.1% of the participants have attended at least one game outside Germany in the last four weeks. 24.7%, roughly one fourth of the

respondents have even attended four or more games during the last four weeks – that is an average of at least one game per week. Of course, this may include people living outside Germany and people being on vacation. Since the amount of people living outside Germany in the sample was very low, one can assume that the statistic above is very accurate and required the respondents to travel to the attended games abroad.

Comparing the two tables from question 7 and question 8, it is notable that a total of ten respondents (1.1%) has not attended any games at all in the last four weeks. Whether those people did not attend any games because of health or personal reasons or if they are simply not active groundhoppers could not be determined with this survey. As the number is very low, one can assume that most respondents which has been active in the last four weeks are indeed active groundhoppers. This is supported by the fact that – regardless of where the games have been attended – a total of 786 respondents (86.5%) have attended at least four games within the last four weeks.

**Q9 - For you personally, judge the listed leagues/competitions in terms of attractiveness regarding groundhopping:**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
UEFA Champions League	909	1	7	3,83	1,824
UEFA Europa League	909	1	7	4,46	1,674
German Cup	909	1	7	4,70	1,523
Bundesliga	909	1	7	4,15	1,759
2. Bundesliga	909	1	7	4,89	1,467
3. Liga	909	1	7	5,44	1,293
Regionalliga	909	1	7	5,67	1,183
Lower German Divisions	909	1	7	5,46	1,494
Foreign Top Divisions	909	1	7	5,77	1,216
Foreign Lower Divisions	909	1	7	5,30	1,558
Valid N (listwise)	909				

Table 9: Results Question 9

Question 9 asked the participants to judge various football leagues and competitions in terms of their individual attractiveness when it comes to groundhopping. The respondents could choose from -3 (entirely unattractive) to +3 (entirely attractive). For the evaluation of the data it has been recoded from 1 to 7 with the latter meaning ‘entirely attractive’. Apart from UEFA Champions League, all other leagues and competitions are rather attractive than unattractive to

the respondents as the mean value shows. However, it is remarkable that the UEFA Champions League where the best European football clubs compete against each other gets the lowest score of all the listed elements. Hence, the athletic value of the individual matchup seems not to be of big relevance to groundhoppers. The reason for the higher score of UEFA Europa League – the second big Europe-wide club competition - might be the fact that there are also various clubs from smaller European countries participating which might be attractive in terms of visiting new grounds when they play their home games. Compared to the two highest German divisions (Bundesliga and 2. Bundesliga), lower divisions in and outside Germany as well as foreign top divisions seem to be of much higher attractiveness to the respondents with mean scores of 5.30 or higher. As many groundhoppers tend to be nostalgic about football and refuse to accept the commercialization of professional football, it makes sense that semi-professional and amateur divisions are more attractive to them in terms of attending games. Furthermore, the fact that many traditional clubs with their traditional stadiums in Germany which used to play Bundesliga in the 1980's and 1990's compete in 3. Liga or Regionalliga. The general attendance for their games is quite high compared to the level they are playing at. This may also attract groundhoppers to experience 'traditional football'.

## 4.2 Motivational Factors

In order to discover and examine the motivational factors of German groundhoppers, a broad variety of 21 statements was given to the participants in question 10, to which they have been able to respond in form of a 7-point Likert scale. Just like in question 9, the selectable answer for every single statement reached from -3 (entirely disagree) to +3 (entirely agree) and was afterwards recoded into a scale from 1 (entirely disagree) to 7 (entirely agree) as shown in the following table.

**Q10 - Please indicate to what extent these phrases apply to you or not:**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Football plays an important role in my life	909	1	7	6,58	,778
I prefer visiting grounds I have never visited before	909	1	7	6,21	1,055
I attend football games close to my place of residence	909	1	7	5,93	1,305
For me, attending football games is a form of recreation	909	1	7	5,92	1,087

I attend football games when I am on a holiday trip	909	1	7	5,90	1,265
I enjoy attending football games in a group of people	909	1	7	5,90	1,288
I want to visit as many grounds as possible	909	1	7	5,83	1,450
It is important to me to watch the full 90 minutes of the game	909	1	7	5,78	1,456
I plan ahead what grounds I am going/willing to visit next	909	1	7	5,42	1,471
I attend football games simply because it is a fun thing to do	909	1	7	5,41	1,301
I make use of the culinary offer in the stadium	909	1	7	5,27	1,519
I attend football games to escape every day's life	909	1	7	5,20	1,630
I consider groundhopping as an expensive activity	909	1	7	5,01	1,497
I gather information about the ground I am going to visit	909	1	7	4,97	1,515
I attend football games because of their entertainment value	909	1	7	4,85	1,542
I gather information about the city in which I am going to attend a game	909	1	7	4,83	1,602
I like to talk/interact with strangers when attending football games	909	1	7	4,66	1,527
I gather information about the teams I am going to watch	909	1	7	4,47	1,699
I enjoy attending football games by myself	909	1	7	4,35	1,748
The competitive meaning of the game I am attending is important to me	909	1	7	4,14	1,686
It is important to me to share my experiences during or afterwards through social media (e.g. Facebook)	909	1	7	3,88	2,074
Valid N (listwise)	909				

Table 10: Results Question 10

Question 10 was of main importance and significance to determine and explore the main motivational factors of the respondents. In order to help visualizing the results in the table shown above, the statements have been sorted in a descending order regarding their mean scores towards each individual phrase. Although the mean score of 6.58 is very high, it does not come as a big surprise that football plays an important role in the respondents' lives, as they are members in an online community about groundhopping. With 70.7% of all participants entirely agreeing with this statement, it clearly shows the sample's passion regarding football itself. While many respondents seem to regularly attend football games close to their place of residence (5.93), it does not keep them from also striving to visit new grounds (6.21). Other high mean scores show that a big majority of the participants considers attending football games as a form a recreation (5.92) and therefore also visit games and grounds when they are on a holiday trip (5.90). In accordance to question 4, where most people stated that they prefer traveling with friends, a mean score of 5.90 supports this opinion as most respondents enjoy attending games while being in a group of people. The theory about collecting comes visible with many respondents wanting to visit as many grounds as possible (5.83). What is interesting is the high agreement of the respondents towards their personal importance of watching the entire 90 minutes of a game (5.78). Compared to that the importance of the competitive meaning of the attended game gets a way lower mean score (4.14). One could interpret this as that groundhoppers do not really care about whether there are two top clubs playing against each other, but it is rather important to them to watch the full game. This coincides with question 9 and the rating of different leagues and competitions towards their attractiveness regarding groundhopping. Lower divisions – meaning less competitive character - got a higher score than for example the UEFA Champions League.

Considering all mean scores, 20 out of 21 statements received a mean score of higher than 4.00 meaning people agreed to all those statements either in a weak or a strong way. The only statement most participants disagreed on was whether it is important to them to share their groundhopping experiences on social media with others (3.88). Considering that the survey was posted in a Facebook group where initially over 1.000 people participated in, this is quite surprising. Therefore, one can assume that the members of the community rather use the Facebook group to connect with other people and exchange information about ticketing or travel questions than to share their experiences with similar people.

Considering all these results regarding the respondents' motivation when it comes to groundhopping, it was interesting to see how certain factors correlated to others. The 21 statements have been tested for reliability with the Cronbach's Alpha test. According to

Sirakaya-Turk et al. (2017), this test should possibly show a score of over 0.700. The Cronbach's Alpha test result showed a score of 0.687 for the selected 21 Likert-type questions. Given the diversity of the questions and the fact that the result was very close to the preferred 0.700 value, it can be assumed that the questions had a fairly high internal consistency.

Correlating the statements with each other using Spearman's rho, as the variables have been ordinal, it was revealed that there were some motivational factors which showed rather strong significant linkages with correlation coefficients just above or under 0.500. On one side, the involved statements have been primarily about the gathering of information about the involved teams, ground or city for future travels. On the other side there have been the questions about whether the respondents want to visit as many grounds as possible, if they prefer visiting new grounds and whether they are planning ahead what ground they are going to visit next.

		<b>Correlations I</b>				
			I plan ahead what grounds I am going/willing to visit next	I gather information about the teams I am going to watch	I gather information about the ground I am going to visit	I gather information about the city in which I am going to attend a game
Spearman's rho	I plan ahead what grounds I am going/willing to visit next	Correlation Coefficient	1,000			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.			
		N	909			
	I gather information about the teams I am going to watch	Correlation Coefficient	,316**	1,000		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	.		
		N	909	909		
	I gather information about the ground I am going to visit	Correlation Coefficient	,502**	,489**	1,000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	.	
		N	909	909	909	
	I gather information about the city in which I am going to attend a game	Correlation Coefficient	,249**	,347**	,501**	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	.
		N	909	909	909	909

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 11: Correlations I

The table above shows that respondents who plan the grounds they are going to visit next in advance, are likely to gather various of information about their next journey as well, with significant correlation coefficients of 0.249 (city), 0.316 (teams) and 0.502 (ground). What is interesting about this table is that it gives an idea about the primary motivation of groundhoppers when they are planning to attend a game. With gathering information about the ground showing the highest correlation, the stadium or venue itself seems to be of highest interest to groundhoppers in this scenario.

			<b>Correlations II</b>		
			I attend football games to escape every day's life	I attend football games because of their entertainment value	For me, attending football games is a form of recreation
Spearman's rho	I attend football games to escape every day's life	Correlation	1,000		
		Coefficient			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.		
		N	909		
	I attend football games because of their entertainment value	Correlation	,100**	1,000	
		Coefficient			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	.	
		N	909	909	
	For me, attending football games is a form of recreation	Correlation	,283**	,247**	1,000
Coefficient					
Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	.	
	N	909	909	909	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 12: Correlations II

The table above gives another impression of linkages regarding the respondents' motives. The correlation coefficients are weaker than in the previous table, but they are still significant at the 0.01 level and indicate a relation between the three variables. Focussing on the respondents' opinion about whether they consider groundhopping being a form of recreation, there are significant correlations with the usage of groundhopping to escape every day's life (0.283) and to experience entertainment (0.247). As a result, one could argue that many groundhoppers tend to use the entertaining character of football games to recover from their daily routines where other people (non-groundhoppers) might choose other leisure activities instead.

### 4.3 Demographic Statistics

To get an idea of the composition of the given sample, the last eight questions of the questionnaire have been of demographic nature. It was important to gather information about the respondents' backgrounds as this is was believed to play a crucial role in detecting possible typologies within the groundhopping community.

		Q11 - Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	868	95,5	95,5	95,5
	Female	41	4,5	4,5	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 13: Results Question 11

Question 11 asked the participants about their gender. It does not come as a big surprise that 95.5% were male, as football is often considered as a mostly male hobby or passion. While there is also a fair amount of female football fans in general, the number still makes sense, as it is usually the men who are more passionate about it and therefore even willing to travel distances to attend a football game.

		Q12 - Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	19 or younger	59	6,5	6,5	6,5
	20 - 24	215	23,7	23,7	30,1
	25 - 29	221	24,3	24,3	54,5
	30 - 34	193	21,2	21,2	75,7
	35 - 39	113	12,4	12,4	88,1
	40 - 44	52	5,7	5,7	93,8
	45 - 49	39	4,3	4,3	98,1
	50 or older	17	1,9	1,9	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 14: Results Question 12

Question 12 had the respondents to enter their individual age as a number. In order to narrow down the big age variety within the sample which reached from 14 to 69 years of age,

it has been divided into eight age groups afterwards. The highest density regarding age is the span between 20 and 34 years of age, as a total of 69.2% of the sample belong into these three related age groups.

**Q13 - Marital status**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	654	71,9	71,9	71,9
	Married, living together	168	18,5	18,5	90,4
	Married, living separate	6	,7	,7	91,1
	Divorced	14	1,5	1,5	92,6
	Civil partnership	23	2,5	2,5	95,2
	Other	44	4,8	4,8	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 15: Results Question 13

Question 13 asked about the marital status of the respondents. A vast majority of 71.9% stated that they were single. However, the assumption that many groundhoppers might be single because they spend a lot of money and time into groundhopping cannot be solved with this question as the term ‘single’ hereby refers to the legal term. Therefore, one does not know if the person is simply not married but living in a relationship with his or her girlfriend or boyfriend or if the person is simply single. Given the fact that some respondents entered ‘girlfriend’ under the ‘other’ column – which could be considered a wrong answer as they are legally single – a fair amount of these 71.9% could be in a relationship just like the 18.5% who are married and living together.

**Q14 - Nationality**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Germany	871	95,8	95,8	95,8
	Other	38	4,2	4,2	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 16: Results Question 14

Question 14 aimed at the nationality of the participants. Regarding the mentioned different nationalities, it makes sense that 95.8% of the participants are German, as the survey has been conducted in a German groundhopper community. Amongst other mentioned

nationalities, Austrians (1.5%) and Swiss (0.8%) are the biggest groups, as they share the German language. As the community is ran in German only, it is most likely that most foreign members either speak the language or live in Germany without holding German citizenship.

**Q15 - Bundesland of residence**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Baden-Württemberg	77	8,5	8,5	8,5
	Bavaria	133	14,6	14,6	23,1
	Berlin	30	3,3	3,3	26,4
	Brandenburg	24	2,6	2,6	29,0
	Bremen	8	,9	,9	29,9
	Hamburg	31	3,4	3,4	33,3
	Hesse	56	6,2	6,2	39,5
	Lower Saxony	18	2,0	2,0	41,5
	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	98	10,8	10,8	52,3
	North Rhine-Westphalia	224	24,6	24,6	76,9
	Rhineland-Palatinate	45	5,0	5,0	81,8
	Saarland	12	1,3	1,3	83,2
	Saxony	55	6,1	6,1	89,2
	Saxony-Anhalt	21	2,3	2,3	91,5
	Schleswig-Holstein	24	2,6	2,6	94,2
	Thuringia	18	2,0	2,0	96,1
	Outside Germany	35	3,9	3,9	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 17: Results Question 15

Question 15 asked about the respondents' Bundesland (state) of residence. The table shows that the participants were living all over Germany. The sample does not fully represent Germany as a whole, considering the population of each Bundesland and comparing it with the given numbers in the figure. But it gives a fairly good overview in general, as every Bundesland is represented in the sample. For example, North Rhine-Westphalia (24.6%) and Bavaria (14.6%) are the two biggest German states by population and they also hold the biggest share of participants in this survey. The same goes for Saarland (1.3%) and Bremen (0.9%), which are the two smallest states by population – the table shows that they also had the fewest participants. The most considerable finding regarding these numbers is the fact that Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (10.8%), which is the third smallest German Bundesland by

population, holds the third highest share of participants in this survey. Whether this is a coincidence or there is just a rather big groundhopping community in the northeast of Germany could not be decided within this survey. It might also be a possibility that this online community has its origin in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and therefore has a higher number of members from this geographical area. According to the nationalities of the respondents, the 3.9% living outside Germany are likely to live in direct neighbour countries to Germany, mostly Austria and Switzerland.

**Q16 - Highest completed level of education**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No school finished	4	,4	,4	,4
	Hauptschulabschluss	31	3,4	3,4	3,9
	Realschulabschluss (Mittlere Reife)	158	17,4	17,4	21,2
	Fachabitur	72	7,9	7,9	29,2
	Abitur	164	18,0	18,0	47,2
	Apprenticeship	196	21,6	21,6	68,8
	Fachhochschulabschluss	51	5,6	5,6	74,4
	Bachelor	131	14,4	14,4	88,8
	Master	44	4,8	4,8	93,6
	Diploma	40	4,4	4,4	98,0
	Staatsexamen	11	1,2	1,2	99,2
	PhD	3	,3	,3	99,6
	Other	4	,4	,4	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

*Table 18: Results Question 16*

Question 16 referred to the highest completed level of education by the respondents. The biggest shares regarding educational background have been with apprenticeship (21.6%), Abitur (18.0%), Realschulabschluss (17.4%) and bachelor's degree (14.4%) as they combine to 71.4% of the participants.

		<b>Q17 - Job status</b>			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Self-employed	39	4,3	4,3	4,3
	Official ("Beamter")	40	4,4	4,4	8,7
	Employee, permanently	495	54,5	54,5	63,1
	Employee, temporarily	74	8,1	8,1	71,3
	Worker	33	3,6	3,6	74,9
	Parental leave	1	,1	,1	75,0
	Retiree	4	,4	,4	75,5
	Pupil/Student	181	19,9	19,9	95,4
	Unemployed	6	,7	,7	96,0
	Other	36	4,0	4,0	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 19: Results Question 17

Question 17 asked about the current job status of the respondents. The two biggest groups of the participants when it comes to their current job status have been permanent employees (54.5%) and pupils/students (19.9%).

		<b>Q18 - Monthly net income</b>			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 400€	52	5,7	5,7	5,7
	400€ - 750€	89	9,8	9,8	15,5
	750€ - 1500€	154	16,9	16,9	32,5
	1500€ - 2000€	216	23,8	23,8	56,2
	2000€ - 2500€	172	18,9	18,9	75,1
	More than 2500€	134	14,7	14,7	89,9
	Prefer not to say	92	10,1	10,1	100,0
	Total	909	100,0	100,0	

Table 20: Results Question 18

Question 18 asked the participants about their monthly net income, which in general is rather diverse as the table above shows. While 10.1% did not want to state their income, one can see that the biggest part (23.8%) of the participants has a monthly net income between 1.500€ and 2.000€. In 2017, the average monthly net income in Germany has been 1.888€ (Statista, 2018). With the majority accumulating around this sum, the sample seems to be quite representative for Germany as a whole.

## 4.4 Typologies of Groundhoppers

Exploring possible typologies of groundhoppers has been one of the research objectives of this thesis. While there has been at least some general research about groundhopping in general, there has been no previous research about the aspect of detecting typologies or profiles of groundhoppers. Given the fact that there is an increasing number of groundhoppers with many different backgrounds (see demographics), it is believed that there will be certain types of groundhoppers or at least different tendencies within the population.

To explore the respondents' opinions towards the statements about motivational factors, an exploratory factor analysis and a subsequent cluster analysis have been chosen. However, Worthington & Whittaker (2006) propose that prior to this analysis the factorability of the correlation matrix should be checked using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy. As mentioned by Worthington & Whittaker (2006), the KMO value should be above 0.600 for a good factor analysis. With the KMO value for the 21 statements being 0.726 this has been given and a reliable factor analysis could have been applied as the data seemed suitable.

**Rotated Component Matrix**

	Component		
	1	2	3
I make use of the culinary offer in the stadium			,655
I attend football games because of their entertainment value			,736
For me, attending football games is a form of recreation			,679
I plan ahead what grounds I am going/willing to visit next		,630	
I want to visit as many grounds as possible		,843	
I prefer visiting grounds I have never visited before		,818	
I gather information about the teams I am going to watch	,741		
I gather information about the ground I am going to visit	,817		
I gather information about the city in which I am going to attend a game	,789		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

*Table 21: Rotated Component Matrix*

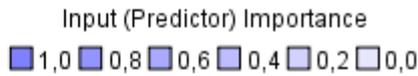
After an initial run of the factor analysis with all 21 variables, one could already expect a three-factor model with each of their eigenvalues being above 1.500. To get a better overview of the three factors, only strong (above 0.500) and clear (no strong cross-loadings) factor loadings have been considered and the factor analysis had been run again with nine variables (see Table 22). The KMO value was almost identical (0.724) and the three factors' eigenvalues were still well above 1.000 while explaining 60.3% of the total variance.

With each of the three factors consisting of three variables, factor 1 was labeled "Information Gathering" as it is built by the three statements about information gathering. It explains 29.6% of the total variance. Factor 2 explains 16.1% of the total variance and was labeled "Collecting", as it consists of the statements about visiting as many grounds as possible, visiting new grounds, and the planning of upcoming visits. Finally, factor 3 explains 14.6% of the total variance and was labeled "Casual Experience", as it consists of statements about recreation, entertainment, and the use of the culinary offer in the stadium.

In the next step, the mean scores of those three factors have been calculated as new variables in order to have a larger range of data input for the cluster analysis. Several different constellations have been tested through the two-step cluster analysis. Before discussing the most interesting clustering, it is worth noting that most demographic characteristics did not have significant influences on the building of clusters. This is surprising as the questionnaire evaluated plenty demographics. However, especially age, gender, education and income did not really distinguish the respondents regarding their motives or behaviour concerning groundhopping. Therefore, one could argue that groundhoppers – although they are very different as people in general – build their typologies not from demographic backgrounds but rather from personal attitudes and character traits.

Figure 5 shows the result of a two-step cluster analysis. The used variables have been the question about whether the respondent considers himself/herself to be a groundhopper, the question whether they mostly attend games of the same football club, the mean score of the "collecting" factor, and the sum of attended games in the last four weeks (in Germany *and* abroad). Three clusters have been formed and the silhouette measure of cohesion and separation showed a value of 0.6, which describes the cluster being of good quality. The input importance of the two yes/no-questions reached 1.00 or 0.81 respectively, while the other two variables reached values of 0.26 or 0.10 respectively. With the former two mentioned variables being categorical, their input importance is certainly higher. Nevertheless, the other two variables also significantly contribute to the clustering process. The ratio size of the clusters had a score of 2.35 and can also be considered as a solid value.

## Clusters



Cluster	3	2	1
<b>Label</b>	Traditional Groundhoppers	Supporter-Groundhoppers	Casual Groundhoppers
<b>Description</b>	1. Claim to be groundhoppers 2. Do not primarily follow one club 3. Collectors 4. Visit most games	1. Claim to be groundhoppers 2. Primarily follow one club 3. Collectors 4. Visit a lot of games	1. Do not claim to be groundhoppers 2. Tend to follow one club 3. Not really collectors 4. Visit least games
<b>Size</b>	50.2% (456)	28.5% (259)	21.3% (194)
<b>Inputs</b>			

Figure 5: Clusters

As the figure shows, three clusters have been formed and labeled. With these clusters it is possible to describe three potential typologies of groundhoppers. As the clusters have been sorted from left to right by their size, the first group to be explained are the “traditional groundhoppers”. With 50.2% they form the biggest group within the sample. The name derives from how groundhoppers are often considered to be. Although there is no universal definition for groundhoppers, most people would describe them like this group. First, they consider themselves as groundhoppers. Second, they do not primarily attend games of the same club. Third, they strive and plan to collect as many grounds as possible and fourth, they visit a large amount of games – several per week.

The second cluster has been labeled as “supporter-groundhoppers” and is represented by 28.5% of the respondents. They would also call themselves groundhoppers and want to visit as

many stadiums as possible. What distinguishes them from the traditional groundhoppers is the fact that they primarily do attend games from the same club. This is where the naming comes from as they are likely to be supporters of a certain club who – besides attending home games – follow the club to most away games as well. Regarding their total number of attending games, the supporters-groundhoppers are similar to the traditional groundhoppers and visit many games, although their average is slightly lower.

The third group was called “casual groundhoppers” and is the smallest one with a share of 21.3% of the sample. In contrast to the other two groups, they would not consider themselves to be groundhoppers. They tend to mostly attend games of the same club, but not as strict as the supporters-groundhoppers. What also makes this third group different from the other two is that they are not as passionate about collecting grounds. Furthermore, they visit a significant lower number of games and there might be weeks where they do not attend any games.

## **5. Conclusion**

This thesis aimed to examine the motivational factors and to explore possible typologies of groundhoppers, focussing on a German groundhopper online community and its members. To get an insight into this widely unknown field, a quantitative research approach had been chosen which consisted of the implementation of a web-based questionnaire that had been shared in Germany’s largest Facebook community about groundhopping. Within one week, 909 valid responses had been collected and analysed with IBM SPSS 25.

Considering the first research question “*What are the motivational factors of German football groundhoppers?*”, it can be noted that there are many different motivational factors in general, with a difference in how important they are to the individual respondents. One can conclude that to most groundhoppers in this sample, one of the main motivational factors was the continuous visit of new grounds. In accordance, the participants were mainly striving to visit as many grounds as possible which requires them to regularly travel new places. This leads to another motive which is the connection of holidays and groundhopping, as many respondents attend football games while they are on vacation. Other main motives have been the recreational aspect of groundhopping and the fact that many groundhoppers get together with other people while they are traveling to attend football games. Overall, this thesis was able to determine a variety of general motivational factors of groundhoppers. However, to strengthen and deepen the knowledge of what strives people to be active groundhoppers, further research is necessary. By creating more detailed questions from the gained results in

this thesis, another quantitative research would help to develop a better understanding of these sports tourists. Furthermore, qualitative research based on these results would also contribute to the lack of literature, as groundhoppers could openly answer questions in detail and provide more information about their passion.

The second research question “*What are possible typologies of German football groundhoppers?*”, has been approached with two different types of analyses. After determining specific factors from the questionnaire’s statements about motivation with the use of an exploratory factor analysis, they could be used to test run different cluster analyses in order to explore and detect potential typologies of groundhoppers. With a set of four variables, a two-step cluster analysis came up with useful and interesting clusters. The three discovered groups have been labeled “traditional groundhoppers”, “supporter-groundhoppers” and “casual groundhoppers”. They can be distinguished by their collecting behaviour, their frequency of attending games and their self-reflection about whether they are groundhoppers or not. With the data that has been collected throughout the survey, it is not unlikely that there is potential to explore more typologies or more detailed typologies of groundhoppers. Given the time frame of this project, the results are somewhat superficial as this complex field would require more time and more resources to gain an in-depth look into the groundhopping scene. While this thesis project was able to discover some interesting facts and statistics, further research is required not just to study the behaviour and motives of groundhoppers, but also their value and position within the field of sports tourism.

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# Appendix

## Translation of Questionnaire (Originally in German)

Hello and thank you for participating in my survey among German groundhoppers. I am conducting this survey as a part of my master thesis and I hope that it will help me to increase the surprisingly low level of research regarding “groundhopping” a little bit. This survey is of course anonymous, I will be the only one with insight to the individual questionnaires. After the survey has come to an end, all the collected data will be analysed with statistical software in order to interpret the results.

If you have any questions about the survey or the thesis you can email me via my Swedish university email: h17chrba@du.se

The survey should take less than 10 minutes of your time.

1. Would you consider yourself a groundhopper?
  - Yes
  - No
  
2. Do you mostly attend football games of the same club?
  - Yes
  - No
  
3. Do you have one specific favorite club?
  - Yes
  - No
  
4. When attending football games, I prefer traveling \_\_\_\_\_.
  - by myself
  - with friends
  - with my family
  
5. Which type of transportation do you usually use when attending a football game?
  - Car
  - Bus
  - Train
  - Plane
  - Combination of more than one
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Choose what applies most to you: “Personally, I consider groundhopping as \_\_\_\_\_?”
- Casual leisure
  - Serious leisure
7. Approximately, how many football games within Germany did you attend in the last four weeks?
- None
  - 1 – 3 games
  - 4 – 6 games
  - 7 – 9 games
  - 10 or more games
8. Approximately, how many football games outside Germany did you attend in the last four weeks?
- None
  - 1 – 3
  - 4 – 6
  - 7 – 9
  - 10 or more
9. For you personally, judge the listed leagues/competitions in terms of attractiveness regarding groundhopping. Choose from -3 (not attractive at all) to +3 (completely attractive):
- UEFA Champions League
  - UEFA Europa League
  - German Cup
  - Bundesliga
  - 2. Bundesliga
  - 3. Liga
  - Regionalliga
  - Lower German divisions
  - Foreign top divisions
  - Foreign lower division

10. Please indicate to what extent these phrases apply to you or not. Choose from -3 (does not apply at all) to +3 (applies completely):

- a) Football plays an important role in my life
- b) I attend football games to escape every day's life
- c) I enjoy attending football games in a group of people
- d) I enjoy attending football games by myself
- e) I like to talk/interact with strangers when attending football games
- f) It is important to me to watch the full 90 minutes of the game
- g) I make use of the culinary offer in the stadium
- h) I attend football games because of their entertainment value
- i) For me, attending football games is a form of recreation
- j) I attend football games simply because it is a fun thing to do
- k) The competitive meaning of the game I am attending is important to me
- l) I attend football games when I am on a holiday trip
- m) I attend football games close to my place of residence
- n) I consider groundhopping as an expensive activity
- o) I want to visit as many grounds as possible
- p) I prefer visiting grounds I have never visited before
- q) I gather information about the teams I am going to watch
- r) I plan ahead what grounds I am going/willing to visit next
- s) I gather information about the ground I am going to visit
- t) I gather information about the city in which I am going to attend a game
- u) It is important to me to share my experiences during or afterwards through social media (e.g. Facebook)

You are almost done!

Ultimately, just one page with short questions for demographic purposes. Again, the survey is 100% anonymous and is going to be treated discretely.

11. Choose your gender

- Male
- Female

12. How old are you?

\_\_\_\_\_

13. Choose your marital status:

- Single
- Married, living together
- Married, living separate
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Civil partnership
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Choose your nationality:

- Germany
- Austria
- Switzerland
- Luxembourg
- Liechtenstein
- Netherlands
- Turkey
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Choose your Bundesland of residence:

- Baden-Württemberg
- Bavaria
- Berlin
- Brandenburg
- Bremen
- Hamburg
- Hesse
- Lower Saxony
- Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
- North Rhine-Westphalia
- Rhineland-Palatinate
- Saarland
- Saxony
- Saxony-Anhalt
- Schleswig-Holstein
- Thuringia
- Outside Germany

16. What is your highest completed level of education?

- No school finished
- Hauptschulabschluss
- Realschulabschluss (mittlere Reife)
- Fachabitur
- Abitur
- Apprenticeship
- Fachhochschulabschluss
- Bachelor
- Master
- Diploma
- Staatsexamen
- PhD
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

17. What is your current job status?

- Self-employed
- Official (“Beamter”)
- Employee, permanently
- Employee, temporarily
- Worker
- Parental leave
- Retiree
- Pupil/Student
- Unemployed
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Indicate your monthly net income:

- Under 400€
- 400€ - 750€
- 750€ - 1500€
- 1500€ - 2000€
- 2000€ - 2500€
- Over 2500€
- Prefer not to say

That's it!

Thank you very much for participating and withstanding. As a reminder, my email once again: h17chrba@du.se

All you need to do now is click on “Done” ;)