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An Exploration of Contributing Factors of Student Fitness Employee Job Satisfaction in Campus Recreation

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AN EXPLORATION OF CONTRIBUTING FACTORS OF STUDENT FITNESS EMPLOYEE
JOB SATISFACTION IN CAMPUS RECREATION

By

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JOB SATISFACTION IN CAMPUS RECREATION

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AN EXPLORATION OF CONTRIBUTING FACTORS OF STUDENT FITNESS EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION IN CAMPUS RECREATION

Abstract

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University of the Pacific
2020

This qualitative study explored what factors contributed to a student employee's satisfaction with their job in the fitness sector of campus recreation. Campus recreation programs offer many on-campus jobs for students, with a focus on student development and community. Despite much research being done on job satisfaction, there is a noticeable gap when it comes to job satisfaction in campus recreation fitness. Findings from nine semi-structured phone interviews across three universities in California, Louisiana, and Mississippi have yielded three main elements: people, job qualities, and rewards. First, the findings indicated that supervisors, teammates, and patrons are the people that contribute to job satisfaction. Second, job qualities included job design and creativity. Third, rewards encompassed recognition, pay, and promotion and were a bit unpredictable in how they affect job satisfaction. Many of these themes paralleled previous research, while some more unique topics, such as the impact of patrons and creativity on job satisfaction, emerged. The findings of this research provide campus recreation fitness professionals with information on how to create a work environment that foster high job satisfaction. The study concludes with several recommendations that can be used to better understand the contributing factors of job satisfaction for student employees in campus recreation fitness programs.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." -Confucius

While the academic study of job satisfaction may not have existed in the days of Confucius, Kellison and James (2011, p. ix) share, "Job satisfaction is among the most researched concepts in the study of organizational behavior." Most research on the topic has shown a correlation between job satisfaction and positive outcomes such as strong job performance, commitment, and loyalty (Kellison & James, 2011). Satisfied employees have stronger productivity than dissatisfied employees and can recruit other similarly valuable workers. Ultimately, employees with high job satisfaction are vital to their organization's success, and therefore, understanding the major factors contributing to one's job satisfaction is highly worthwhile to leaders and employers (Stier, Schneider, Kampf, & Gaskins, 2010).

In a collegiate setting, there are a plethora of job opportunities for students. One organization on campus that employs many students is campus recreation. Often, a major influence on an employee's job satisfaction is how positively an employee perceives his or her work environment (Kellison, Kim, & Magnusen, 2013). With recreation having a focus on fun and enjoyment, it stands to reason that this department on a campus might offer a positive work experience for a student employee. Campus recreation facilities seek to create a sense of community that is coupled with opportunities to relieve stress and enjoy wellness-based programming (Henchy, 2011). Because campus recreation is an important part of an undergraduate student's college experience, an employee's increased job satisfaction can foster a more positive environment not only for students who use recreation center services, but also for other employees (Grimes, 2011).

Campus recreation is comprised of a variety of areas. Common branches of campus recreation are fitness, intramural and club sports, aquatics, and outdoor adventures. Currently, while comprehensive research has been done on job satisfaction of all campus recreation student employees, there has been little research specifically focusing on the branch of fitness. Some recent studies include looking at broad campus recreation job satisfaction of all employees (Grimes, 2011; Kellison & James, 2011), work attitudes of millennial collegiate recreation employees (Kellison, Kim, & Magnusen, 2013), job satisfaction of campus recreation administrators (Kaltenbaugh, 2009; Zhang, DeMichele, & Connaughton, 2004), and job satisfaction's relationship to personal correlates in campus recreation (Ross, Young, Sturts, & Kim, 2014). As outlined in further detail later, the fitness branch of campus recreation includes distinct job components that are not necessarily present in the other branches of campus recreation, making it a particularly intriguing sector to study.

A common trend in campus recreation research has been that employees are particularly unsatisfied with their pay rate but satisfied with their level of work responsibility and their ability to schedule their job around class responsibilities (Johnson, Kaiser, & Bell, 2012; Kellison & James, 2011). A specialized understanding of what contributes to job satisfaction within the area of fitness in campus recreation and whether pay rate is the only notable dissatisfaction can provide directors with the ability to maximize the performance of their fitness employees and thus their programs. Therefore, this study will examine the contributing factors of job satisfaction for campus recreation student fitness employees by way of semi-structured interviews aimed at solidifying contemporary perceptions of job satisfaction.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In 1969, Locke defined job satisfaction as a “pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values” (p. 316). Aziri (2011) expounded on job satisfaction with definitions such as “a worker’s sense of achievement and success on the job” and “the collection of feeling and beliefs that people have about their current job” (p. 78). While all definitions may seem excessively broad at first glance, it is necessary to understand that such a sweeping definition is needed, since individual workers each hold different values in a unique way that allow them to uniquely experience job satisfaction (Locke, 1969, p. 332).

In the past, job satisfaction was viewed as whether an employee’s core needs were being met. However, in 1997, Spector indicated the commencement of a trend that focused instead on a worker’s attitude or feeling for their job (p. 2). This comes from the perspective that not only do employees deserve to be treated well for their wellbeing but also employee attitudes can influence their performance and behavior in the workplace. This trend is supported by a direct correlation that has been shown between one’s personality characteristics and their perceived job satisfaction, with extraversion holding a positive correlation and psychoticism and neuroticism (mental health) having a negative correlation (Furnham & Zacherl, 1986). Spector (1997) shares that job satisfaction is one of the most widely researched topics in its field, compared to other facets of organizational behavior, since it has a strong ability to heavily affect an organization’s efficiency (p. 1).

For an employee, having high job satisfaction is related to also having increased productivity and personal well-being levels (Aziri, 2011). Aziri (2011) continues to say that “[j]ob satisfaction is the key ingredient that leads to recognition, income, promotion, and the

achievement of other goals that lead to a feeling of fulfillment” (p. 78). Therefore, it can be inferred that if an employee desires to increase their salary or improve their position title, having high job satisfaction may be of key importance to them. Additionally, because job dissatisfaction often findings in depression, psychosomatic illness, and heart disease (Seashore and Taber, 1975) as well as increased anxiety and even a shorter lifespan (Spector, 1997, p. 66), employees may wish to implement strategies for improving job satisfaction in an attempt to live a more fulfilling life.

From an employer’s perspective, if they wish to prevent turnover, Lambert and Hogan (2009) indicate that employees with high job satisfaction are not only more committed to their organization, but also less likely to hold turnover intent. “Job satisfaction can be considered as one of the main factors when it comes to efficiency and effectiveness of business organizations” (Aziri, 2011, p. 78), which indicates that if employers can ensure their staff are satisfied with their job, their organization or business may run more smoothly and efficiently. Additionally, employers may find it valuable to minimize job dissatisfaction as it may lead to drug use and destructive behaviors - such as theft and sabotage - in the workplace (Seashore & Taber, 1975). For these outlined reasons, it may be of interest to both employees and employers to begin to question the contributing factors of job satisfaction.

In order to best understand the factors that relate to job satisfaction, Christen, Iyer, and Soberman (2006) present research supporting that job satisfaction increases alongside job performance (p. 144). An increase in effort is often linked to an increase in job performance; therefore, it stands to reason that the amount of effort one invests into their job will (at least partially) dictate their level of job satisfaction (Christen et al., 2006, p. 145). Aziri shares other factors that have been hypothesized to correlate with job satisfaction, and they are as follows:

- Manager's concern for people
- Job design (scope, depth, interest, perceived value)
- Compensation (external and internal consistency)
- Working conditions
- Social relationships
- Perceived long-range opportunities
- Perceived opportunities elsewhere
- Levels of aspiration and need achievement

Perhaps one of the most highly regarded theories in the discussion of job satisfaction is Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory. Ross et al. (2014) explain that according to this model, when hygiene factors in the workplace are removed, job dissatisfaction increases. While the inclusion of these factors does not guarantee a rise in job satisfaction, it does show a relationship with the reduction of job dissatisfaction (p. 72). Meanwhile, the motivators are the factors that are theorized to either increase or decrease job satisfaction when they are present or absent respectively (Locke, 1969, p. 332). The breakdown of motivators is the following:

- Responsibility
- Recognition
- Promotion
- Achievement in work
- Advancement
- Intrinsic aspects of the job

Hygiene factors, on the other hand, are as follows:

- Supervisor

- Salary/benefits
- Working conditions
- Company policies
- Job security
- Relationships with colleagues

As both intrinsic and extrinsic factors emerge as possible contributors to job satisfaction, it is important to understand the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. “Intrinsic motivation is defined as the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence . . . [e]xtrinsic motivation is a construct that pertains whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcome” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, pp. 56, 60). Vallerand and Ratelle (2002) postulate that those who hold intrinsic motivation in a task produce higher quality work that is more creative than those who are completing a task with extrinsic motivation. Thus, as contributing factors of job satisfaction prove to be inherently intrinsic or extrinsic, it is interesting to note that the literature suggests managers might want to emphasize the intrinsically motivating factors of job satisfaction to achieve the highest quality product from their employees.

Often, job satisfaction is measured by organizations using job satisfaction surveys and follow-up discussions or interviews (Spector, 1997, p. 72). Another popular method of measuring job satisfaction is through paper-pencil quantifiable questionnaires (Aziri, 2011, p. 82). While questionnaires cost very little and use reliable scales to easily quantify the data, they are very specific and often do not allow interviewees to vary in their responses from the specific topics introduced. On the other hand, personal interviews are less consistent and consume more resources yet allow for a deeper extrapolation from the participants (Spector, 1997, p. 5).

Several previous research studies on job satisfaction have relied on self-designed questionnaires (Stier, Schneider, Kampf, & Gaskins, 2010), with several of these studies implementing a quantifiably Likert scale as part of the questionnaire design (Christen, Iyer, & Soberman, 2006; Omar, Lolli, Chen-McCain, & Dickerson, 2011; Zhang et al. 2004). Self-developed questionnaires, such as these, are created after review of relevant literature, consultation with experts, and testing of the questions (Zhang et al., 2004, p. 190). Additionally, they may be inspired by questions asked on previously established questionnaires (Christen, Iyer, & Soberman, 2006, p. 149). An advantage of creating study-specific questionnaires is that the inquiries are specifically tailored to the population that is being surveyed (Zhang et al., 2004, p. 191). It is also common in job satisfaction research to utilize previously developed survey instruments. Examples of instruments that have been used by a previous study are The Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire Job Satisfaction Subscale and Perceived Work Environment Factors Scale (Kellison & James, 2011) as well as Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (Kaltenbaugh, 2009; Silverberg, Marshall, & Ellis, 2001).

Qualitative studies on job satisfaction have also utilized a variety of sources and methods. Mason (2002) describes how the primary methods of qualitative research – interviewing, observing, participating, and using visual documents – use the following data sources in research:

- People (as individuals, groups or collectivities)
- Organizations, institutions and entities
- Texts (published and unpublished sources including virtual ones)
- Settings and environments (material, visual/sensory and virtual)
- Objects, artefacts, media products (material, visual/sensory and virtual)

- Events and happenings (material, visual/sensory and virtual)

One example of how qualitative methods can be used in a research study can be seen in how Chen, Yang, Feng, and Tighe (2017) chose to conduct focused discussions, with self-developed topics that aim to understand the perception of attitudes related to job satisfaction. Incorporation of qualitative inquiries into job satisfaction research allows for a much more thorough examination of the topic, as exemplified by the following qualitative questions used in a study by Brayer and Marcinowicz (2018) on job satisfaction of nurses with master of nursing degrees: “(1) What makes the nursing job satisfying for you? (2) What makes the nursing job dissatisfying for you?” (p. 3). Qualitative studies are especially relevant in job satisfaction research, as qualitative instruments identify and develop emerging factors as they relate to job satisfaction (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012). As new generations enter into the workforce, it is vital to understand what factors impact their job satisfaction and if those factors are different than in the past (Kellison, Kim, & Magnusen, 2013).

The specific workforce of higher education includes a wide range of communities with the focal group being the upcoming generation of students; however, staff, administration, external research communities, alumni, businesses, and even the government are considered stakeholders in the operations of the institution (Jongbloed, Enders, & Salerno, 2008).

Therefore, Jongbloed, Enders, & Salerno (2008) note that universities uniquely not only provide a source of education but also contribute to societal change for a wide range of groups. Because expectations of higher educational institutions are changing, they are being forced to adapt via the inclusion of diverse educational content and administrative programs (Arbo & Benneworth, 2007). Research thus far has indicated that despite the uniquely dynamic environment of higher education, university faculty’s job satisfaction and dissatisfaction falls in line with Herzberg’s

Motivation-Hygiene theory (Iacqua, Schumacher, & Li, 1995); however, this does not speak to the job satisfaction of student employees in a higher education setting. Additional research by Baldwin (2009) indicates that university administrators were satisfied with present job duties, pay, opportunities for promotion, and supervision yet dissatisfied with their coworkers and their job in general. Schulze (2006) suggested that differences between universities, such as governing policies, may also lead to major differences in importance factors of job satisfaction. “Organisations have satisfied their customers only if they have also satisfied their employees” (Chen, Yang, Shiau, & Wang, 2006, p. 497), and with students being the customers of higher education settings, it is crucial that all employees of the university, including student staff, hold a positive job satisfaction.

The fitness industry is another unique and growing workplace environment in that many of its operations require skilled labor, flexibility, and a customer service focus (Macintosh & Walker, 2012). Macintosh and Walker (2012) further share that fitness positions includes job characteristics that differ from mainstream business “through activities designed for healing, restoration, and skill advancement” (p. 116). Additionally, fitness employees are required to incorporate emotional labor into their job duties. This means that they must control personal feelings in order to garner a positive emotional response from the customer for whom they serve (Maguire, 2001). Limited research has been conducted in regards to corporate fitness job satisfaction, but preliminary findings have shown that intrinsic job qualities such as creativity and recognition improved fitness employees’ job satisfaction more than extrinsic qualities such as pay and promotion. Additionally, the emphasis of helping others and eliciting a positive reaction is a distinct factor in a fitness employee’s job satisfaction (Smucker & Kent, 2004). In contrast, within the Greek healthcare system, the more that emotional labor was present, the

lower the job satisfaction (Psilopanagioti, Anagnostopoulos, Mourtou, & Niakas, 2012).

Findings are also divided on whether emotional labor contributes to positive or negative job satisfaction for teachers. In a review of emotional labor in teaching, Tsang (2011) cites four articles that argue emotional labor decreases job satisfaction and thirteen articles that show there is a more positive relationship between emotional labor and job satisfaction.

Campus recreation fitness employment is a unique job opportunity for university students found within a higher education setting yet including many distinct job components like those found in sport management. As such, the question arises as to whether the job satisfaction determinants of the fitness branch of campus recreation resemble those described by Herzberg (Ross et al., 2014) and found in higher education, including more unique qualities such as some found in the corporate fitness industry, or remain completely separate from both organizations. This study aims to help answer this question and fill the gap existing in the sport management literature on campus fitness employees.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore contributing factors to job satisfaction for a student fitness employee within a campus recreation setting. For exploratory studies, qualitative methods are often optimal. Qualitative methodology is diverse in its methods and data (Punch, 2014), can capture non-quantifiable data about human behavior (such as experiences, feelings, and emotions), assumes that reality is subjective, and often occurs in a natural setting (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Critiques often arise that qualitative studies have smaller sample sizes (Gratton & Jones, 2004), are anecdotal, and do not have a systematic grounding (Mason, 2002). However, due to the subjective nature of this project, qualitative methods were used to collect data. Specifically, semi-structured interviews were conducted and coded in order to gather current or recent insights as they relate to modern job satisfaction.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is a form of interpretive research that is known for being both creative and revelatory (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012). One of the strengths of qualitative studies is that it allows the researcher to delve into the attitudes and feelings of the research participants (Chen, Yang, Feng, & Tighe, 2017). Because this type of research allows for a subject to describe their unique interpretation of reality, qualitative research is a good fit to discover what fitness employees perceive to contribute most to their job satisfaction. By comparing the perspectives among all of the interviewed participants, recurring themes may be identified and highlighted. Jansen (2010) described qualitative studies as follows:

Many empirical studies explore the diversity of certain behaviors or cognitions within a given population, based on some ten to fifty semi-structured interviews with members

selected from that population. Typically the analysis involves the comparison of interview data for each topic inquired and then a summary of their diversity into a number of categories (themes of concern, types of behavior, attitudes, etc.). In the report, these categories are justified by quotations from the interviews.

Because job satisfaction is a complex and subjective, a qualitative methodology will be used to discover the variety of themes through interviews.

Mason (2002) shared that there are three major methods of qualitative research: interviewing, observing, and using visual documents. Interviewing is one of the most common forms of qualitative research and is based on the idea that people's perceptions and personal experiences are meaningful for society. There are three major reasons why a researcher might choose to use interviews, according to Atkinson (2012):

1. Interviews allow the researcher to see varied views and perspectives by asking people about their unique experiences.
2. Interviews often unravel the assignment of meaning to thoughts and experiences by the interviewees. This allows for lived experiences to dictate the findings of the study instead of a more mechanical data collection.
3. Interviews (with the exception of structured interviews) remove standardization as a barrier for findings and allows researchers "to speak with subjects in order to generate a wide and deep knowledge base about their topic" (Atkinson, 2012, p. 123) as opposed to limiting responses to "narrowly defined parameters" (p. 123).

Gratton and Jones (2004) described four main categories of qualitative interviews. The first of these categories is structured interviews. Structured interviews are like surveys in that they include standardized questions (Atkinson, 2012) that are asked and recorded by the researcher. As opposed to self-reported or computer-completed surveys, structured interviews allow the researcher or interviewee to clarify any confusing questions or answers. Structured

interviews only allow for the collection of predetermined data, which prevents the emergence of novel themes (Gratton & Jones, 2004), but helps to eliminate bias (Mason, 2002).

Semi-structured interviews are another category of qualitative interviewing. This type of interviewing uses a list of questions that are labeled and known as the “interview schedule” (Atkinson, 2012). Different from the structured interviews, semi-structured interviews are flexible and can cover topics in different sequences, based on each interviewee’s unique dialogue with the researcher. Follow-up questions can be used to dig for more detailed emerging information. Although data interpretation may be difficult due to ambiguity (Gratton & Jones, 2004), the organized yet fluid format of semi-structured interviewing is often seen as the most valid category of qualitative research (Mason, 2002).

A third category of qualitative interviewing is the unstructured interview. Unstructured interviews have very little focus, as the interviewee leads the discussion within the interview. The researcher has a vague direction for the interview and develops questions during the interview. “One potential danger is that of the interviewee becoming dominant and leading the interview in unwanted directions” (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p. 143).

Finally, focus groups are the fourth category of qualitative interviews. These interviews are often semi-structured yet conducted with a group of interviewees, instead of just a single participant. In focus groups, “interaction between members of the group is an important element in obtaining data” (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p. 142). The interaction among the group’s participants can potentially lead to a deeper discussion of the topic. However, the individuals of the group may offer false information because of the pressure of others in the group. Additionally, focus groups can be difficult to guide and can require a greater amount of planning than other forms of interviews.

The second major method of qualitative research, beyond speaking with participants, is observing. According to Gratton and Jones (2004), there are two classifications of observation: participant or non-participant. “Non-participant observation is the simplest form and is where the researcher will observe the phenomenon ‘from outside’ with no engagement with either the activity or the subjects” (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p. 160). Participant observation involves immersing oneself in a research setting in order to experience a range of dimensions (such as styles of behavior or construction of conversations or documents) that are not accessible in only conducting an interview (Mason, 2002). Observation works well for populations that might struggle to adequately express their opinions or beliefs, such as children (Gratton & Jones, 2004). However, observation may not be reliable method of studying job satisfaction, because as Mason (2002) says, “you cannot assume that your experience of a setting, and your social location and so on, match those of all others involved.”

A final major method of qualitative research is using visual documents or content analysis. Mason (2002) indicated that using visual documents assumes that visual representations of the world are as meaningful as or even more important than verbal utterances for understanding the world. Gratton and Jones (2004) further shared that content analysis can include any form of text, whether that be visual or audio. Context analysis may be used singularly or may be combined with another qualitative research method (Mason, 2002). “[F]or many researchers, ‘seeing’ is believing. A growing number of researches in sport, exercise and health fields visual aids, visual data or visual data collection techniques as means of producing knowledge about the world” (Atkinson, 2012, p. 239). Unfortunately, a common issue with the research method of content analysis is that often the meanings that researchers pull from the texts are misunderstandings of what the original authors meant (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Because the

discovery of themes related to job satisfaction was studied in this research via fitness employees' personal experiences, in order to ensure each participant's meaning is properly understood, content analysis or using visual documents was not an appropriate research method for this study.

Because this study aimed to collect non-quantifiable data about human behavior, specifically the contributing factors of job satisfaction, a qualitative research design was warranted. Semi-structured interviews were selected as the qualitative methodology for a variety of reasons. Primarily, the flexibility of semi-structured interviews allowed for the interviewees to share unique thoughts and experiences that might not emerge from a stiffly structured interview experience. The ability to ask follow-up questions allowed major themes to be deeply explored. Additionally, a variety of perspectives could be richly explored throughout the semi-structured interviews. An interview guide (see Appendix A) was utilized to best prevent the interviewee from directing the discussion into capricious and unrelated tangents. This also allowed for a relatively consistent line of questioning to compare and contrast participant perspectives across institutions.

Mason (2002) provided a series of steps for preparing for qualitative interviews. The first step involves establishing the big question that the research study is going to explore. Next, the big question should be broken down into smaller questions that are clearly linked to the big question. The third step involves converting the smaller questions into interview topics. At this point, the fourth step involves evaluating the topics and smaller questions with the big research question to ensure that they are contributing to the purpose of the research project. Step five involves creating a loose interview structure that will provide a flexible guide for all the interviews. Steps six and seven involve establishing standardized questions and completing a

final cross-check of all questions and topics. Following this preparation for the interviews, Mason (2002) suggests recording pilot interviews and gathering feedback from both the interviewees and a colleague to “[ensure] that you are identifying which skills you need to work on, and that you are developing and improving these” (p. 75).

When determining structure for interviews, the desired depth and breadth should be considered (Mason, 2002). Many questions should be prepared if the breadth is more important, while fewer questions should be established if the researcher would prefer to get deep answers instead. The first question may be a warm-up question but then all following questions should be chosen based on whether the interviewer would like to continue to delve into the current topic or would instead rather change the direction of the conversation. "The intellectual task is to try to assess, on the spot, the relevance of each part of the interaction to your research questions, or to what you really want to know" (Mason, 2002, p. 73). The interviewer must, in the heat of the interview, decide if continuing one topic or switching to another will be most beneficial to the big question of the research.

Seale (2011) shared best practice strategies for completing qualitative interviews and begins by emphasizing the importance of attempting to recruit a varied group of people. This study recruited not only fitness attendants but also group fitness instructors and personal trainers. Next, Seale (2011) advised to create a list of questions based on relevant literature that can mutate based on the interactions within the interviews. If possible, all interviews should be conducted by the same researcher to maintain consistency and create a solid understanding of all topics shared by interviewees (Brod, Tesler, & Christensen, 2009). Seale (2011) adds that it is important to ensure that the location chosen for the interview is private so that the interviewee can feel comfortable speaking about the topic, and the interviewer can easily hear and

communicate with the participant. The beginning of the interview may include the commencement of the audio recording and a reminder of the confidentiality and purpose of the study. Any other instructions can be given at this time and participants can be provided with an informed consent letter that specifies they are consenting to the interview and may leave at any time (Brod, Tesler, & Christensen, 2009). It is important to note that the recording device may influence the interviewees comfort level when discussing many topics, and the researcher offered reassurance that the recording is for transcription purposes only.

Participants and Procedures

The study enlisted nine participants. The primary researcher used his professional relationships to reach out to campus recreation supervisors and ask for student employee recruitment. Supervisors of campus recreation student fitness employees were contacted and presented with the questions to be utilized in this study. After receiving permission and contact information from the supervisors, fitness employees (including fitness attendants, group fitness instructors, and personal trainers) at three different public four-year universities in California, Louisiana, and Mississippi were contacted with a recruitment letter (see Appendix B) and asked to participate in a 30-60-minute confidential interview. When employees agreed to the interview, the primary researcher scheduled a phone interview. Phone interviews were conducted in the private residence of the primary researcher, and interviewed employees were not required to disclose their location but were encouraged to complete the interview in a location that was most comfortable for them.

The experience levels of participants in their current jobs ranged from three weeks to three years. All participants had previous jobs outside of fitness; however, for eight of the participants this was their first job in fitness. Six of the participants were pursuing a fitness-

related degree at the time of interview, and all were undergraduate students. The universities at which the participants were employed ranged in enrollment from approximately 11,000 undergraduate students to having approximately 23,000 students. Universities were selected based on convenience and access. The institutions all maintain extensive recreational offerings including group fitness classes, personal training, intramurals, club sports, and aquatics. The number of administrators in these recreation departments ranged from 8-14.

Prior to being interviewed, participants were asked to sign an informed consent document (see Appendix C). This document described the purpose of the study and explained how the information collected was to be kept confidential. The participants were assured that they could retract their participation if they felt uncomfortable. After collecting basic demographic information on the participant, a pre-developed series of questions was used to guide the discussion. Questions were based on topics meant to examine job satisfaction and were drawn from previous studies. All questions were open-ended, and some were structured around themes found in Aziri's factors of job satisfaction (Aziri, 2011) and Locke's motivators and hygiene factors (Locke, 1969). Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim for data analysis.

Data Analysis and Validity

According to Merriam (2002), “in qualitative research, data analysis is *simultaneous* with data collection” (p. 14). This means that as soon as the first interview commences, the primary researcher should begin analyzing if adjustments need to be made to the questions in order to redirect the information that is being received toward emerging themes. In order for the data to be analyzed in a write-up format, the direct tape recordings from the interviews were transcribed into text, either detailing the verbal clutter that accompanied the main ideas or smoothing out the interview into a more “straightforward summary” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 51).

Once the interviews were transcribed, data from the interviews was compared in order to discover patterns, which became codes (Merriam, 2002). Codes are defined as “tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to . . . information compiled during a study” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56). These labels were associated with a single word or an entire paragraph; however, the meaning was the most important component of the code (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Some tags were changed as the study progressed, but all relevant points of data were separated and labelled (Côté, Salmela, Baria, & Russell, 1993).

Following the creation of codes, Côté et al. (1993) shared that the various labels should be compared and re-organized into categories. In this study, these categories included codes with similar meanings in order to best organize the emerging themes from the interviews. Because this study involved the accounts of a variety of employees, the convergence and comparison of their different experiences and perspectives provided a form of triangulation (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Another method of validating a qualitative study outlined by Creswell and Miller (2000) and used in this study was peer debriefing in which “a peer reviewer provides support, plays devil’s advocate, challenges the researchers’ assumptions, pushes the researchers to the next step methodologically, and asks hard questions about methods and interpretations” (p.129). My thesis supervisor, and other committee members served in the peer advisor role to ensure that my assumptions about fitness employees did not bias the data analysis process.

In summation, Thorne (2000) outlined four major components of a qualitative analysis. *Comprehending* the phenomenon under study was the major purpose of the review of literature completed within this study. *Synthesizing* a portrait of the phenomenon was completed through the data collection (interviews) and analyzation (coding). *Theorizing* about relations took place

as the codes were re-organized into categories. Finally, *recontextualizing*, defined as “putting the new knowledge about phenomena and relations back into the context of how others have articulated the evolving knowledge” (Thorne, 2000, p. 70) will be evident in the discussion section of the thesis.

Ethical Concerns

In qualitative research, “the researcher is considered to be the research instrument” (Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, & Cheraghi, 2014, p. 2) and thus has a responsibility to ensure that ethical concerns are acknowledged and treated respectfully. The following are ethical concerns discussed by Dongre and Sankaran (2016) that are particularly relevant in a semi-structured interview. The first concern is that sensitive topics may emotionally disturb the interviewee. For example, while investigating job satisfaction, the interviewee may decide to share a distressing situation from work that detracted from their job satisfaction, and in doing so may experience an emotional trigger. To combat this, I was prepared to be empathetic and cease the interview in the case of emotional distress. Any probing of sensitive topics was done gently.

Another concern is informed consent. In a research project all participants must be fully aware of the nature of the study and explicitly consent to their participation in the study. Interviewees should have freedom to refuse participation, if they do not feel comfortable talking about components of their job satisfaction. Informed consent was provided to all participants electronically prior to completing the interviews.

Privacy and confidentiality are also ethical concerns within semi-structured interviews. In-depth interviews provide stronger confidentiality than focus groups; however, interviewees should still be fully aware of any confidentiality procedures utilized by the researcher. “There

are several effective strategies to protect personal information, for instance secure data storage methods, removal of identifier components, biographical details amendments and pseudonyms” (Sanjari et al, 2014, p. 4). These strategies were shared with interviewees in the introductions to the interviews in hopes that they felt free to openly discuss their job satisfaction factors, even if they might be mentioning co-workers or supervisors.

Interviewer-related ethical concerns include the misinterpretation of data collection. Involving more than one researcher in the data interpretation can combat this concern, and in this study, the thesis committee that is supporting the primary researcher will act in this regard. Additional to these ethical concerns, relationships between the interviewer and the participant were developed throughout the interview; thus, the researcher could clearly identify their role in the interview as well as remain aware of the impact they may have on the participant (Sanjari et al, 2014).

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate contributing factors to job satisfaction for a student fitness employee within a campus recreation setting. Findings from nine interviews suggested three major themes, each with their own unique sub-themes. First, people played a role in a student fitness employee's job satisfaction. The teammates, supervisor, and patrons that the employee served all contributed to the satisfaction experienced in the workplace. A second major theme included the unique job qualities found in the fitness sector of campus recreation. Job design and creativity played a part in job satisfaction. Finally, rewards were a third and final theme found from the findings of the interviews. Recognition, promotion, and pay were all heavily mentioned by the employees being interviewed. These findings reflected many topics introduced in the review of literature, and some themes were unique to this study. The following findings explore the themes that were derived from the interviews.

People

Fitness employees spoke about the social components of their jobs and noted that the people they interact with in their workplace contribute to how satisfied they are with their job. There were a variety of people that the interviewed staff identified as impacting their satisfaction. Some of the people, such as the patrons or customers that the interviewed employees were serving, were identified as the main reason that the employee was in their present job. On the other hand, supervisors and other team members sometimes improved job satisfaction while other times they challenged it, depending on the interactions had between those people and the interviewed employees. No matter the job duties, all interviewees indicated

that they encountered people every day they worked, and those interactions influenced how happy or unhappy they were in their present job.

Team

Findings from the interviews discovered that many employees felt there was an attempted environment of teamwork in their campus recreation job environments, even though their responsibilities in fitness were typically completed independently of other coworkers (i.e., training a client, teaching a class, etc.). This team atmosphere helped for the employees to feel as though they fit in and were part of a group of like-minded people:

. . . we have a meeting, sort of, at night from 9-10pm where we all gather together and kind of go over any news occurring, any new updates occurring in the facility, and like everybody, all of the attendants are there. All of my coworkers are there in one spot. And we start with a casual icebreaker kind of game, and then we move into the business side of things. But when we play those games it's like I realize: like man, these are all people that I can relate to and I have fun with pretty much every day on a daily basis, we always do a good job, and then after we're doing our icebreaker, our supervisors tell us we're doing a great job. And after that night I was like, whoa, I'm really satisfied with where I'm at right now because of who I'm around. (Daryl, fitness attendant, 3 months' experience)

Not only did the student employees feel as though they fit in with their team, but they often felt as though they could look up to their teammates and coworkers who had been in the position for longer. Having the ability to learn from peers gave student employees a feeling of support; they had a circle of like-minded individuals with whom they could not only relate to but also learn from:

My coworkers here, I think they definitely add to my job satisfaction. Being that they-going through training, the trainers that were already previously there before us, we've been in touch with them some, and they gave us good constructive criticism. I look up to everyone around me just because I feel like they're more seasoned, of course, since they've been there longer, and I like to look at how they kind of interact with their clients and everything. How they put their class together and take some of what I like and what

I don't like about it. And I think that this adds to my job satisfaction that I have good influences to look up to. (Mattie, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 3 weeks' experience)

Although most employees craved the family environment with their teammates and the corresponding improvement in job satisfaction, a couple of students felt like team building was not a key component of their job. One interviewee felt that relationships with her coworkers did not feel natural, even though she longed for a community within her teammates and shared that she would probably spend more time in the workplace if she had relationships with the others there. Another interviewee felt that because everyone works independently, she did not even know many of her teammates and that if steps were taken to build the team mentality, her annoyance would grow, and job satisfaction would go down. Despite this declaration of rejecting the desire for team building, she acknowledged in other areas of the interview that having a stronger team would make her more comfortable in sharing ideas with their peers, which she identified as being something that would make her more satisfied with her job. The findings suggested that when a team environment added to the job itself for student fitness employees within campus recreation, job satisfaction seemed to improve.

Supervisors

The supervisor held a lot of weight in the job satisfaction of those interviewed. The amount of time spent with their supervisor did not have the greatest impact with employee job satisfaction. Instead, the importance of supervisors seemed to come from how they made their employees feel. The interviews emphasized the support and concern that managers had for their students was paramount:

[My supervisor] treats all of us personal trainers and really anyone she comes in contact with just absolutely to the best of her ability, and she makes them feel warm and . . .

[s]he's an amazing person, in general. If I did not have that sort of person in her position, then yes, that would impact my job satisfaction. It would impact it quite a substantial amount. Back in food services if I was replaced with someone that I had in food services with a supervisor then I would most likely quit my job . . . [j]ust having an amazing supervisor there that I can come and confide with, that I can be absolutely transparent with is critical for my job satisfaction. (Rick, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 1.5 years' experience).

If I'm working in one of my sessions with one of my clients or in my group class and they're just passing by, ask me if I'm OK, if I need something, just let me know if I need something at that moment or if I need some help with some workouts. Stuff like that, so they're always supportive. If I have something going on, like for some reason I cannot make it to one of my sessions, I just feel the freedom to tell them, hey, this is what's going on, and I know that they will be very supportive about it, and that they will be very understanding about it. That's the way that I feel with them. (Hal, personal trainer, 8 months' experience).

Several interviews highlighted that the support of supervisors was so valuable to job satisfaction that the employee would quit their job if that support were not there. Students that did not feel as though they had support from their supervisors indicated that they experienced frustration in their workplace because of this. Instead, they noted that supervisors simply disciplined them without communicating an avenue to learn from mistakes. In fact, communication between supervisors and their staff was another way that the interviewees determined if they had supervisor support that boosted their job satisfaction. If solid communication from their supervisors was present, then the students highlighted how this added to their job satisfaction. However, when communication was missing, findings from the interviews showed that employees missed it:

I mean, communication is what 95% of what campus rec does. We communicate with patrons and clients and staff and our supervisor all the time and when you go into work and it's like, oh hey, by the way we've moved this to this date and then you've already got something scheduled, that's really frustrating. I mean, communicating with one another, it helps the overall to build a trust between everyone. Whenever people aren't telling you what's going on makes you feel behind basically. (Connie, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 1.5 years' experience).

Because to me, it'd be like we're all human, we all have thought processes, and we all logically think about things, so the more information you have, the better-informed decision you can make. When you don't get all that information from one of your coworkers, from one of your subordinates, from one of your employers, you tend to make decisions off of other information there, and when you do that sometimes you make mistakes, and when you make mistakes you just are not satisfied with your job. (Jake, personal trainer, 2 years' experience).

One employee identified that often supervisors use too many different avenues of communication, which prevents the communication from being streamlined. Haphazard communication only served to confuse and frustrate employees, whereas one consistent method improved communication and job satisfaction. Transparency and clear communication from the supervisor helped student employees to feel supported and understanding about their job. Employees seemed to want to feel as though their supervisor cares about them on a personal level. Interviewees indicated that when that concern is present and combined with support and good communication, job satisfaction is improved.

Patrons

In the fitness branch of campus recreation, patrons may take one of several forms. For personal trainers, a patron is their client, with whom they work one-on-one. Group fitness instructors identify patrons as one of their class participants, while a fitness attendant may recognize any gym participant as a patron. Regardless of how exactly patrons are defined throughout the fitness sector, the findings from the interviews gave the impression that the patrons greatly contributed to each employee's job satisfaction. In every single interview, the student fitness employee was able to recall a specific time when they had an impact on or built a relationship with a patron of their workplace. The findings from the interviews showed that job satisfaction is linked to fitness employees feeling good about the support that they are providing

to others. Seeing people grow, challenging themselves to reach a goal, and smiling because they have a newfound confidence in their ability provided an irrefutable ‘feel good’ effect to improve job satisfaction:

Gosh, working with my clientele is very satisfying. Working with people and helping them get to the goals, watching them take those goals and then surpass them and then find other goals to obtain: that is my number one reason why I do what I do. I love watching the athletes grow, and I love watching them emotionally and physically grow. It’s an intimate moment when someone is struggling physically and mentally in front of you and being able to be right there and say, ok, I know this is rough, let’s do this. I know you can do this; we can do this. That’s very satisfying that I get to be a part of that process for them. (Rose, personal trainer, 3 years’ experience).

One reason that job satisfaction was linked to the growth of others was because some fitness employees had their own personal experiences that they used to relate to the people with whom they are working. By the employees knowing how far they have personally grown, watching others overcome those same hurdles proved satisfactory. It gave the employees a sense of purpose; they were doing their job for a reason; thus, that made their job satisfying. They believed wholeheartedly in the product (fitness) that they were selling:

I literally left the army and got overweight, and I started working out really hard. I realized how much that fitness meant to me. When I help other people do that same thing, it’s just like the whole- I don’t know. It just feels good, because I know how they feel, and seeing that excitement, it’s like seeing someone open Christmas presents, if you just gave someone \$100. Sometimes they’re just so excited that they just dropped this number of weight or so excited that they’re able to lift 150 lbs. It’s just that excitement that really it makes me really appreciate what I do. (Jake, personal trainer, 2 years’ experience).

Back in high school, my parents weren’t the healthiest sort of people. I saw what bad eating habits kind of did to them and as well as me. I was impacted by that as well, that’s why I got into the self-discipline of working out and eating better by myself. I saw the transformation of my parents as well as other people who went through similar situations. Friends that went down the path of drugs and alcohol. I just thought there must be a better way to help people other than abusive substances, and food is a substance . . . I thought that was a great escape for me as an angsty teenage boy; it was a great escape to get all this energy out: to feel calm and at one . . . [i]t’s why I teach it to this day and teach other people how to really calm themselves and calm their minds. Yeah, I think

that's why it's a centerpiece and why I really enjoy helping people is because I've seen the destruction of other things, and I know that I can make a change and a difference. I know that there's a better way. (Rick, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 1.5 years' experience).

Fitness is a job filled with teammates, supervisors, and patrons that all play some degree of a role in one's job satisfaction. People provide support to the employee, and seeing others grow can inspire a feeling of mentorship if it's from a coworker or supervisor, and the growth of patrons can create feelings of empathy and excitement. When the people involved with a campus recreation fitness job are lackluster, that may lead to a student employee's job satisfaction declining. Although the people in a job setting are often a factor out of an employee's control, those people are often still a factor in whether a student fitness employee may enjoy or even continue in their job.

Job Qualities

The interviews regularly included discussion of topics related to the unique job qualities found as student employees of a campus recreation fitness program. Not only did many of the students speak about how job design influenced their job satisfaction, but they also spoke to the freedom to be creative played in their jobs. Interviewees did highlight components of their jobs that they did not like and that detracted from their satisfaction, but many students identified that the innate qualities found within their fitness jobs were so satisfying that it kept them from searching for a different type of job elsewhere.

Job Design

Several interviewees found that their job design added to their job satisfaction, because the job itself was something that the student enjoyed doing. Many of the students enjoyed the

fitness skills with which they are assisting others to complete. According to participants, the job itself was something that they already enjoy doing, thus creating a job that they were hesitant to leave. One employee even found that despite working conditions being less than ideal, her job satisfaction was not impacted, because she loved her job design so much:

I love my job. I love to spin and our spin studio sucks, like our bikes are awful, our stereo system is the worst, the microphone doesn't work so I have to scream and we again don't get paid at all, but I could not complain about anything. I just love my job so much. The environment- I know a lot of other spin instructors that don't like spinning as much as I do complain a lot about having bad bikes or a bad stereo system or their voice hurts because they have to yell. If you're doing what you love to do that's really not an issue . . . [i]t gives me an escape from what I'm feeling outside of the real world. I get into those studios and spin room, and I turn on my music, and now it's time to work out, and it's time to help other people work out and put all that aside. You just feel excited and motivated. (Lizzie, group fitness instructor, 1.5 years' experience).

Generally, campus recreation fitness job designs are also flexible and autonomous according to several of the students interviewed, and these components contribute to the overall satisfaction that comes from this job quality. One of the major differences between the job design of a fitness job in the campus recreation sector and most other jobs, as identified by the interviewees, is that fitness employees often only work an hour at a time. While the employee can choose to stack hours to create a longer shift, single sessions either training a client or teaching a group fitness class are designed not only to fit easily into a busy schedule, but also to set students up to succeed autonomously. Because of the convenience of working with the unique academic schedules of college students, campus recreation fitness jobs are often designed in a way that increases the job satisfaction of many of the students interviewed for this study.

I like it because, well, coming to college you're becoming independent; it's just really a big step from high school. When I was lifeguarding, we always had a supervisor watching us like a hawk. He was always there making sure we did what we were supposed to do even though we already knew. It was kind of annoying when you just have someone on your back and it's like yes, I know how to do this, but I don't need to

do it right now. With this job it's very much flexible to our schedules because we're all very different. There's some personal trainers in the band or they're in the theater and they're very busy. The autonomy allows us to work our job into our schedule but didn't give us a pressure to have certain hours like how people work 8-5. I go into . . . the gym here about maybe 2-3 times a day, but it's at an hour at a time, and it's really helpful to me because in between those times I can go to the library or I can go eat and then it's not like you're in one spot at the same time. (Lillian, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 1.3 years' experience).

It appeared that the flexibility of the job design provided a sense of satisfaction to the employees that a more rigid job would be unable to provide.

Responsibility is another innate part of the job design that comes with the autonomy of working with one's own clients, teaching one's own classes, or leading one's own shifts. Most of the interviewees felt that their level of responsibility was extremely satisfying. If threatened with the removal of responsibility, they felt that their job satisfaction would decrease.

Responsibility was often linked to feelings of success and pride, which incentivizes students to continue working at their current job.

[T]he more responsibility that I've been given, it makes me want to keep going. You know, having that chance to improve just a little bit more to be better and then to know that my supervisor and my GA notice these improvements and are willing to give me more responsibility: it makes me feel more proud and to want to stay with what I'm doing. (Connie, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 1.5 years' experience).

While almost all the interviewed employees had never worked in campus recreation or the fitness industry before acquiring their current job, much of the reason for increased job satisfaction stems from the job design itself.

Creativity

Another unique job quality of working within the fitness sector of campus recreation is the freedom to be creative within the job. Whereas a 'traditional' job might specify what

employees need to do and how to accomplish it, the findings from the interviews indicated that fitness employees felt as though they have copious amounts of freedom to be creative in the classes they created and clients for whom they programmed in campus recreation. Many of the students interviewed shared that each person they work with is different, and if they had restrictions on how creative they were able to be in their workplace, they would not only be unable to adequately complete their job, but they would also have decreased job satisfaction.

Oh my gosh! Creative liberty: it's huge! I have the liberty to create my own classes; I've started different types of classes . . . one of my bosses is really good about saying, Rose, whatever you want to teach, whatever style you want to teach it in: we don't care. Do what you do; you're great. So that's really cool that I can actually - say I've got 16 weeks - this is the goal that I want to make for this group, this whatever class I decide to teach. There's one class I call STAB it; stability, stamina, and strength, right? So I kinda focus on those things, and I have another class where I teach some harder, really, really difficult heavy lifting. So I have that kind of creativity in what I want to do on a daily basis . . . 100% if I walked into work, and I was handed by my boss what they wanted me train my clients on, I'd probably throw it back in their face. (Rose, personal trainer, 3 years' experience).

Rose was not the only interviewee to mention having the ability to create programming in her workplace. Several of the interviews highlighted the creative classes and workouts that the student employees were able to design for their patrons. Those students that mentioned having the ability to create and edit the content that they provide to patrons as part of their job described how that freedom to be creative were some of their most satisfying parts of their job.

[Creativity] is my favorite part about the job. I invented a new class; I invented Spin Strength. One day I walked up to my boss and I was like, hey, this class I think would be really cool, and I think people would really like it, and she agreed with me, and I just completely made the class my own, and every single week I do whatever I want . . . I mean, you have to stay within the scope of the class so like an aqua fusion in the pool, you still have to be in the pool, but what you want to do outside of that is all up to you, and I love that. You don't have to follow a certain format or use a certain kind of music or do this certain kind of exercises. (Lizzie, group fitness instructor).

My supervisor gives us free reign, especially if we have ideas and stuff. I you know off the top of my head, so like something that happened to me a couple of weeks ago: I

realized, hey, our group ex instructors don't have tank tops. Like let's get those tank tops, so [my supervisor] was OK, you know that's your idea; take it and run with it. She gave me the free reign to do that. I think that helps a lot. And just with formatting for our clients and everything: we have no structured plan, and we have the opportunity to structure all of our workouts and our classes to how we feel fit and how we feel the need to do that. And so I think that provides a lot of creativity opportunities as well. (Connie, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 1.5 years' experience).

One of the students interviewed even felt like the ability to be creative with workout programming was a challenging quality within the job that kept work from being boring and unsatisfying. The interviewees also felt like their creativity was unique to each of their coworkers, and they appreciated the freedom to explore their personal creativity within their job. The ability to be creative allowed the employees to complete their job to the best of their ability and to be flexible in the ways that they provide fitness to a variety of patrons from day to day. The fitness portion of campus recreation offered unique job qualities such as creativity and expected its student employees to take advantage of their unique job design in order to succeed within their jobs. As a result, job satisfaction may be positively impacted when the innate qualities of the job such as a flexibility, autonomy, and creativity are provided freely, as many of the interviewed students proved in their interviews.

Rewards

Finally, extrinsic rewards played somewhat of a role in the job satisfaction of participants. Three major types of rewards seemed to emerge when participants discussed job satisfaction: recognition, promotions, and pay. While all three rewards did not perhaps have the same impact on their satisfaction, they were still themes that were highly relevant within the interviews. Recognition was often craved by employees that sought higher job satisfaction and held by those that identified as already having high job satisfaction. Promotions and pay were

regularly cited by the employees as being lackluster, and while the findings indicate they may not have an extremely heavy impact on job satisfaction, they still appear to be contributing factors of some sort based on the amount of times they were mentioned by those interviewed.

Recognition

The findings of the interviews indicated that some employees could often easily refer to a time that they received recognition in their workplace. Meanwhile, students that did not receive routine recognition shared feelings of frustration and discontent. Though the following examples may appear short and insignificant, they have remained in each employee's mind and are associated with job satisfaction:

[The supervisors at my job] do awards every year for all the employees. They give out 'employee of the month,' and even though all that stuff is kinda mundane - it's just like here's your cookie be happy of where you are - it still works. I'm glad I got like 'best personal trainer' one year, and I was super happy with that, and it made me feel proud even though I was like it's not that big of a deal. It definitely played a role. (Jake, personal trainer, 2 years' experience).

I teach this class Aqua Fusion, and it's really just a lot of fun because it's old people, and they've been coming to this class for like 20 years or whatever, and they've had their fair share of instructors, and they're really picky about their class . . . One time, well actually every time, but the first time that one of the people were like you know . . . "I just really love your class. It's my favorite class; you're my favorite instructor right now teaching the class," and that just means so much to me. They are picky. They know exactly what they want, and they want to try new things, but they're also closed off to trying new things; they don't want to go outside of what they know. For me, that was a really hard class to get a grasp of, and it's very different from the other classes I do teach. So when they tell me they really enjoy my class, that just makes me feel so good and that I'm doing something. (Lizzie, group fitness instructor, 1.5 years' experience).

More than just providing higher job satisfaction, recognition was responsible for some of the interviewees staying in their current job and workplace. The findings from this study offered evidence that recognition contributed to job satisfaction, which then prevented employees from searching for careers elsewhere.

I want to do what I do because I get the feedback that I get. If I was getting terrible feedback all the time, I would of course want to try to change something, but if it kept on happening, I would be drilled into the ground with this negativity. For starters, I probably wouldn't be very good at what I do, and second, I probably wouldn't want to continue what I do. With the positive atmosphere people bring into my class and the even more atmosphere that they give off leaving my classroom is just astounding to me, and it makes me want to teach more classes. It makes me want to take on more clients. It makes me want to practice harder. It kind of trickles down to every part of my life. (Rick, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 1.5 years' experience).

If you're doing what you do, it's really easy to get in a rut and just run out of music, run out of workout ideas, stuff like that. When you have people coming to you - no matter if it's the participant, if it's your boss, if it's something else - if you have people coming up to you and complimenting your stuff that makes you want to keep going. That kind of stops you from getting into a rut. Once you're in a rut, I feel like your job satisfaction just goes down because you don't want to be there. (Lizzie, group fitness instructor, 1.5 years' experience).

While some of the employees were able to easily share how experiences with recognition contributed to their job satisfaction, the findings of this study suggest that a lack of recognition was common. Several employees felt as though they lacked recognition, and not being recognized for their efforts often led to the employees having less job satisfaction. When asked what it feels like to have recognition or appreciation missing from their workplace, three interviewees indicated the following:

Yeah, it just feels like you're kinda working without a cause, if you don't feel appreciated, like you're just kinda going through the motions. But knowing that there's kinda- I don't want to say reward- but that there's appreciation for your hard work, it's kinda more valuable. Your work becomes more valuable. It doesn't feel like you're just wasting your time there. It feels like having more of an impactful time. (Daryl, fitness attendant, 3 months' experience).

One of the most important things I think within this is that - and in the trainer department that I don't see - we're not recognized. We're not recognized for being out in the gym; we're not recognized for doing what we do; we're not recognized for the energy that we give and energy that we take. We're almost a lost entity within the facility, if that makes sense. We're left to our own; they don't really see what we do; they don't really know what we do in the back office. So, I think my job satisfaction would be a little higher if we were even noticed. (Rose, personal trainer, 3 years' experience).

It just felt like I was just doing a lot, and I mean I don't do things to get gratitude or awards from it, [but hearing], "you're doing a good job. We're really proud of you," . . . it just didn't happen. I never got that. I just kept pushing myself to do well at this job, but a lot of our old personal trainers didn't, and it was just everything is on me so now I have to do good because I'm carrying the weight of the other trainers who aren't necessarily. That's kinda why I didn't feel appreciated. (Lillian, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 1.3 years' experience).

Additionally, one staff member explained that he felt needed when others shared their appreciation and recognition of him. He connected a high sense of satisfaction with this feeling of usefulness. His supervisors appreciated that he was contributing within his workplace and sharing that made him desire to work even harder and be more satisfied at the same time. Employees in this study wanted to be seen and heard, especially when they were doing a good job. When supervisors and patrons voiced this recognition, employees then experienced a boost to their overall job satisfaction.

Promotions

Throughout the interviews, student fitness employees seemed divided on the existence of promotions in their workplace, depending on their job setups. One student shared that the longer you were employed in the fitness campus recreation position, the more your title, pay, and responsibility burgeoned. Another student found that they could be promoted into having multiple jobs or roles within campus recreation and identified that knowing this, he felt more motivated to attempt to receive the promotion with more responsibility and leadership.

Meanwhile, a variety of other interviewees felt as though there were no opportunities for promotion in their jobs. These employees were split on the role that the absence of promotions played in their job satisfaction. Several employees wished there were opportunities for promotion, as they self-identified as leaders who wanted something toward which to work.

However, they felt frustrated when their responsibility was increased, only to not receive any type of promotion.

I had been focusing too much on work when there was no ladder to climb and so that's why I ended up having to pull back from it. There's was no bonus other than literally that small satisfaction of I handle all this stuff that I'm working towards and all these responsibilities and then what do I have to show for it? . . . I'm definitely a person who likes to have a lot of responsibility, which is . . . why I invested so much time in it at first. I still kinda do. [My job satisfaction] would definitely improve if I felt like there was a literal ladder to climb, but there's not really so it's less in that aspect. (Jake, personal trainer, 2 years' experience).

On the flip side, one employee felt that having promotions would be detrimental to her job satisfaction as it would create an unhealthy and competitive environment that would cause her to question her abilities as an employee.

[I]t depends on the person. I'm not very competitive when it comes to things such as working out and other people reaching their fitness goals. I really like the fact that here . . . we have more of a we meet with a client, someone that's interested in getting personal training sessions, and [our supervisor] looks at all of her personal trainers she has and determines who fits best with that person after talking to them and figuring out what their fitness levels are and what they would like to achieve. So, I don't think there's too much competition here. If there was, I probably wouldn't be too satisfied with it because then I would be like oh my goodness am I not good enough? (Mattie, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 3 weeks' experience).

Offering promotions in a workplace can either create a goal for employees to strive for and try to attain, which can cause them to feel more satisfied in their workplace. However, the added competition of employees vying against others for a promotion could also increase stress levels and decrease job satisfaction. With student employees offering different perspectives, promotion is a likely contributing factor for job satisfaction, but it seemed to differ based on each individual employee's personality, and it was unclear the specific role promotion plays.

Pay

The most recurring theme in this study's interviews revolved around the compensation in a campus recreation fitness career. Every interviewee mentioned pay to some extent in their discussion. While nearly all interviewees identified that they were not satisfied with their current pay, several mentioned that they understood why compensation was not higher. They cited the fact that campus recreation programs do not have the funding and resources to pay employees more. Some employees referenced their need to work in other fitness settings in order to earn more money to cover their expenses. As such, they compared their two pay rates and admitted that their campus recreation position paid substantially lower. Those that were not satisfied with their current pay and those that were satisfied shared that they felt their job satisfaction would increase if they were paid more money for their job. A few employees even said that the only thing that could improve their satisfaction would be pay; however, it was almost always followed up with them clarifying that they understood why the pay was low. One student employee emphasized that because of other contributing factors (such as her love for her job design), the dissatisfying pay was outweighed.

I'm a broke college student; of course, I wish I was getting paid more. I look at it as if I wasn't teaching the class, I would be in it, so might as well get paid even if . . . it's a little above minimum wage . . . I think it's completely reasonable anywhere you go on campus working as a student worker, you're going to get that same pay. I actually honestly might be getting more than other workers, so I think it's totally reasonable . . . I love it so much, so I don't mind . . . I think for what I do, especially because I am taking that time outside of class, I mean I would never complain about it because I love doing it, but I am taking that time outside of my day technically working to put together a class and a format and songs. (Lizzie, group fitness instructor, 1.5 years' experience).

For nearly all the employees interviewed, starting rate upon hire was congruent with that state's minimum wage. Upon getting a national fitness certification, which most interviewees indicated was expected, their compensation would increase to slightly over minimum wage but

still not rivaling the wages that local gyms offered. This increase in pay was somewhat satisfying for the students, yet they still wanted more.

In the short time that I've been here, when I started working, they paid me the minimum wage, and they promised me that they were going to raise my pay when- after doing the in-house evaluation or the in-house test, and I did. They actually raised it, so I'm really satisfied with that, because they are doing it. At the same time, I'm not satisfied, because I know that I can get more. And I know that I can get more because I'm always trying to learn and to read; I'm always that proactive, so I know that I should get more. Maybe time will get it, yes and no. Yes, because they promised me to [raise] it, and they did, but right now I'm kinda like I want more. (Hal, personal trainer, 8 months' experience).

While pay was not the major deciding factor of whether the student employees have high job satisfaction in their campus recreation fitness job, it remained a contributing factor. Nearly all interviewees indicated dissatisfaction with their pay, yet they stressed that other factors were more important to them and that their low compensation was understandable. One student even indicated no dissatisfaction with his pay, but he still shared that if given the resources and choice, he would want to raise the pay for his position.

I think for what I do, I get paid a sufficient amount . . . I think for the overall gratification of doing the actual work, it doesn't even feel like a job to me at all so to get paid on top of doing what I'm doing, it's very- I find myself in disbelief after class when I sign my pay sheet and I say, "Wow, I actually just got paid to teach this class. I got paid to make people feel better." It's very striking to me sometimes. I think that the pay is sufficient for what I do, because I would do it without any pay at all if I could. The pay is nice . . . if I got to pay others, and I got to set the rate, and there was an infinite amount of money and situations were ideal: I would definitely raise the pay rate, because I think for what the personal trainers add to the community and what they do in helping others is critical for development of stronger people, not just physically but of course mentally: building other people up to be as strong as they can possibly be. (Rick, group fitness instructor & personal trainer, 1.5 years' experience).

Whether currently satisfied or not with the extrinsic rewards offered in their jobs, all those interviewed spoke regularly about recognition, promotion, and pay. There often appeared to be an interplay among the external rewards, job qualities, and people, showing that there is not

always simple one-dimensional approach to job satisfaction in a campus recreation fitness program. Instead, there is likely a spectrum of contributing factors that can differ among not only unique fitness workplaces but also the individuals in those spaces.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore contributing factors to job satisfaction for student fitness employees within a campus recreation setting. Findings from nine qualitative semi-structured interviews indicated that there are many diverse contributors. However, three major themes emerged. The people involved with the job, the job qualities of working in campus recreation fitness, and the rewards given to employees appeared to be contributing factors to the employees' job satisfaction. The following section will discuss the implications of the findings, recommendations to administrators, and limitations of this study.

People

Literature suggested that campus recreation employees crave positive social relationships with their coworkers and supervisors (Kroth & Young, 2014). The findings of this study bolstered this information, as a team environment led by a supportive supervisor seemed to correlate with high job satisfaction. This aligned with research by Kellison and James (2011) in which positive coworker relationships and effective supervision were two of only six significant predictors of job satisfaction. Additionally, the findings from this study fit within Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, which listed both "supervisor" and "relationship with colleagues" as hygiene factors or factors that detract from job satisfaction when they are not present in the workplace (Ross et al., 2014). Kroth and Young (2014) explained that supervisors are so important to job satisfaction because many employees want guidance toward clear objectives in order to find gratification within the workplace challenge. In addition, having positive relationships with colleagues leads to collaborative efforts and projects, fulfilling desires for teamwork. Campus recreation fitness administrators may find that providing more support and direction as well as fostering a team environment in the workplace, such as by implementing

team teaching or offering team bonding activities outside of work hours, will be beneficial in employee job satisfaction.

Maguire (2001) shared that the fitness industry's unique inclusion of emotional labor and helping others can also add to one's job satisfaction. The inclusion of patrons (or any individuals other than the supervisor and coworkers) as a people group that contribute to job satisfaction in a campus recreation setting is a result that has not been evident in past research. However, the findings from this study indicated that student fitness employees found that the patrons whom they train were a large contributor to their job satisfaction. As a factor that has not been extensively studied, understanding why patrons play a role in their student employees' job satisfaction may benefit campus recreation fitness administrators in optimizing employee-patron interactions to heighten the job satisfaction of all student fitness employees. If this understanding were able to be established, it may even contribute to other disciplines, since emotional labor within both the educational and healthcare systems does not always have a positive relationship with job satisfaction (Psilopanagioti, Anagnostopoulos, Mourtou, & Niakas, 2012; Tsang, 2011). Deciphering why emotional labor may be linked to positive job satisfaction in campus recreation fitness, other disciplines may be able to ascertain how to use the inherent emotional labor within the job to make employees more satisfied.

These findings may indicate that teaching emotional labor skills could be important for fitness employees. Offering on-the-job trainings about how to control personal feelings to elicit positive customer responses could both strengthen employee-patron interactions as well as employee job satisfaction. Many disciplines cannot eliminate the emotional labor requirement from the job design because of the inherent need to satisfy customers with the offered service. However, by training employees on how to efficiently use emotional labor in a way that makes

the job duties more enjoyable rather than more draining, administrators may be able to increase employee morale and satisfaction.

Another recommendation specifically for campus recreation fitness supervisors is to provide ample opportunities and activities that foster team building not only between coworkers but also between the student employees and the professional staff. This recommendation comes from participants emphasizing that they pull job satisfaction from the people they interact with in their job. These programs should be intentionally inclusive to ensure that all student employees feel as though they have a place within the team and may include something as simple as a game night and potluck or may be as extensive as an extravagant outing to a team-based ropes course. Ideally, experiences such as these will allow student employees to feel supported both by their supervisor and their teammates as they work together with the people that they interact with daily outside of the workplace. Allowing employees to get to know each other more extensively, may help create relational bonds, which this study suggests may improve overall job satisfaction.

Job Qualities

Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (1976) as well as research by Rue and Byars (2003) showed that the job design, or innate aspects of a job, is a key factor to job satisfaction. Herzberg specifically listed this as a motivator (Aziri, 2011). The findings from this study may offer support for that aspect of Herzberg's theory, with employees sharing that the job itself was what retained them when other factors were more dissatisfying. Additionally, this study suggested that creativity was another factor of job satisfaction that much of the literature has never specifically emerged as crucial to high job satisfaction. Smucker and Kent (2004) did not find that creativity impacted other careers in the sport industry (i.e., professional sport, parks and recreation, etc.); however, they did find that creativity (as well as variety, recognition, and

independence) might be a more important factor to fitness job satisfaction than pay, promotion opportunities, or policies. This study concurs with Smucker and Kent, suggesting that creative freedom may be a key to keeping fitness employees satisfied.

“Freedom to get the job done” was identified by Kroth and Young (2014, p. 30) as a key to job satisfaction. Many of those interviewed shared similar sentiments about the value of freedom within their jobs. This quality was identified as a contributing factor to student fitness employees’ job satisfaction in campus recreation. Campus recreation supervisors may find that by creating job designs that allow for creative freedom within the job duties, employee satisfaction could increase. Administrators can accomplish this by providing clear expectations of job requirements with deadlines but allowing the students to have freedom in how they accomplish their duties. Micromanaging student fitness employees and providing strict workout plans that they are expected to use with patrons would not allow for full creativity. Because the innate job requirements of many fitness titles include the creation of something (i.e., group fitness instructors create a class design, personal trainers create a workout plan, etc.), the ability to have creative freedom is more important to fitness employees than others in the sport industry who do not need to necessarily craft something as part of their job.

Challenging student employees with different fitness modalities to investigate or implement may help to ensure that job duties inspire creative freedom to design unique workout plans for unique populations. If an employee is used to working with athletes, allowing them the opportunity to work with older adults may provide a refreshing opportunity to be creative. Additionally, providing optional responsibilities to undertake such as overseeing special projects, theming workouts, and planning special events may inspire creativity and higher job satisfaction among staff. Intrinsic motivation boosts creativity (Vallerand & Ratelle, 2002), so if supervisors

can determine what aspects of the job design cause their employee to feel inherent satisfaction, intentionally magnifying those aspects in their employee's duties may lead to stronger creativity and higher job satisfaction.

Another recommendation for managers is that they could investigate the interplay of job satisfaction factors. It is interesting to note that some factors contributing to job satisfaction, such as supervisors, seemed to have influence on other contributing factors like creativity. Determining which factors have overlap and affect each other would prove beneficial as managers are designing jobs.

Rewards

Smucker and Kent (2004) showed that the contributing factors to the job satisfaction of fitness employees are often more intrinsic than extrinsic. Kellison and James (2011) also found that fitness employees in campus recreation tend to pull less job satisfaction from external rewards, such as compensation, than employees in other sectors of campus recreation. While the findings of this study hinted that some student fitness employees felt that rewards were not currently adding to their job satisfaction, it was generally stated that there was a desire for rewards. If present, rewards, whether tangible or not, would contribute to an increase in job satisfaction. “[M]odern workplace employees are more likely to change jobs and careers throughout their lives” (Kroth & Young, 2014, p. 28), which may indicate that employees are consistently on the lookout for better rewards, such as career advancements or pay increases. However, some of the employees in the study stayed at their job, despite there being poor rewards. This could indicate that other factors of campus recreation job satisfaction hold more weight than rewards in a student employee's decision to stay in their present job.

The findings from this study appeared consistent with Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory. Herzberg listed salary or pay as a hygiene factor, whereas both recognition and promotion are motivators (Ross et al., 2014). As indicated in many of the interviews, campus recreation fitness programs are often not set up with ample funding or a particularly vertical hierarchy to change the pay or promotion structure. If other pay and promotion opportunities existed, they might offer extrinsic motivation to some students who would work harder try to attain higher hourly wages or job titles. While these were two emerging factors for job satisfaction, the findings suggested that students were divided on what weight pay and promotion held in job satisfaction. However, the students appeared to feel that recognition both was crucial to high job satisfaction when it was present and was an element of friction when it was absent. When students received recognition in any form, they cited positive feeling such as pride in themselves, which increased their job satisfaction and encouraged them to continue to excel in their job. Because employees felt an innate satisfaction from recognition, this recognition created intrinsic motivation within those that were recognized for doing a good job. Intrinsic motivation leads to higher quality work than extrinsic motivation (Vallerand & Ratelle, 2002); thus, supervisors might want to focus on finding ways to incorporate more elements of recognition into the workplace as it may lead to higher intrinsic motivation and thus increased quality of work.

Recognition can come from a variety of sources, and there are a variety of methods of recognition that campus recreation fitness administrations could implement to improve job satisfaction. As the findings from this study suggested, physical awards and verbal compliments are two strategies management could include more recognition in the workplace. If supervisors can verbally acknowledge that an employee is excelling at their job, this form of recognition is

intangible, painless and free, yet it boasts a high value as a contributing factor of job satisfaction. Other methods of recognition might include handwritten notes or the sharing of positive patron feedback with employees. Whichever method an administrator uses to ensure that recognition is inserted into the workplace, it is probable from the literature and from this study that it will prove to contribute to higher job satisfaction.

A recommendation for supervisors is to establish a budget with enough funds targeted at rewarding employees. The findings suggest that job satisfaction dropped when student employees did not feel as though they were being rewarded for their hard work. This strategic budget would allow for both smaller, short-term rewards as well as larger, long-term rewards. Rewards may include notes, small gifts, monetary bonuses, staff appreciation events, and awards that would be focused on recognizing students and improving job satisfaction.

Limitations

This study's generalizability is limited; however, all qualitative studies are contextual. Initially, a limitation may be the sample size of the semi-structured interviews. Only nine students were interviewed, and they only represented three different public universities. It is possible that the findings are most applicable in the states of California, Louisiana, and Mississippi within those campus recreation programs. Additionally, because the sample size only includes public universities in the West and South regions of the United States, it is possible that it might be difficult to target the findings toward a private universities or students in different regions of the country. A second limitation is that the student employees may have felt unsafe to be fully honest because the primary researcher knows administrators employed at each institution and used those connections to elicit participation from students. Although the informed consent assured participants that conscious steps would be taken to ensure anonymity,

the students may have been worried that their responses would get back to their employers or impact their current job status. Finally, a third limitation is that the researcher was unable to develop rapport with the interviewees in person. Although phone interviews are excellent for allowing the interviewee to ensure they are in a private location, developing deeper rapport in-person may have allowed for the interviewees to feel more comfortable in their answers. Also, in a semi-structured interview on the phone, the researcher is not able to use body language to create a more welcoming environment, nor is the researcher able to analyze the participant's body language for cues as to when to cease an uncomfortable topic or push for a bit more clarification and depth.

Future Research

The goal of this study was to help campus recreation professionals better create work environments that increase a student fitness employee's job satisfaction. Further research could be done in some areas of job satisfaction for student employees in the fitness sector of campus recreation. One focus could be analyzing job satisfaction across the variety of segments within campus recreation fitness. Although there has been much research done in job satisfaction, not many studies have focused on job satisfaction in the fitness industry or, even more specifically, into the fitness sector of campus recreation. This research could compare the contributing factors of job satisfaction among group fitness instructors, personal trainers, and fitness attendants. Additionally, it would also be beneficial to have a job satisfaction research instrument, specifically designed for campus recreation fitness employees. Because there are elements of both the fitness industry and higher education at play in this job position, being able to specifically measure the job satisfaction of a population that has unique contributing factors such as patron interaction would be greatly beneficial for supervisors.

Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore contributing factors to job satisfaction for a student fitness employee within a campus recreation setting. Nine student fitness employees at three universities across three different states were interviewed and qualitative research methods were utilized to discover themes within the interviews. It was found that people, job qualities, and rewards were major themes related to fitness job satisfaction in campus recreation. While many of these themes paralleled previous studies described in the literature, several sub-themes, such as patron interactions and creativity, proved to be more unique factors of job satisfaction in the space of campus recreation fitness.

This study suggests that employment in a campus recreation setting includes several factors that differ from other careers and disciplines. Maintaining a high job satisfaction of employees appears to be important not only to the productivity of the organization but also to the retention of strong employees. It is the hope of this study that fitness managers across campus recreation spaces may examine the role of the contributing factors of job satisfaction outlined in this study within their own organization. Management of student fitness employees should involve investment in improving student job satisfaction. Fostering an environment that highlights contributing factors of job satisfaction may be a strong first step in this direction.

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APPENDIX A: POTENTIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Can you tell me what your job currently requires of you?
- How long have you been in your position? What did you do previously? What do you study?
- Why did you decide to pursue your current job?
- What makes your job satisfying for you?
 - Tell me about the level of responsibility you hold in your job and if you are satisfied with it.
 - How are you able to be creative in your current job?
 - What opportunities for promotion are there in your career and are you satisfied with these current options?
 - Tell me how satisfied you are with your pay. Ideally what would you like to get paid for your current position?
 - Tell me about your coworkers and how they add to or detract from your job satisfaction. How much do you interact with your co-workers?
 - Tell me about your supervisor(s) and how they add to or detract from your job satisfaction. How often do you interact with your supervisor?
- Can you describe a time in the past when you were most satisfied at your job?
- Is there anything you would add to that scenario to make your job even more ideal?
- To what degree do your clients/class participants/patrons influence your job satisfaction?
 - Share an example of when this happened.
 - What emotions do you typically feel in the workplace?
 - How do your clients/participants/patrons influence your emotions?
- Why are you currently at your present job instead of switching to a different job elsewhere?
- Can you describe the working conditions of your current job? How do you feel they impact your satisfaction with your job?
- Can you tell me about the time when you were most dissatisfied with your job?
 - What made that experience particularly dissatisfactory?
- How do you cope with times when you are dissatisfied with your job?
- Is there anything additional that you would like to share with me about your current job satisfaction?

APPENDIX B: POTENTIAL RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear _____,

My name is John Davenport, and I am a second-year grad student at The University of the Pacific. Job satisfaction is of interest to me as I supervise fitness employees daily; therefore, I am completing my graduate thesis on the contributing factors of job satisfaction in a campus recreation fitness setting.

I am emailing to ask if you would be willing to take 30-60 minutes to meet with me and briefly discuss your personal job satisfaction in your current campus recreation position. The interview will be recorded and transcribed so that I can recognize common themes as they relate to your job satisfaction. Participation is completely voluntary, and your answers will be anonymous from your supervisor, coworkers, and outside parties.

Please let me know if you would be interested in contributing to this research. If you are interested or have any questions, respond to this e-mail, and we can schedule a time to chat. I promise to not take too much of your time!

Thank you so much,

John Davenport

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT

Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by John Davenport, a graduate student in the Health, Exercise, and Sport Sciences department at University of the Pacific. The purpose of this research is to investigate the contributing factors of job satisfaction of a student fitness employee within a campus recreation setting.

This form includes detailed information on the research to help you decide whether to participate in this study. Please read it carefully and ask any questions you have before you agree to participate.

Procedures

Your participation will involve a single interview in which you will be asked questions related to your job satisfaction at your current campus recreation fitness job. The interview will be recorded. Your total participation in this project is expected to be 30-60 minutes. If you agree to participate, your job title will not be collected. We anticipate that 10 people will participate in this research study.

Risks

This is a minimal risk research study. That means that the risks of participating are no more likely or serious than those you encounter in everyday activities. The foreseeable risks or discomforts include potential mild emotional distress and possible breach of electronic files. In order to minimize those risks and discomforts, the researchers will cease the interview in case of emotional distress and keep all electronic files in a password protected location.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits from participating the study.

Confidentiality

The researcher will make every effort to ensure that the information you provide as part of this study remains confidential. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications, presentations, or reports resulting from this research study.

We will collect your information through audio recorded interviews. This information will be securely stored on a password-protected cell phone and computer. The recordings will be kept for three years, and then it will be destroyed.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you agree to participate now and change your mind later, you may withdraw at any time without any penalty.

Questions about the Research

If you have any questions about this research project or your role in this study, please feel free to contact the student researcher John Davenport, University of the Pacific Graduate Student, by telephone at (209) 932-2917 or via email at jdavenport@pacific.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in a research project please contact the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs, University of the Pacific 209-946-3903. In the event of a research-related injury, please contact your regular medical provider and bill through your normal insurance carrier, then contact the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs.

Informed Consent

By signing below, you agree to participate in this study. You indicate that you understand the risks and benefits of participation, and that you know what you will be asked to do. You also agree that you have asked any questions you might have and are clear on how to stop your participation in the study if you choose to do so. You will be offered a copy of this signed form to keep.

Participant's Signature

Participant's Name, Printed

Date