A National Examination of Gender Equity in Public Parks and Recreation

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Despite the number of women in the field of public parks and recreation, gender equity continues to be a problem. The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of workplace equity in public parks and recreation on a national level. The impact these perceptions have on workplace attitudes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship was also examined. Subjects for this study were drawn from the American Parks and Recreation Society membership list using a systematic stratified random sampling procedure. Chi-square, multivariate and univariate analyses were used for data analyses. Data indicated that there were significant differences between men and women with regard to perceptions of equity as well as levels of organizational citizenship. Perceptions of inequity also appear to be precursors to lower levels of organizational commitment.

KEYWORDS: *Gender equity, discrimination, work attitudes, leisure services*

Introduction

Within the United States, women comprise roughly 52% of the adult population (www.stats.bls.bov/opub/ted/2000/feb/wk3/art02.htm). According to the 1998 United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 59.8% of women over age sixteen are members of the workforce, and over 75% of women ages 25-54 are in the workforce (www.stats.bls.bov/opub/ted/2000/feb/wk3/ art02.htm). Although progress has been made in several areas (McDonald, 2000), the statistics regarding women's progress in the workplace continue to be quite startling. . . .28 million women in corporate America . . . 3 female CEOs in Fortune 500 (.6%) . . . 7 female CEOs in Fortune 1000 (.7%) . . . less than 5% of senior managers at the level of Vice President and above are women (Thompson, 1999). Interestingly, these statistics remain despite research that suggests that women may be more capable in today's changing workplace. For example, a 1993 study by Hagberg Consulting Group in California, found that women scored higher than men on management criteria (criteria included leadership and problem solving skills) (Thompson, 1999).

Shinew and Arnold (1998) found in their study of gender equity in Illinois public recreation agencies that while 54% of middle managers were

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female, only 11% of executive level professionals were female. Although this percentage is higher than many other industries, it is still disconcerting. Their study also uncovered a number of other areas of inequity such as promotion opportunities and perceptions of gender discrimination among women. To date, research on the issue of equity between men and women in the field of public parks and recreation has been limited. Allison (1999), Arnold and Shinew (1997), Frisby (1992), Frisby and Brown (1991), Henderson (1992), and Henderson and Bialeschki (1995) have all examined women's career issues. However, a recent national examination of equity perceptions held by female public recreation professionals was needed, and thus this study attempted to broaden earlier research and provide insight into issues of equity in the field of public parks and recreation. Further, a study that examines the impact such perceptions have on workplace behaviors and attitudes was needed. Public parks and recreation agencies are designed to serve all people; they profess to be a harbor of social equity. Social equity within organizations that serve the public involves an obligation to represent all groups within its constituency through the agency's actions. Therefore, to be socially equitable, the field needs to be representative of the population that it serves at all levels of management. Given this, the purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of workplace equity among men and women in public parks and recreation. The impact these perceptions have on workplace behaviors and attitudes was also explored. The behaviors and attitudes studied included organizational citizenship, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction.

Women's Status in the Workplace

As previously indicated, inequity issues are not unique to the leisure services field. Many private businesses continue to perpetuate gender inequity. Despite the fact that over 50% of entry-level accountants are female, only 13% are partners, 35% are managers, and less than 5% are senior partners. In addition, less than 20% of women hold top manager positions in the "Big 6" accounting firms (Hayes & Hollman, 1996; Hooks & Cheramy, 1994; Kretz, 1997). A committee established to examine issues that affect female accountants found that women face a number of obstacles in their quest for upward mobility (Special Committee Examines, 1997). Obstacles include a lack of societal support and approval for women in professional careers, sexist attitudes within management and among peers, prejudices and stereotypes of pregnancy as well as combining family and career, women's lack of understanding of needed career advancement elements, the absence of flexible work schedules, and perceptions that women are not serious about their careers (Special Committee Examines, 1997).

Women in the law profession are facing similar battles. Despite the fact that between 1971 and 1991 the number of female lawyers rose 800%, female lawyers continue to experience inequity and harassment in the workplace (Chiu, 1998). Laband and Lentz (1998) found that a male supervisor, colleague, or client had sexually harassed two-thirds of female lawyers surveyed.

Rosenberg, Perlstadt, and Phillips (1993) found that female lawyers are not finding the same degree of success when compared to male lawyers. Women are generally in lower status positions in the profession and are concentrated in less remunerative specialties. In addition, the authors found that women are less likely to become partners during their careers, have little decision-making power in their firms, and overall earn only two-thirds of the income that male lawyers earn.

It is not just within the private business sector that the picture of equity remains grim for women; statistics on equity within governmental ranks is also sobering. A gender gap clearly exists at the local level, and continues at the state and federal levels. Under the last administration, only 21% of United States Cabinet members were female. In fact, since 1789, of the 486 citizens who have served in the Cabinet, only 21 or 4.3% have been women. Only 9% of United States Senators were female and 12.9% of United States Representatives were female. Within the Judicial branch of the federal government, two out of nine Supreme Court justices are female (22%) and 13% of all Federal judges are female (www.gendergap.com/governme.htm).

At the state level of government, 19% of all state senators and 23% of all state representatives were female. Only 6% or 3 of the state governors were women; only 16 women have ever served as governor of a state. As of 1991, only 9% of state judges were female. At the local level, only twelve of the 100 largest cities in America have female mayors; 202 of 975 cities with a population over 30,000 have female mayors. Finally, less than 25% of locally elected officials were women (www.gendergap.com/governme.htm). These statistics point to the need to continue addressing the issue of inequity in all areas of the workforce.

Women in Leisure Services

Although there has not been a great deal of research in this area, some studies have examined women's role and status in the leisure services industry. For example, Henderson (1992) and Frisby (1992) examined different models to help understand women's position in the field. Henderson utilized the complementary-contribution model in her research, which asserts that women are different than men in terms of what they value in work and what they contribute to the workforce. In this model, different does not imply less, but suggests that women offer their organization something unique. Their contribution may not fit the male model of what is considered successful, but may enhance the workforce and broaden its perspective. In Henderson's (1992) review of the literature concerning the role of women in the leisure profession, she found that women in leisure services were facing discrimination in the form of a glass ceiling, and were experiencing sexual harassment and gender discrimination. She also found that career planning sometimes included different dimensions for women. Women often combined their career with taking care of a family and spouse, and for that reason they had distinct areas of concern in their career development pro-

cess. Henderson concluded that balancing personal and professional lives is often more of an issue for women than it is for men.

Building on an earlier study that was conducted with 30 women in upper and middle management positions in public recreation agencies in Canada (Frisby & Brown, 1991), Frisby (1992) developed a model of career development for women in leisure services. Frisby's model examines the career development of women, taking note of how it resembles or differs from that of men. Traditional models of career development (e.g., Schien, 1978) were developed for men, by men, and purport that in order to be successful and advance in one's career, one must compete for a limited number of jobs by demonstrating continuous employment. Moreover, one must adopt a style of management that "conforms to established male-oriented norms, clearly separates work and family responsibilities, and prioritize one's career over other interests and obligations" (Frisby, 1992, p. 157). However, with the influx of women into the workforce, this model may no longer be relevant for women *or men*. Frisby concluded that the career development of women must be taken seriously if the field is going to be representative of the population that it is serving. She posited that if differences in womens' career development are not recognized, women who continue to hit a "glass ceiling" may choose to leave the field.

More recently, Henderson and Bialeschki (1995) conducted a nation-wide study to assess the working conditions of women in the leisure services field. The findings of their study supported both the complementary-contribution model and the model of women's career development. The authors found evidence that supported Frisby's contention that the traditional model of career development does not satisfactorily define the career development of most women in the leisure services profession. Further, women were likely to report that their organizations expected a great deal from them, often without regard to outside responsibilities, such as child and household responsibilities. Henderson's and Frisby's models suggest that these type of responsibilities be taken into consideration. The women reported that they often worked beyond a normal 40-hour workweek. Nonetheless, they felt that they did not have the same opportunities as men for advancement. In addition, it was evident by the responses from the women that they still perceived discrimination in the workplace. Older women were more likely to report that at some time during their career they had experienced gender discrimination. Henderson and Bialeschki posited that perhaps discrimination incidences are decreasing as organizations become more aware of the ramifications of discrimination, both personal and legal. They also concluded that unless discrimination, both conscious and unconscious, continues to decrease, the career development of women may continue to be negatively affected.

Recently, Allison (1999) examined how park and recreation agencies deal with diversity issues and programs in the workplace. In her study, diversity was defined broadly and included not only gender, but race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, class, and age. Allison's in-depth interviews with

18 professionals produced interesting findings. Results indicated that "diversity policies and practices were predominantly symbolic rather than substantive." Diversity training was referred to as "cosmetic" because diversity principles were not implemented into daily practices. Respondents reported that problems continue to exist in terms of hiring, promotion, and job placement practices. One of the reasons given for selective hiring and promotion practices was that "management generally surrounded themselves, albeit unconsciously, with people like themselves." Allison concluded that in the next millennium, the success or failure of community programs might, in part, be determined by the ability of agencies to effectively deal with diverse populations. She urged agencies to create "meaningful organizational change" in the ways they deal with a diverse workforce.

The current study is an extension of previous research that was conducted in a Midwestern state with public recreation employees (Shinew & Arnold, 1998; Shinew, Anderson, & Arnold, in 2000). These initial studies found that women reported feelings of discrimination and perceived inequity in the workplace. Women felt that they were given fewer opportunities than men for promotion, and that there had been inadequate efforts made by the profession to promote women. Women were significantly more likely than men to report that they had seen a glass ceiling during their career. The female respondents also indicated that they received less salary when compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, women felt less prepared than did men for upper management positions. The current study extends this research to include a nationwide sample.

The Study's Theoretical Base

The current study is guided by the equity theory (Adams, 1965), which is based on the concept that whenever there is an exchange between two people, there is the possibility that one side will see the exchange as inequitable. The two parts of the equity ratio, inputs and outcomes, have their own unique set of characteristics. Inputs are what a person brings to a relationship and can include such variables as education, intelligence, hard work, and honesty. However, inputs are only considered in the ratio if they are *recognized* by the person as an input and are seen as relevant (Adams, 1963). Outcomes are those things that a person gains from a relationship. Outcomes can include pay, benefits, and satisfaction, but again these are only seen as outcomes if the person perceives them as such. Through socialization people usually have a fairly clear understanding of what types of outcomes are appropriate for different situations.

Inputs and outcomes are correlated, but imperfectly so (Adams, 1963; Weick, 1966). Due to this imperfect correlation, situations of inequity arise. If inputs and outcomes were always perfectly correlated, inequity would not exist. However, it is important to remember that perception is key to the ratio; the *perception* of the inputs and outcomes can be different from the *actual* inputs and outcomes. The relationship between the two is almost com-

pletely psychological and therefore, feelings of inequity are not necessarily logical (Adams, 1963).

There are a number of ways to reduce perceived inequity. First, a person can change his or her inputs. While some inputs such as sex and ethnicity cannot be altered, others such as amount of work completed can. Adams (1972) reported that people are more likely to adjust their inputs when they feel under-rewarded as opposed to over-rewarded. Second, the person may alter outcomes. These types of actions can be difficult to control, as they may include pay raises or promotions. Third, they may leave by quitting, being transferred, or through absenteeism. Fourth, they may psychologically distort inputs or outcomes, making them higher or lower. Finally, the fifth possibility is to change the referent other. This can also be difficult if the relationship is long-standing, as the person would have to make him or herself non-comparable to the other (Adams, 1963; Lawler & O'Gara, 1967; Patrick & Jackson, 1991; Weick, 1966).

The benefits an employer can gain through the equitable treatment of his or her employees are numerous. Equity has been tied to retention, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational citizenship. An organization that is known for treating its employees equitably is in a better position to attract top employees. Additionally, equitable treatment can help minimize conflict between co-workers as well as between subordinates and supervisors (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978).

The Study's Key Variables

The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of workplace equity among men and women in public parks and recreation. The impact these perceptions have on workplace behaviors and attitudes was also explored. The behaviors and attitudes included in the study are organizational commitment, organizational citizenship, and job satisfaction. A brief description of these variables is provided below.

Organizational Commitment

According to Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979), organizational commitment can be characterized by three elements. First, the worker must have a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values. Second, the employee must possess the willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization. Finally, the employee must have a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. However, a second type of organizational commitment is also often considered—calculated commitment. Calculated commitment is concerned with commitment resulting from costs "sunk" into an organization, side bets, and the cost of leaving an organization. Sunk costs and side bets refer to what an employee would lose if she/he left the organization, such as a pension (Aven, Parker, & McEvoy, 1993; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Organizational commitment is vital to the

health of an organization. It has been used to predict absenteeism, perform-
ance, and turnover, among other things. It has also been credited for re-
ducing negative behaviors and increasing the amount of work that employees
perform (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Aven et al. (1993) found that committed
workers contributed innovation and creativity to the organization and were
more likely to remain with the organization.

Several researchers (Aven et al., 1993; McCue & Wright, 1996) have
investigated the relationship between gender and commitment. Attitudinal
commitment (a form of organizational commitment) is often used as an
explanation for why, in general, women have lower organizational rank than
do men. Two models (the job model and the gender model) are often used
to determine attitudinal commitment. The gender model purports that due
to their socialization, women place a greater emphasis on their family roles
than do men. This model posits that women establish their identity through
their nurturing relationships with others and contends that women are pre-
disposed to be less attitudinally committed to their organizations than men
due to gender socialization. Variables in the gender model include family
issues, demographic variables such as sex and marital status, and work and
family relationships. The job model states that workplace experiences deter-
mine attitudinal commitment, and suggests that attitudinal commitment var-
ies only when women and men have different organizational experiences.
Job model variables include factors that are seen as unrelated to gender
stereotypes, such as reward systems, location, work environment, organiza-
tion and professional tenure, and career orientation.

Aven et al. (1993) and McCue and Wright (1996) found overwhelming
support for the job model and its relationship to attitudinal commitment for
both women and men. That is, the differences found between men and
women's commitment levels were not related to gender socialization, but
rather to their experiences in the workplace. The researchers found that
women and men have different workplace experiences, which may account
for lower attitudinal commitment among women who were more likely to
perceive inequity.

Organizational Citizenship

Organizational citizenship is characterized by discretionary, extra-role
behavior exhibited by an employee (Pond, Nacoste, Mohr, & Rodriguez,
1997). The three characteristics of this behavior are that it is discretionary,
it is not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and it
promotes the effective functioning of the organization (Pond et al., 1997).
There are two primary types of organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB).
The first falls under the category of altruism and refers to behaviors that
tend to benefit a specific person, such as helping another employee with his
or her productivity when he or she falls behind. The second type, generalized
compliance, is more concerned with behaviors that do not benefit a specific
person, but rather help the organization (Schappe, 1998). Organizational

citizenship, while not required of an employee, is essential to the well being of any organization; it breeds innovation, creativity, and cooperation (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Folger, 1993).

Organizational citizenship has been examined as a resolution tool for inequity. For example, if an employee perceives negative inequity, he or she may limit OCB. This can be an effective tool because these behaviors are not required, and thus failure to perform them does not typically lead to sanctions against the employee. Conversely, if the employee perceives that they are on the receiving end of positive inequity, guilt may drive the employee to increase their OCB (Schnake, 1991).

Job Satisfaction

Research suggests that job dissatisfaction is associated with perceived inequity. Miles, Hatfield, and Huseman (1989), in their work on how people react to inequity, found a number of relationships between reward levels (outcomes) and job satisfaction. They found that employees who were under-rewarded or over-rewarded were less satisfied than those who were equitably rewarded. Moreover, O'Neill and Mone (1998) found that equity correlated positively with job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and negatively with intent to leave.

In Perry's (1993) study of African Americans' job satisfaction, she found that they felt that they had the job skills for better pay, but that discrimination was preventing equity from occurring. Their perceived inputs were higher than their perceived outcomes. These same results could conceivably be applied to women. If they see themselves as discriminated against, they may also see themselves as overqualified for their jobs. Clearly, this could be related to turnover. Further ramifications for minorities and women may be a reduction in motivation for these groups to gain the education and skills needed to advance in the workforce because the desired outcomes are simply not materializing.

Loscocco and Spitze (1991) found that men and women made similar equity judgements and that the more women worked with men, the less satisfied they were with their (usually lower) pay. Similarly, Witt and Nye (1992) found that money and promotions were salient to both men and women in their equity ratio and any resulting job satisfaction. The authors had predicted that gender would be a moderator in the relationship between job satisfaction and perceived fairness of pay and promotion, and that perceptions of fairness and expressions of job satisfaction would be higher for women. This prediction was not supported; perceived fairness appeared to affect job satisfaction, but this relationship did not vary by gender.

Methods

The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of workplace equity among men and women in public parks and recreation. The impact these

perceptions have on workplace behaviors and attitudes was also explored. The behaviors and attitudes studied included organizational citizenship, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction

Sample

The sampling frame for the study was chosen from the American Parks and Recreation Society (APRS). Members of APRS are professionals who work in the local delivery of parks, recreation, and leisure services. The sample was stratified by sex and was systematically drawn with a random starting point. A total of 500 men and 500 women were drawn from a population of 6000; all levels of management were sampled. The sample was chosen to serve as a representative sample of APRS members, allowing for variations in agency size and city populations. APRS was chosen as the sampling frame due to the nature of the society—it is the largest membership society under the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) comprised of parks and recreation professionals. Questionnaires, cover letters, and self-addressed, stamped return envelopes were sent to each randomly selected APRS member. Addresses were obtained from NRPA. Follow-up postcards were sent ten days after the initial questionnaire mailing. As an incentive, potential respondents were informed that returned surveys would qualify them for a drawing for a free registration for the NRPA's annual "Creative Programming Forum" worth approximately $275.00. Of the 1000 surveys mailed, 549 were returned; however, six were returned as undeliverable resulting in a response rate of 55% for this study, 262 men and 281 women.

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the sample. It is evident that respondents were largely white (non-Hispanic) (92%). The second largest racial group were African-Americans (4.1%). Almost 23% of all respondents indicated a personal income of $40,000-$49,999, followed closely by $30,000-$39,999 (22.6%). The largest percentage of respondents reported an annual household income of $100,000 or more (26.6%). Almost 13% of all respondents indicated a household income of $60,000-$69,999. The respondents appear to be a well-educated group. Forty-four percent of all respondents had completed their Bachelor's degree while 34.4% had completed either their Master's degree or their Doctoral degree. Sixty-eight percent of respondents reported that they worked for a municipal parks and recreation agency while 9% worked for a park district and 9% for a county agency. Sixty-eight percent of all respondents indicated that they were married compared to the 22.5% who stated that they were single. Finally, Table 1 indicates the level of management that respondents had attained. Both the middle management and executive level management categories each accounted for 46% of the sample.

Questionnaire

A mail questionnaire was used to measure perceptions of equity and multiple work attitudes and behaviors among men and women employed in

TABLE 1
Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Demographic Characteristics	Percentages		
	Entire Sample ($n = 543$)	Male ($n = 262$)	Female ($n = 281$)
Race			
African-American	4.1	4.2	3.6
White (non-Hispanic)	92.0	92.7	91.4
Hispanic	1.9	1.5	2.1
Asian	1.1	1.2	1.1
Mixed Race	0.3	0.0	0.0
Native American	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	0.6	0.4	0.7
Annual Personal Income			
Less than $29,999	9.8	4.7	14.7
$30,000-$39,999	22.6	20.5	24.7
$40,000-$49,999	22.8	18.5	26.9
$50,000-$59,999	16.1	17.0	15.4
$60,000-$69,000	13.0	15.7	9.7
$70,000 and above	15.7	23.6	8.6
Annual Household Income			
Less than $29,999	3.3	2.8	4.0
$30,000-$39,999	8.2	7.0	9.4
$40,000-$49,999	10.0	6.6	13.3
$50,000-$59,999	11.3	8.1	14.4
$60,000-$69,999	12.6	14.3	10.8
$70,000-$79,999	10.4	12.4	8.6
$80,000-$89,999	7.8	10.8	5.0
$90,000-$99,999	9.7	8.3	11.2
$100,000 and above	26.6	29.7	23.3
Highest Educational Level			
High School, Junior College, Some College/Technical School	7.4	7.8	7.2
Completed Bachelor's Degree	44.1	46.3	42.0
Some Graduate Work	14.2	12.0	16.4
Completed Master's Degree or Ph.D.	33.9	33.5	34.1
Other	.4	.4	.3
Marital Status			
Single	21.5	11.5	31.0
Married	69.7	81.7	58.4
Divorced, Widowed, Other	8.8	6.8	10.6
Management Level			
Entry	8.0	7.0	9.1
Middle	46.2	36.7	55.1
Executive	45.8	56.3	35.8

public parks and recreation. Also included in the questionnaire were a number of demographic questions that were used as background information and to profile the study participants. The questionnaire was pilot tested by public recreation personnel to assess its face validity and clarity. No changes were made to the questionnaire based on results from the pilot test.

Perceptions of equity were measured primarily through the use of a scale initially designed to examine the issue of equity in the field of architecture (Anthony, 1996). Shinew and Arnold (1998) had previously used the scale in the area of leisure services. Respondents were asked, "Indicate how you compare with members of the opposite sex in similar (work) positions. Comparisons may be made with individuals in your agency or at another recreation and park agency." Respondents were given ten statements for comparison; they were asked to respond according to a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "much less" to "much more." The items included opportunities for advancement, salary, amount of encouragement received from superiors, extent of participation in management decisions, amount of respect from clients, amount of respect from co-workers, amount of respect from subordinates, performance expectations, desirable work assignments, and employee benefits.

To measure equity in relation to promotion opportunities, respondents were asked to respond to three statements. The statements were "males are given fewer promotion opportunities than are females," "females are given fewer promotion opportunities than are males," and "there are adequate efforts made by the profession to promote women." Response options ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" on a 5-point Likert scale.

Organizational commitment was measured through the use of Mowday et al.'s (1979) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). The OCQ is comprised of 15 statements regarding feelings the respondent has about his or her organization. Statements included "I feel little loyalty to this organization," "I really care about the fate of this organization," and "I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help this organization be successful." Responses were based on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Brayfield and Rothe's (1951) Job Satisfaction Scale was also used in this study. This scale is a global measure of job satisfaction that assesses the degree to which respondents agree or disagree with a series of evaluative statements including "I enjoy my work more than my leisure time," "I am disappointed that I ever took this job," "There are some conditions concerning my job that could be improved," and "My job is like a hobby to me." A 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" was used for the evaluation of each statement.

Organizational citizenship was measured using an instrument developed by Smith, Organ, and Near (1983) and modified by Pond et al. (1997) that measures both aspects of organizational citizenship behavior B altruism and generalized compliance. The scale has 16 items that describe OCB behaviors. The items included "volunteer for things that are not required," "give ad-

vance notice if unable to come to work," and "assist your supervisor with his or her work." For each item the respondent was asked how often they engage in the behavior ranging from "always" to "never" on a 5-point Likert scale.

Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were used to determine if male and female professionals differed on perceptions of equity as well as on measurements of workplace behaviors and attitudes. A second comparison of workplace behaviors and attitudes was made between professionals who perceived equity versus those who perceived positive or negative inequity, regardless of gender. Following significant multivariate effects, univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were used to determine the items that differed significantly in both analyses. In the first analysis, sex was the independent variable and the items for each question served as the dependent variables. In the second analysis, equity (positive inequity, negative inequity, equity) was the independent variable while job behaviors and attitudes served as the dependent variables; Dunnett's T3 post-hoc analyses were conducted to determine where significant differences existed between the three groups. Chi-square analyses were used for the questions that had a dichotomous response format.

In order to compare equity groups, it was necessary to place respondents in categories of those who perceived negative inequity, positive inequity, or equity for the items in Anthony's (1996) scale. If a respondent answered "somewhat more" or "much more" to an item, he/she was categorized as perceiving *positive inequity*. If he/she answered "somewhat less" or "much less," he/she was categorized as perceiving *negative inequity*. All remaining respondents who indicated "the same" were classified as perceiving *equity*.

Results

The study focused on determining if there were differences in perceptions of workplace equity among men and women in public parks and recreation. Second, the study questioned whether there were differences in workplace behaviors and attitudes held by male and female professionals. Additionally, an examination of whether perceptions of equity, regardless of sex, have an impact on workplace behaviors and attitudes was conducted. Following are the results of these analyses.

Perceptions of Gender Discrimination

The MANOVA results indicated a significant difference between men and women with regard to perceptions of gender discrimination. The first scale focused on promotion opportunities for men and women. An overall F-value of 45.23 ($p = .000$) was found with an initial multivariate analysis. An examination of individual items through univariate analyses found significant differences for all three items as indicated in Table 2. Women disagreed more than men that "males are given fewer promotion opportunities than are females" ($F = 28.29$; $p = .000$). Conversely, women agreed more strongly

TABLE 2
Gender Comparisons on Statements Regarding Perceived Gender Discrimination in
the Recreation and Parks Profession

	Means			
Statement	Male	Female ($n = 257$)	F-Value ($n = 280$)	p-value
Males are given fewer promotion opportunities than are females.	2.48	2.07	28.29	.000
Females are given fewer promotion opportunities than are males.	2.65	3.43	90.54	.000
There are adequate efforts made by the profession to promote women.	3.69	2.98	97.35	.000

Note: Mean scores are based on a 5-point Likert-type scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

with the statement that "females are given fewer promotion opportunities than are males" ($F = 90.54$; $p = .000$). Finally, women disagreed more with the statement "there are adequate efforts made by the profession to promote women" ($F = 97.35$; $p = .000$).

Perceptions of Gender Inequity

The second equity scale asked respondents to compare themselves to members of the opposite sex in similar positions regarding a variety of issues such as salary and performance expectations. The results are summarized in Table 3. An overall F-value of 8.42 ($p = .000$) was found for the initial multivariate analysis; follow-up univariate analyses were conducted. Significant differences were found for eight of the eleven scale items. Women indicated that they had fewer "opportunities for advancement" than men. Women also indicated that their "extent of participation in management decisions" was less than men's. Regarding respect from superiors, clients, co-workers, and subordinates, women indicated that they received less respect from each group. Women also felt that their performance expectations were higher than men's were and that their salaries were lower than men's.

Because salary inequity received the strongest reaction from the women in the study, post-hoc analyses were conducted to examine differences in salary by management level. The rationale for this analysis was the finding that women perceived they received "much less" salary than their male counterparts. No significant differences were found between men and women regarding reported personal salaries at either the entry ($X^2 = 1.59$; $p = .453$) or executive ($X^2 = 9.20$; $p = .102$) levels of management. However, at the middle management level there was a significant difference ($X^2 = 20.78$;

TABLE 3

Gender Comparisons on Statements Regarding Gender Inequity in the Recreation and Parks Profession

| | Means | | | |
| | Male ($n = 253$) | Female ($n = 271$) | F-Value | p-value |
Statement				
Opportunities for advancement.	3.12	2.76	19.91	.000
Amount of encouragement received from superiors.	3.01	2.90	3.52	.061
Extent of participation in management.	3.13	2.88	16.40	.000
Amount of respect from superiors.	3.10	2.93	7.37	.007
Amount of respect from clients.	3.38	3.07	26.31	.000
Amount of respect from co-workers.	3.28	3.15	5.39	.021
Amount of respect from subordinates.	3.28	3.13	6.16	.013
Performance expectations.	3.27	3.40	5.13	.024
Desirable work assignments.	3.06	3.03	.27	.604
Salary.	3.06	2.68	37.65	.000
Employee benefits.	3.03	2.98	2.62	.106

Note: Mean scores are based on a 5-point Likert-type scale of 1 (much less) to 5 (much more).

$p = .001$) with men making more money than women. These findings suggest that despite having reached the same level of management, women in middle management are not making an equal salary. However, two other explanations other than blatant inequity are plausible for this finding. The men in middle management are older (41.6 years) than the women (38.7 years) ($t = 2.54$; $p = .012$), but perhaps more importantly, the men have been in their current positions ($t = 2.01$; $p = .045$), their current organizations ($t = 2.46$; $p = .015$), and the profession ($t = 2.62$; $p = .009$), longer than the women.

Organizational Commitment

The initial multivariate analysis of the organizational commitment scale indicated that there was no significant difference between men and women with regard to organizational commitment ($F = 1.00$; $p = .449$). Therefore, subsequent univariate analyses were not conducted.

Job Satisfaction

An initial multivariate analysis indicated a significant difference between men and women with regard to job satisfaction ($F = 1.96$; $p = .009$). Follow-up univariate analyses were conducted to determine where differences existed among individual items of the scale. The univariate analyses found that only one of sixteen statements, "I am satisfied with my job for the time

being," produced a level of significance greater than .05 ($F = 4.98$; $p = .026$); women more strongly agreed with this statement.

Organizational Citizenship

The initial multivariate analysis of the organizational citizenship scale indicated a significant difference between the responses of men and women ($F = 2.17$; $p = .005$). Based on this initial finding, univariate analyses were examined to determine where the differences existed. Table 4 illustrates these differences. As indicated, significant differences were found in four of the sixteen items. The first difference was found with the statement, "Help others who have a heavy work load," with females indicating that they engaged in this behavior more often. A gender difference was also found regarding the statement, "Coast toward the end of the day"; more women admitted to engaging in this behavior. The third difference was with the behavior, "Spend a great deal of time on personal phone conversations," as more women than men spent time doing this. Finally, a difference was found with the behavior, "Arrive at work on time"; more men than women reported that they arrive at work on time.

TABLE 4

Gender Comparisons on Statements Regarding Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

	Means		F-Value	p-value
Statement	Male	Female	($n = 255$)	($n = 269$)
Assist your supervisor with his or her work.	3.66	3.70	.21	.649
Make innovative suggestions to improve your department.	4.11	4.11	.00	.975
Volunteer for things that are not required.	3.82	3.94	2.72	.100
Orient new people even though it is not required.	3.72	3.74	.09	.768
Help others who have been absent.	3.63	3.73	1.80	.180
Attend functions that are not required but that help improve the image of the organization.	3.92	3.89	.25	.617
Help others who have a heavy work load.	3.64	3.81	6.86	.009
Take undeserved work breaks.	1.76	1.82	.83	.362
Coast toward the end of the day.	1.93	2.06	3.88	.049
Spend a great deal of time on personal phone conversations.	1.74	1.88	7.08	.008
Arrive at work on time.	4.58	4.34	14.63	.000
Give advance notice if unable to come to work.	4.86	4.85	.11	.745
Attend work above the norm.	4.53	4.47	1.35	.246
Take extra breaks.	1.56	1.65	2.58	.109
Spend time in idle conversation.	2.26	2.37	3.86	.050
Take unnecessary time off work.	1.38	1.42	.56	.454

Note: Mean scores are based on a 5-point Likert-type scale of 1 (always) to 5 (never).

The second phase of the analysis focused on differences based solely on perceptions of equity regardless of sex. In order to conduct this analysis, each item of the equity scale developed by Anthony (1996) was examined to determine perceptions of equity held by respondents. Table 5 indicates significant differences in equity groups' (negative inequity, equity, positive inequity) work attitudes and behaviors on each of the items of the equity scale.

As indicated by Table 5, most differences between equity groups were in the area of organizational commitment. Differences in organizational commitment were found for the equity related questions of "opportunities for advancement," "amount of encouragement received from supervisor," "extent of participation in management decisions," "amount of respect from superiors," "amount of respect from subordinates," "performance expectations," "desirable work assignments," and "employee benefits." For each of these items with the exception of performance expectations, those who perceived negative inequity in each area had a significantly lower level of organizational commitment. Differences in job satisfaction were found for the equity items of "amount of encouragement received from supervisor" and "desirable work assignments." For each of these two items, those who perceived negative inequity in these areas had significantly lower levels of job satisfaction than those who perceived equity or positive inequity. No differences were found for organizational citizenship.

Gender comparisons were made within each equity group, but no significant differences were found between men and women. Despite the larger number of women falling into the negative inequity category on most items (e.g. salary, men = 20, women = 100), mean scores for job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship were not significantly different. In addition, no differences in workplace behaviors or attitudes were found for men and women in the positive inequity category. The only trends found in the gender comparison where within the equity category. Although not statistically significant, women who perceived equity tended to report higher levels of job satisfaction than did men who perceived equity. In addition, men who perceived equity were more likely to report engaging in organizational citizenship behaviors than were women who perceived equity.

Discussion

Equity theory literature has suggested that job satisfaction and organizational commitment may be tied to equity in that those with perceptions of inequity may be less committed to and less satisfied with their jobs (O'Neill & Mone, 1998; Schnake, 1991; Steers & Porter, 1983; Vroom, 1970). This was supported by the results of the current study. In general, those who perceived negative inequity had lower levels of organizational commitment than did those who perceived equity or positive inequity. Further, when gender comparisons were made within each of the equity groups (positive inequity, negative inequity, equity), no significant differences were found between women

TABLE 5
Equity Group Comparisons of Job Attitudes and Behaviors

	Equity Perceptions		
	Negative Inequity	Equity	Positive Inequity
Opportunities for Advancement	$n = 107$	$n = 359$	$n = 71$
Job Satisfaction	72.39	74.78	74.94
Organizational Commitment	71.67[a]	80.00[b]	79.17[b]
Organizational Citizenship	51.49	51.43	51.45
Encouragement Received from Supervisor	$n = 79$	$n = 367$	$n = 76$
Job Satisfaction	69.89[a]	74.86[b]	76.66[b]
Organizational Commitment	66.89[a]	79.93[b]	82.37[b]
Organizational Citizenship	51.40	51.23	52.61
Extent of Participation in Management Decisions	$n = 84$	$n = 341$	$n = 89$
Job Satisfaction	70.77	74.93	75.43
Organizational Commitment	69.10[a]	80.14[b]	79.89[b]
Organizational Citizenship	51.58	51.59	52.25
Amount of Respect from Superiors	$n = 90$	$n = 331$	$n = 93$
Job Satisfaction	70.87	75.03	75.06
Organizational Commitment	70.31[a]	79.76[b]	80.62[b]
Organizational Citizenship	51.65	51.33	51.63
Amount of Respect from Subordinates	$n = 45$	$n = 336$	$n = 133$
Job Satisfaction	71.76	74.66	74.33
Organizational Commitment	69.82[a]	79.76[b]	77.41[b]
Organizational Citizenship	51.14	51.24	52.08
Performance Expectations	$n = 16$	$n = 332$	$n = 165$
Job Satisfaction	74.74	75.16	72.61
Organizational Commitment	75.00[b]	80.40[a]	74.43[b]
Organizational Citizenship	52.50	51.46	51.29
Desirable Work Assignments	$n = 46$	$n = 395$	$n = 73$
Job Satisfaction	69.72[a]	74.74[b]	75.22[b]
Organizational Commitment	64.89[a]	79.69[b]	79.34[b]
Organizational Citizenship	51.63	51.38	51.86
Employee Benefits	$n = 18$	$n = 481$	$n = 16$
Job Satisfaction	68.67	74.48	76.00
Organizational Commitment	65.28[a]	78.86[b]	76.25[b]
Organizational Citizenship	52.13	51.44	50.76

Different superscripts (a,b) indicate significantly different cell means by Dunnett's T test which allows for unequal variances ($p < .05$). Absence of a superscript indicates no significant difference between equity groups.

and men. Thus, the impact that equity perceptions have on workplace be-
haviors and attitudes did not statistically vary by gender.

However, the findings of the study did reveal that many of the women
perceived inequity in the workplace. Perceptions of inequity were reported
for promotion opportunities, salary, performance expectations, amount of
respect from subordinates, co-workers, clients and supervisors, as well as level
of participation in management. These are discouraging results that have
several implications for the field.

The findings also indicated a significant difference between women and
men regarding their level of organizational citizenship. Women displayed
lower levels of organizational citizenship behaviors on three factors, however
women were more likely to indicate that they "help others who have a heavy
work load." Schnake (1991) has argued that organizational citizenship be-
haviors may be used as resolution tools for inequity in that they can be used
to compensate for the imbalance in the input:outcome ratio by helping the
person reduce his or her inputs to the organization. By participating more
frequently in some of these "anti-organizational citizenship behaviors,"
women can modify their outcomes. They may be changing the ratio of inputs
to outcomes by perceiving "arriv(ing) to work late" as a positive outcome as
it allows them more time away from the job (Adams, 1972; Weick, 1966).
Another explanation may be that many working women are also juggling
parental roles, which may require them to arrive to work late and/or to make
personal phone calls to check on children. It is noteworthy, however, that
there was not a significant difference between women and men for the state-
ment "attend work above the norm."

The practical implications of the data are far-reaching and applicable to
a great number of people. Procedural justice, or fairness, in the workplace
has been indicated as a precursor to organizational citizenship (Moorman,
Niehoff, & Organ, 1993). The study's findings regarding gender differences
in perceptions of equity are noteworthy. If women sense a lack of fairness in
how they are treated, they may limit their organizational citizenship behav-
iors, which is an issue for administrators. While organizational citizenship
behaviors are not required of employees, they are certainly helpful to the
survival and success of an organization (Pond et al., 1997).

Among the respondents who were married, more men had children and
more men had spouses who did not work fulltime. In contrast, more of the
married women had spouses who did work full-time. Therefore, as the lit-
erature suggests, women might be taking on a greater share of the household
work than are men (Cook, 1993; Henderson, 1992; Ott, 1984). The tradi-
tional model of career development does not take into consideration family
responsibilities when determining routes to success. As a result, manage-
ment's perceptions regarding women's career development are often nega-
tively influenced by women's home responsibilities (Chao & Malik, 1988;
Cook, 1993). In light of differences in marital status and child-rearing re-
sponsibilities, public parks and recreation organizations may need to con-
sider that Henderson's (1992) and Frisby's (1992) models may be more ap-
propriate.

A previous public parks and recreation study conducted by Shinew, Anderson, and Arnold (2000) found a large discrepancy in the number of women and men in executive level positions in a Midwestern state. Similarly, Frisby (1992) found that many female leisure service professionals were concerned that men held the majority of upper management positions and that men held most of the seats on the city councils that govern municipal parks and recreation agencies. The current study, conducted almost a decade later, found the numbers to be similar; men still reign in upper management. Further, when asked in this study if "there are adequate efforts made by the profession to promote women," women were more likely than men to disagree. There are practical implications of this finding regarding women's career development. The lack of women in upper administrative positions and the perception among women that not enough is being done to change the situation needs to be addressed. Aggressive recruiting efforts, innovative training programs, and an openness to accept alternative career models could serve as a starting point. The mean age for women in this study was almost six years younger than men's. Therefore, it is important to prepare them for promotion opportunities. If women continue to feel rebuffed in promotion opportunities, they may simply leave rather than develop their careers in this profession. This would have the unfortunate effect of even fewer women being qualified for promotion.

The results indicated that women did not feel that they enjoyed the same degree of participation in management as men in comparable positions. This finding indicates that public parks and recreation administrators may need to examine the decision-making processes in their organizations. Not only could this benefit employees, but it may also contribute to social equity if all employees' beliefs and opinions were sought and valued. Additionally, participatory decision-making has been tied to organizational commitment (Steers & Porter, 1983; Zeffane, 1994). Interestingly, Zeffane (1994) has also tied management level to organizational commitment. A post-hoc analysis examining level of management and organizational commitment found significant results; as predicted by Zeffane (1994), executive level employees were more committed. This supports the argument that more women are needed in upper administrative positions if they are to remain committed to their organizations.

McCue and Wright (1996) addressed attitudinal commitment (a form of organizational commitment) in a comparison between the job model and gender models. The job model professes that attitudinal commitment is dependent upon organizational factors while the gender model assumes that differences in commitment are a result of gender differences in socialization between men and women. McCue and Wright found that the job model better explained attitudinal commitment, which demonstrates that organizational factors, positive and negative, affect level of commitment. This indicates that if women are treated fairly and equitably, their level of commitment should be equal to that of men. The results of this study regarding gender comparisons by equity category support this notion.

Future Directions for Study

Several issues have been addressed in this study, but further research is needed. Of particular interest is the development of a longitudinal study based on the same issues addressed in this study. For example, Frisby's (1992) study found inequities in the number of men and women represented in upper management. This study, conducted in the year 2000, found the same types of inequities. As more professionals, particularly administrators, are made aware of this discrepancy, it would be interesting to reexamine equity issues in ten years. A longitudinal study would allow for comparisons over time within the field. Even if the same cohort were not used, a national, representative sample would allow for some relevant comparisons.

The issues included in this study could be further served by a qualitative study that further examined perceptions of inequity. Often, due to the objective nature of quantitative data, a study loses something in the translation from subject to researcher. In addition, often the answers to the quantitative instrument will lead to more questions better suited for a qualitative framework.

Certainly public parks and recreation is not the only leisure delivery system worth examining. These same issues could be applied to the areas of sport management, natural resources, leisure education, travel and tourism, therapeutic recreation, campus recreation, and commercial recreation. A comparison between the three primary types of leisure service providers (not-for-profit, private not-for-profit, and commercial) would provide an invaluable comparison for administrators. Additionally, comparisons between public parks and recreation and other professions (both private as well as other social services type professions—social work, healthcare, etc.) would add greater insight, and the leisure service profession could perhaps implement personnel policies and procedures that have served other professions well.

In summary, the research indicates that inequity continues to be a problem in the public parks and recreation profession. While both sexes are undoubtedly affected by this issue, women consistently report stronger perceptions of negative inequity in the workplace. It appears that these perceptions, regardless of gender, have a negative effect on certain workplace behaviors and attitudes. Without a stronger effort to address inequities, professionals, especially women, as well as agencies, will continue to suffer the negative effects of workplace inequity.

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