



# **2016 NRPA Annual Conference**

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## **Abstracts from the 2016 NRPA Research Sessions**

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# Preface

## 2016 NRPA Research Sessions

This year marks the 39th year that the National Recreation and Park Association has hosted research presentations in conjunction with the Annual Congress. Changes that were initiated for the 2015 Congress have been continued and expanded, in an effort to better connect research with the needs and interests of colleagues on the ground in the field. The changes instituted are a result of collaborative discussions between NRPA and TALS leadership. Among the most notable this year is the introduction of a practitioner review component, in which all abstracts submitted were reviewed not only for research content and rigor by academic reviewers, but also for applicability, timeliness, and value to the field by practitioner reviewers. Change is rarely easy, nor accepted without question critical assessment. The changes made to the research sessions are no exception; with an exciting flurry of discussions on the discipline's website (ALSNET@LISTSERV.UGA.EDU) those changes were integrated into the structure of the research sessions this year with subsequent changes coming next year. Submission numbers were lower than they were for the 2015 Congress, but are average compared to the 2013 and 2014 Congresses. This year we received 73 abstracts for review, including two panel presentations. Of those, 54 oral paper presentations and 10 posters are included in this year's sessions. All the abstracts were blind peer reviewed in a process where the reviewers do not know if the abstract is to be considered for a poster or an oral presentation.

The 2016 NRPA Research Sessions commence on Wednesday, October 6, with the Butler Lecture at 8 a.m. This year, we are bringing back a panel-type event with two highly regarded researchers in the field of social justice in recreation, Drs. Myron Floyd and Monika Stodolska. They will address Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration in the Changing Society: Assessing Contributions of Scholarship to Leisure Theory and Practice.

Oral presentations for the 2016 Research Sessions will begin on Wednesday, October 6, immediately following the Butler Lecture. Authors were encouraged to identify thematic areas for their abstracts at the time of submission. Thematic areas for abstracts reflect the NRPA pillars; Health and Wellness, Conservation, and Social Equity. Additional thematic areas include Recreation Administration to accommodate papers specific to issues of management and operations, and Research Methodology to maintain important discussions and learning opportunities for research methods and approaches. Overall, the presentations represent an impressive diversity and depth. The moderators have been asked to facilitate Q & A between presenters and attendees at the end of each session; please plan to attend the entire session to reap full benefits of the research and subsequent discussions.

The organization of the NRPA Research Sessions is a collaborative effort. Our thanks go to the review coordinators and the academic and practitioner reviewers whose dedication and willingness to serve are much appreciated. We want to extend thanks and appreciation to NRPA staff liaison Tom Crosley, who has been invaluable in the process again this year, and to Dr. Mike Edwards for coordinating the poster session. We also extend our thanks to the presenters for sharing their work and the moderators for facilitating the sessions.

**Rasul Mowatt and Dorothy Schmalz**

*2016 NRPA Research Sessions Co-Chairs*

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**RACE, ETHNICITY, AND IMMIGRATION IN THE CHANGING SOCIETY:  
ASSESSING CONTRIBUTIONS OF SCHOLARSHIP TO LEISURE  
THEORY AND PRACTICE**

Myron Floyd, Professor and Department Head  
Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management  
North Carolina State University

Monika Stodolska, Professor  
Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism  
University of Illinois

We will examine the history of the scholarship on race, ethnicity, and immigration in leisure and recreation studies and assess its impact on the broader literature and professional practice. The presentation also aims to discuss the relevance of this scholarship to building leisure theory and to solving problems stemming from racial and ethnic inequality in the current and future society.



**Myron Floyd** is professor and department head in the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management at North Carolina State University. Active in both teaching and research, Dr. Floyd has taught courses in evaluation and research methods, park management, and leisure theory. His most recent research examines how public parks and other built environment features contribute to physical activity in low income communities of color. His research appears in a variety of highly regarded scientific journals including *Leisure Sciences*, *Journal of Leisure Research*, *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, *Circulation*, and *Environment and Behavior*. Dr. Floyd serves on the Forestry Research Advisory Council which provides advice to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture on research priorities for the US Forest Service and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. He also serves on the board of directors for the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Dr. Floyd is the 2008 recipient of the National Recreation and Park Association Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt Award for Excellence in Recreation and Park Research. He is an elected Fellow of the Academy of Leisure Sciences.



**Monika Stodolska** is a professor in the Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism, University of Illinois. She received her PhD in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences from the University of Alberta, Canada. Her research focuses on issues of cultural change, quality of life, and their relationship to leisure behavior of ethnic and racial minorities. She explores subjects such as the adaptation processes among minority groups, the effects of leisure on identity development among young immigrants, and transnationalism. Other subjects that are prominent in her research include ethnic and racial discrimination in leisure settings, recreation behavior of minority populations in nat-

ural environments, physical activity among minority groups, as well as constraints on leisure. Dr. Stodolska's research has been funded by the USDA Forest Service, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and National Recreation and Park Association. She has co-edited books entitled *Race, Ethnicity, and Leisure* with Drs. Kim Shinew, Myron Floyd, and Gordon Walker, and *Leisure Matters: The State and Future of Leisure Studies* with Drs. Gordon Walker and David Scott. Her research has also been published in the *Journal of Leisure Research*, *Leisure Sciences*, *Leisure/Loisir*, *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, *Social Science Quarterly*, the *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*, and other outlets.

## **LEISURE DEFINED BY FREE CHOICE: UGANDAN WOMEN'S PERCEPTIONS OF LEISURE**

Emilie V. Adams, Brigham Young University

Peter J. Ward, Brigham Young University

Stacy T. Taniguchi, Brigham Young University

Steven J. Hite, Brigham Young University

### **Introduction**

What people do for leisure may convey more about their feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and values than what they do in any other context (Kleiber, Walker, & Mannell, 2011). In recent years, interest has surfaced regarding leisure research from a global perspective, not only for the purpose of understanding leisure in individual countries, but to facilitate further examination of leisure practices and beliefs in our own societies and lives (Henderson & Gibson, 2013; Iwasaki, Nishino, Onda, & Bowling, 2007; Roberts, 2010). Two of the researchers had extensive experience conducting research in Uganda (McGovern et al., 2014; Warren et al., 2012). Because of the social network previously established, researchers were able to go to Uganda with a connection to people who our participants trusted. This rapport has been built up over years of consistently returning to conduct research. The interest in leisure outside western countries, the interest of the Ugandan government in finding in promoting gender equality, and our position of building relationships, intersected to provide a compelling research opportunity to explore Ugandan women's perceptions of leisure. The objectives were to find the core constructs related to leisure by following a trail of evidence to explore the essence of how women describe leisure and determine if there are commonalities to the descriptions.

### **Methods**

In this qualitative study, the leisure experiences of 38 Ugandan women of various backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses were evaluated through semi-structured interviews. The sample was a snowball sample beginning with contacts in the network researchers had previously established in Uganda. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and the data was analyzed using the constant comparative method. Primary coding, axial coding, and selective coding was done using NVivo 10 software. Women were assigned pseudonyms and their demographic information is summarized in Table 1.

### **Results**

Themes for the meaning of leisure include fortifying leisure, enjoyment, and rest and relaxation. Previous research on the leisure of adolescents in Uganda (McGovern et al., 2014) described the concept of fortifying leisure, defined as "leisure outcomes that strengthen the individual to overcome inevitable challenges they will face throughout their lives and enable them to succeed" (p. 23). In the present study themes from the data supporting the concept of fortifying leisure included personal development, family and community development, and professional development. Other main theme were enjoyment and rest and relaxation. After considering how fortifying leisure, relaxation, and enjoyment intersect, and considering how participants discussed non-leisure time, the core variable of "free choice" emerged.

### **Discussion**

Enjoyment, rest, and relaxation, are elements of leisure that fall well within most definitions. However, fortifying leisure is a different concept of defining leisure than typically used. The fortifying leisure discussed by most participants was inextricably connected to achieving outcomes.

Women in Uganda negotiate their obligated time to include leisure, and their work and leisure occur concurrently. In both this study and Dilbaghi's and Dilbaghi's (2007) study of farmwomen in India, the findings demonstrated leisure can be created in the midst of strenuous activities. Kahn (1997) reported similar findings in her research on the leisure of hill-farming women in Bangladesh and reported viewing work and leisure as a dichotomy obscured by the subtle pleasure and gratification women achieved from apparent obligatory chores and routines (Kahn, 1997). Therefore, it is unreasonable to reject activities as leisure simply because their result is productive.

Based on the results, it appears much of this cultural partition of work versus leisure is based not on a definition of leisure, but on a definition of work. Axial coding showed leisure in Uganda occurred during both discretionary time and during what we would call work. Women who were self-employed or subsistence providers ultimately determined how they would spend all of their time. The participants who were formally employed had a clear sense of when they had time to do what they wanted, versus when they were exchanging their time for a wage. Women who were working for a wage related they experienced little autonomy at work and conveyed they had little time to choose what they wanted to do. Conversely, women with plentiful free time did not always view their free time as leisure. Rather, many described free time as a burden because they did not have many leisure options in which to choose to participate and described how time not engaged in productive activity was not enjoyable. Both discretionary time and productive time were considered leisure only when the activities were freely chosen by the individual.

Rather than being nonworking time, in many cases, leisure was a mental time-space where Ugandan women experienced personal choice, achievement, building relationships, a sense of accomplishment, stress relief, and a sense of enjoyment. Activities that would not typically be coded by researchers as leisure, because of their productive end result, were in fact leisure to the women in our study.

### **Implications for Practice**

Allowing the data to reflect on leisure experiences in the United States, it appears when working with clients it is vital to recognize the importance an internal locus of control plays in experiencing activities as leisure. Activities, whether goal oriented or not, may be experienced as enjoyable leisure pursuits if clients feel they are freely choosing to engage in the activity. For example educational programming could be viewed as leisure, despite the goal oriented nature of the programming, if clients feel they chose to participate in activities. In contrast educational programming may be perceived as simply mandatory work if clients feel they have no say in attending or participating. The same principal may be applied to book clubs, volunteer activities, and sports programming. Practitioners can pay attention to the way they present activities, and offer free choice as appropriate to possibly help increase client satisfaction.

Emilie V Adams, Brigham Young University, (801) 372-5491, [emilie.adams@gmail.com](mailto:emilie.adams@gmail.com)

**Table 1***Participants and Demographic Information \*Interview not successfully audio recorded*

Name	Interview	Age	Dwelling	Education	Marital status	# Dependents	Religion	SES	Occupation
Mary	55-UNP	53	Urban	PhD	Single	0	Christian	EP	Professor
Abbo	56-UPG	55	Urban	PhD	Married	4	Christian	EP	Professor
Nabu	57-UNP	52	Urban	PhD	Single	0	Christian	EP	Professor
Faylola	58-UNP	26	Urban	Degree	Single	1	Christian	EP	Social worker
Jane	59-RCB	55	Urban	Certificate	Married	30	Christian	BE	Entrepreneur
Ann	60-RNP	27	Rural	Degree	Single	0	Christian	EP	Project coordinator
Kisha	61-UND*	20	Urban	S4	Single	0	Christian	BE	Student
Fran	62-UCP	39	Urban	Degree	Single	1	Christian	EP	Bursar
Lydia	63-UNB	54	Urban	S4	Single	0	Christian	BE	Entrepreneur
Jenny	64-UNP*	22	Urban	Degree	Single	0	Muslim	EP	Looking for work
Harriet	65-UNP	21	Urban	Certificate	Single	0	Muslim	EP	Looking for work
Susan	66-UNS	19	Urban	S6	Single	0	Christian	BE	Student
Liz	67-UNP	24	Urban	Degree	Single	0	Christian	EP	Secondary teacher
Winnie	68-UNP	24	Urban	Degree	Engaged	0	Christian	EP	Secondary teacher
Norma	69-UNB	20	Urban	P-P6	Single	0	Christian	BE	Textile manufacturer
Theresa	70-UNB	29	Urban	P-P6	Single	0	Christian	BE	Maid
Gabriella	71-UCB	26	Urban	S4	Single	2	Christian	BE	Baker
Nikita	72-RCS	45	Rural	P-P6	Widowed	6	Muslim	SP	Subsistence provider
Kip	73-RCS	40	Rural	P-P6	Married	8	Muslim	SP	Subsistence provider
Gretta	74-RCP	42	Rural	Certificate	Single	6	Christian	EP	School teacher
Bemma	75-RCP	24	Rural	S6	Married	2	Muslim	EP	School teacher
Irina	76-RCB	35	Rural	P-P6	Married	3	Christian	BE	small shop owner
Reya	77-RCS	42	Rural	P-P6	Married	4	Muslim	SP	Subsistence provider
Miriam	78-RCS	32	Rural	P-P6	Married	5	Christian	SP	Subsistence provider
Polly	79-RCS	29	Rural	P-P6	Married	6	Christian	SP	Subsistence provider
Chrissy	80-UCP	24	Rural	Degree	Married	2	Christian	EP	Social worker
Joan	82-RNE	23	Rural	Certificate	Married	0	Christian	EP	School teacher
Whitney	83RCP	32	Rural	Certificate	Married	4	Christian	EP	School teacher
Daisy	84-RGS	40	Rural	P-P6	Married	8	Christian	SP	Subsistence provider
Lilly	85-RGS	46	Rural	P-P6	Widowed	6	Christian	SP	Brewer
Jan	86-RCS	33	Rural	P-P6	Married	10	Christian	SP	Subsistence provider
Corrie	87UGS	72	Urban	P-P6	Married	0	Christian	SP	Subsistence provider
Stella	88-RNP	27	Rural	Degree	Single	0	Christian	EP	Nurse
Diane	89-RCP	24	Rural	Certificate	Single	1	Christian	EP	Midwife
Mara	90-RCP	27	Rural	Certificate	Married	2	Christian	EP	Nurse
Ruth	91-RCB	24	Rural	Degree	Single	1	Christian	EP	School matron
Miriam	92-UNS	19	Rural	S4	Single	0	Christian	Student	Student
Lisa	93-UCP*	24	Urban	Degree	Married	2	Christian	EP	Secondary teacher



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## USE OF IVE IN MAPPING PERCEIVED SAFETY IN A PARK

Perver K. Baran, North Carolina State University

Payam Tabrizian, North Carolina State University

Yujia Zhai, Tongji University, China

Myron F. Floyd, North Carolina State University

Jordan W. Smith, Utah State University

Urban parks provide local residents with leisure-time and utilitarian physical activity opportunities (Cohen, et al., 2007; Zlot & Schmid, 2005). Parks also support psychological and social well-being (Prezza & Pacilli, 2007; Tinsley, Tinsley, & Croskeys, 2002). However, park use may be diminished if potential visitors perceive threats to their health and safety (Lapham et al., 2015; Bedimo-Rung, Mowen, & Cohen, 2005). Evidence suggests that feelings of fear or danger are strongly influenced by the spatial enclosure (Stamps, 2005) that is formed by the configuration and physical characteristics of landscape features (Herzog & Kutzli, 2002; Jorgensen, Hitchmough, & Calvert, 2002). To date, the relationship between spatial enclosure and perceived safety has not been addressed in the context of urban parks. Additionally, conventional methods of representing environments (such as photos, slides, and videos) may not adequately mimic actual urban park settings, consequently biasing judgments of safety. This study examined how spatial enclosure relates to individuals' perception of safety utilizing realistic non-manipulated representations of actual park settings displayed to research subjects through immersive virtual environments (IVE) via a head-mounted display device. The study recognizes different situational characteristics, including spatial enclosure, play a role in perception of safety. In addition, the research develops a method to spatially map safety perception patterns within urban parks.

### Methods

The study site was a mid-sized (21.4 acres) urban park in Raleigh, NC. Study stimuli involved eight 360° IVE scenes representing different situations within the park. Situations varied in level of spatial enclosure (low, medium, high) based on the degree of visual and locomotive permeability (Stamps, 2012), which are dependent on the height and permeability of lateral vegetation (Jorgensen et al., 2002) and path features. For each location, an array of 54 images (9 images in the row, 6 images in column) were acquired using a digital SLR camera fitted within a GigaPan EPIC Pro robotic controller. All images were taken in December 2013 at noon time under cloudy condition to minimize the shading effect. The images were then stitched together to create a full 360° equirectangular image and converted into virtual environment through a process known as cube mapping (Smith, 2015). Finally, the virtual environments were rendered and displayed into head mounted displays (Oculus Rift Dk1). In the experiment, 29 female and 19 male undergraduate student participants were invited to experience these virtual environments by wearing a head-mounted display device. Participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale how safe they would feel to walk alone in the environment during the day. After each rating, participants were also asked to indicate main reasons that made them feel safe or unsafe in a particular location. Descriptive statistics of safety-score means were calculated using SAS v9.4 software. GLM analyses of variance models were used to assess the main effects of enclosure level and gender on perceived safety as well as the interaction effects. Tukey's HSD multiple comparison tests were performed to further evaluate pairwise differences for safety-scores across scenes and to observe the simple effect of gender on safety ratings for each scene. Reasons leading to a particular safety perception

indicated by participants were categorized into 16 environmental attributes. Correlation analysis was performed to examine associations between safety scores and frequency of environmental attributes for each gender and for all participants. Finally, average safety evaluations for each scene was assigned to the geocoded locations and mapped across the study area using “inverse distance weighted (IDW) with barriers” interpolation tool in ESRI ArcMap.

## **Results**

GLM analysis indicated significant differences for mean perceived safety scores between the three enclosure levels ( $F = 83.3, p < .001$ ) and between males and females ( $F = 24.08, p < .001$ ). Pairwise differences between scenes showed that the two scenes with highest level of enclosure are perceived significantly different from the rest of the scenes. As expected, these two most enclosed locations were perceived as the least safe places in the park ( $M = 3.25$  and  $M = 3.08$ ). Among most commonly mentioned reasons for such perception were, “enclosed/cannot see” and “trees/bushes.” The most open location was perceived as the second safest location in the park ( $M = 4.46$ ). In addition to “open/empty/see everything,” participants indicated the presence of a “house/building” as a reason behind their judgments. The safest perceived location in the park ( $M = 4.79$ ) has a very low degree of enclosure; in addition, a playground with a child playing in the background contributed to the high degree of perceived safety. In general, study results indicated that factors such as openness, good visibility, and presence of people and paths can lead people to perceive an environment as safe. Overall, except for the scene rated as safest, female participants perceived the park locations as less safe in comparison to male participants. The perceived safety maps showed the majority of the park was perceived as relatively safe place to walk, while the two least safe locations were clustered in an area with dense vegetation (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

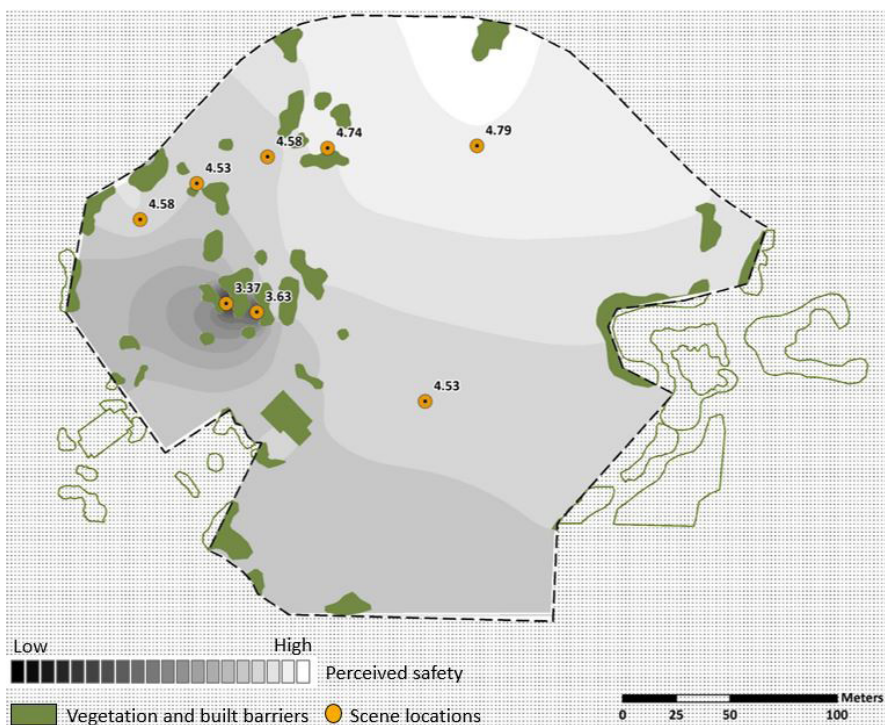
## **Discussion**

The study suggests spatial enclosure created by arrangement of vegetation is one of the main environmental attributes contributing to perceived safety in a park. Additional attributes that contribute to perception of safety are presence of people and paths. It is important to note that study results may not apply to general population, since due to brain development, undergraduate students may have varying levels of risk perception. Nevertheless, the study demonstrates IVE technology can provide an efficient approach to collect human perception data on the perceived safety in neighborhood parks. Finally, the study offers an innovative method to utilize human perception data in order to spatially map safety perception patterns within parks.

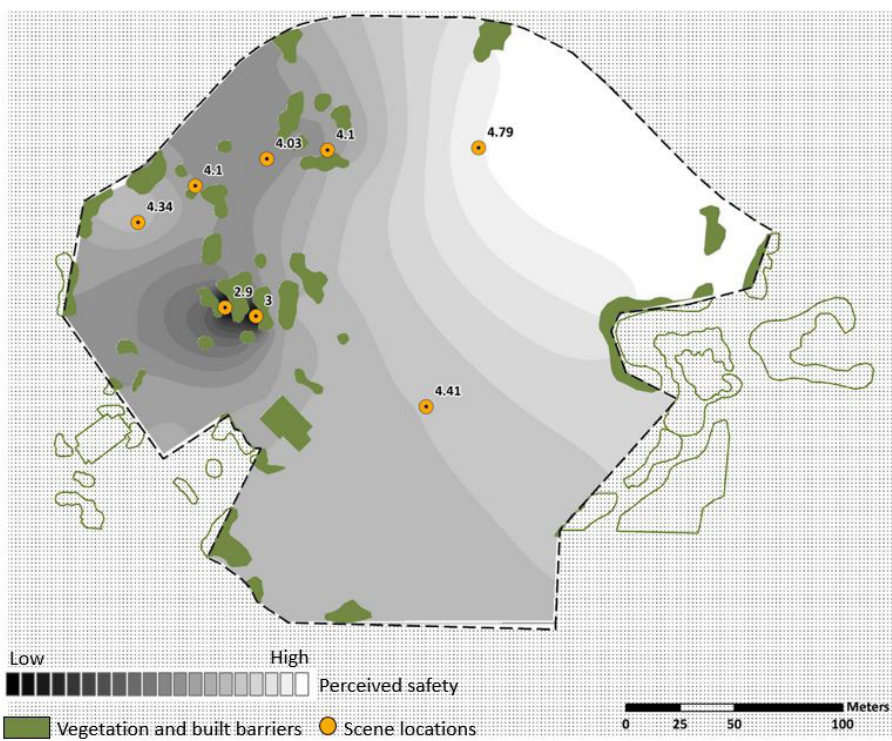
## **Implications for Practice**

The study results provide valuable insights for park planning and management. The resulting safety maps also may be valuable decision-support tools utilized by designers, park planners and managers. They can be helpful in identifying locations that require interventions. Similar approaches could be used for evaluation of other open spaces, such as trails, streets and public squares. In addition, the approach explored here also provides opportunities to manipulate environmental stimuli for rigorous experimental studies to assess the effect of various environmental attributes and design elements on people’s perceptions.

Perver K. Baran, North Carolina State University, (919)513-2373, [perver\\_baran@ncsu.edu](mailto:perver_baran@ncsu.edu)



**Figure 1.** Map of Average Perceived Safety by Males



**Figure 2.** Map of Average Perceived Safety by Females

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## **REPEATED CONFERENCE VISITS: EFFECT ON THE PLACE BONDING OF YOUTH**

Stephen R. Beck, Oklahoma State University

Donna Lindenmeier, Oklahoma State University

Kevin Fink, Central State University

### **Introduction**

Youth conferences can be held at various types of facilities such as universities, campgrounds, parks, and convention centers. These conferences may provide recreation, educational workshops, leadership development, and social connectedness, but it is also possible that youth may be developing place bonds with the facilities and surrounding environment. Through repeated exposures and experiences, undifferentiated space often develops special meaning for the participants and these spaces become special places (Tuan, 1977). As people become familiar with these places they often develop person-place bonds and may refer to them as their “own” place or favorite place for a particular activity (Hammitt, Backlund, & Bixler, 2004). Place bonding has been theorized to contain five dimensions, place identity, place dependence, place familiarity, place belongingness, and place rootedness (Hammitt, Kyle, & Oh, 2009). Theories involving attachment to recreational places have become prevalent in publications during the past 20 years (Lewicka, 2011). However, there has been little to no focus on pre-college age youth or attachments to conference environments.

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is an effect, and if so, what is the level of effect repeated trips to the conference had on the youths’ level of place bonding to the facility. Additionally, the study investigated the level of effect that trips to the facility for activities other than the conference had on place bonding. By determining if providing youth repeated exposure to the campus through this type of conference, administrators and program designers may be given insight on how to facilitate youth programs in a manner that develops youth into becoming long-term users and stakeholders for the facility.

### **Methods**

This study was collected during state 4-H Roundup (Roundup) held at a land-grant university and compared measurements of frequency of campus visits (Table 1) and repeated attendance to Roundup (Table 2) to the youth’s campus place bonding scores. Additionally, in order to account for varying combinations of years attending Roundup and frequency of visits to campus, the researchers developed an experience use history scale that was compared to place bonding scores. During the final session, 648 youth (aged 12–19) that attended Roundup were provided a pen and paper survey (response rate = 70%) to determine both their frequency of conference attendance and other campus visits. A 22-item scale was used to provide respondents scores for the five dimensions of place bonding: place familiarity, place belongingness, place identity, place dependence, and place rootedness. A cross-sectional analysis was conducted using nonparametric statistics. The level of risk was set at  $\alpha = .05$ . Upon determining significant omnibus results with a Kruskal-Wallis  $H$ -test, post-hoc tests were run using a Dunn-Bonferroni test to compare ranked data to determine which groups contributed to the significance.

### **Findings**

Results indicated that increased trips to Roundup had an effect on the respondents’ place bonding to campus (Table 3). As the frequency of trips to Roundup increased, there was a significant increase in the scores for all five dimensions of place bonding [ $\chi^2 (3, N = 451) \geq 10.2 (p \leq .017)$ ]. Visits to the campus for reasons other than Roundup were also shown to have similar effects on place bonding (Table 4). As the frequency of other visits to the campus increased there was a sig-

nificant increase in the respondents' scores for all five dimensions of place bonding [ $\chi^2 (3, N = 407) \geq 20.85 (p < .001)$ ]. In order to compare the varying combinations of Roundup visits and other visits to campus, four classifications of experience use history were formed. These groups were significantly different for all five place bonding dimensions [ $\chi^2 (3, N = 404) \geq 19.48 (p < .001)$ ].

### **Discussion**

The number of years a youth returned to attend the conference significantly affected the place bonding scores in all five dimensions. This suggests that the more times a youth member returns to engage in this type of conference the more likely they will develop a bond to the conference location. Place familiarity had the highest significance level which may have been attributed to the active engagement that the youth had within the campus. As active engagement has been shown to support familiarity (Evans & Pezdek, 1980).

The number of times that a youth came to campus during the year other than the conference had a significant effect on all five place bonding dimensions. Though all five dimensions had significant increases with increased frequency of trips to campus, respondents that came to campus six or more times in the past year had highly significant increases for place familiarity, place belonging, and place identity, indicating the importance of bringing youth to the location for activities other than the conference.

Measurements using the experience use history scale showed significant differences for all five dimensions. The data clearly showed that both the frequency of return visits to the conference and frequency of other campus visits had their own unique effect on bonding. However, results did not support one as being more important than the other.

### **Implications**

Facilitators of conferences have the opportunity to develop programs that may strengthen the people-place bonds to their facilities. Programs that actively engage the participants within the environment may further facilitate familiarity. These programs should provide youth an environment in which they feel safe which can help participants develop feelings of security and home. Furthermore, programs that are rich in traditions and develop historical ties with the environment may help develop belongingness, and identity.

Thoughtful program design may increase the strength of the human-place bonds to facilities hosting youth conferences. For example, designing programs that help the participants understand the historical significance of a place may lead to a stronger place identity. Potentially, these bonds may help in developing clientele that desire to return to facility on an annual basis and become lifelong stakeholders.

This study showed that all five dimensions of place bonding increased through participation in a youth conference. It is recommended that future studies focus on determining which aspects of the conference experience have the greatest significance on bonding scores. Additionally, this study used convenience sampling methods at an Oklahoma university and are not generalizable so further random studies at alternate facilities should be conducted.

Stephen Beck, Oklahoma State University, (405) 744-8886, [steve.beck@okstate.edu](mailto:steve.beck@okstate.edu)

### *Roundup Attendance Groups, Frequency, and Percentage of Usable Responses*

Group	Years of Attendance	Frequency	Percentage
1	1	169	37.5
2	2	106	23.5
3	3	81	18.0
4	4 - 8	95	21.1
Total		451	100.1

*Campus Visits Groups, Frequency and Percentage of Usable Responses*

Group	Number of Visits	Frequency	Percentage
1	0	127	31.2
2	1-2	134	32.9
3	3-5	100	24.6
4	6-276	46	11.3
Total		407	100.0

### Comparisons of Roundup Attendance on Place Bonding

	Omnibus Scores		Dunn-Bonferroni Post-Hoc				
Dimension	$\chi^2$	$p$	1-2	1-3	1-4	2-3	2-4
Familiarity	136.5	<.001*	<.001*	<.001*	<.001*	.070	<.001*
Belonging	19.56	<.001*	.771	.013*	<.001*	.765	.124
Identity	14.17	.003*	.706	.126	.002*	1.00	.361
Dependence	26.61	<.001*	.079	.001*	<.001*	.803	.342
Rootedness	10.24	.017*	1.00	.052	.053	1.00	1.00

3 df, N = 451, \*  $\alpha \leq .05$ , \*\* Adjusted significance  $\alpha \leq .05$

### Comparisons of Campus Visits on Place Bonding

Dimension	Omnibus Scores		Dunn-Bonferroni Post-Hoc				
	$\chi^2$	$p$	1-2	1-3	1-4	2-3	2-4
Familiarity	63.27	<.001*	<.001*	<.001*	<.001*	1.00	<.001*
Belonging	46.63	<.001*	.021*	<.001*	<.001*	.200	<.001*
Identity	38.38	<.001*	.005*	<.001*	<.001*	1.00	.005*
Dependence	23.44	<.001*	.013*	.015*	<.001*	1.00	.132
Rootedness	20.85	<.001*	.009*	.003*	.001*	1.00	.811

3 df, N = 407, \*  $\alpha \leq .05$ , \*\* Adjusted significance  $\alpha \leq .05$



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## MANAGEMENT AND BENEFITS OF RECREATION PROGRAMS ADDRESSING YOUTH GANG INVOLVEMENT

Liza Berdychevsky, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Monika Stodolska, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Kimberly Shinew, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Gang activity has increased in the U.S. over the past decade (Chesney-Lind, 2013) and youth gang membership is a persistent and serious national problem (Simon, Ritter, & Mahendra, 2013). Between 2002 and 2010, the number of gangs in the U.S. grew from about 21,800 to 29,400—an increase of 35% (Howell, 2013), and in many jurisdictions, gangs account for more than half of violent crimes (Simon et al., 2013). The majority of traditional gang prevention and intervention programs place emphasis on policing, while some new initiatives involve collaborations between schools, communities, and public health departments (National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention, 2015). To date, recreation programs have been conspicuously absent from the national and regional discourse as gang prevention measures, despite the fact that they have the capacity to provide needed safe spaces and positive activities for at-risk youth and, thus, serve as a counterbalance to a life of street crime and deviant leisure. Many such programs are already being implemented throughout the United States. However, rigorous evaluations of their benefits and management guidelines are still lacking. Thus, the objectives of this study were to examine the benefits and qualities of successful recreation programs addressing youth gang involvement. This study was designed to contribute to the literature on the benefits of recreation programs for at-risk youth (Baldwin, 2000) and on the nexus of recreation and crime activities (Stodolska, Shinew, Acevedo, & Izenstark, 2011; Stodolska, Shinew, Acevedo, & Roman 2013).

### Methods

Data collection involved 39 in-depth interviews (33 face-to-face and 6 phone interviews, lasting 1-1.5 hours) with former gang members and recreation practitioners working with gang members. Out of the 28 practitioners, 20 were also previous gang members. Gender, race/ethnicity, and age breakdown of the participants are provided in Table 1. The interviewees were recruited with the help of key informants (e.g., leaders of organizations such as Cure Violence, Chicago) and using a combination of availability and snowball sampling. The interview guide included questions about the impacts of gang involvement on health and well-being, protective and risk factors for gang involvement, deviant and risky leisure activities in the gang, and the roles of recreation programs in preventing gang involvement and/or encouraging members to leave gangs. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, pseudonymized, and analyzed using constructivist grounded theory and the elements of the situational analysis (Charmaz, 2006; Clarke, 2005).

### Findings

*Recreation programs addressing gang involvement.* The participants emphasized key qualities boosting the preventative and interventional capacities of the recreation programs addressing gang involvement, which included attractiveness, affordability, cooperation, consistency, perseverance, structure/supervision, and targeting (see Figure 1). First, programs need to be attractive for youth since recreation is often used to entice youth to participate in other types of prevention initiatives. Frequent examples of activities included sports, music, arts, and trips (to nature, sport contests). Second, such programs have to be affordable or free, considering the sociodemographic profile of the targeted population. Also, offering free snacks and transportation was described as beneficial (and often essential), which highlights the importance of funding for these programs. Third, it is important to involve family members in the programming efforts when possible. Additionally,

strategic cooperation with schools and various community organizations is helpful for sharing available resources and reaching youth through diverse outlets. Fourth, such programmatic efforts should be stable, consistent, and long-term in order to provide proper support and guidance to youth. In an environment that is often unstable and chaotic, dependable and consistent recreational programming is critical. Fifth, considering the nature of the targeted population, these programs must be carefully supervised and organized in terms of safety and discipline. Lastly, the targeted populations' characteristics have to be carefully considered in terms of age, gender, risk level, and specific gang and neighborhood affiliation. Recreation programs that possess some of these key qualities are more likely to result in desired benefits for the targeted population.

*Potential benefits of recreation programs addressing gang involvement.* According to the participants, recreation programs can be effective because they offer numerous personal and interpersonal benefits (see Figure 1). For instance, program leaders/mentors provide youth with positive role models (that may be unavailable at home) who can relate to their struggles because often the mentors themselves have had previous gang experiences. These programs allow youth to develop prosocial relationships with their peers and can help to break racial/ethnic stereotypes. Additionally, they allow youth to acquire important life skills, such as communication and leadership. Such programs can also divert youth's energy and aspirations from a street lifestyle and gang involvement, and keep them busy with positive developmental tasks. Moreover, these programs give youth a safe haven in neighborhoods that are ridden with violence and infested with gangs. Various activities and trips are conducive to broadening youth's horizons by exposing them to environments they might not see otherwise, as many have never travelled outside of their neighborhoods. Finally, the benefits of such programs can include helping youth develop a sense of empowerment (e.g., in choosing a different life course), meaning (due to various reappraisals), purpose and discipline, and self-transformation through self-expression.

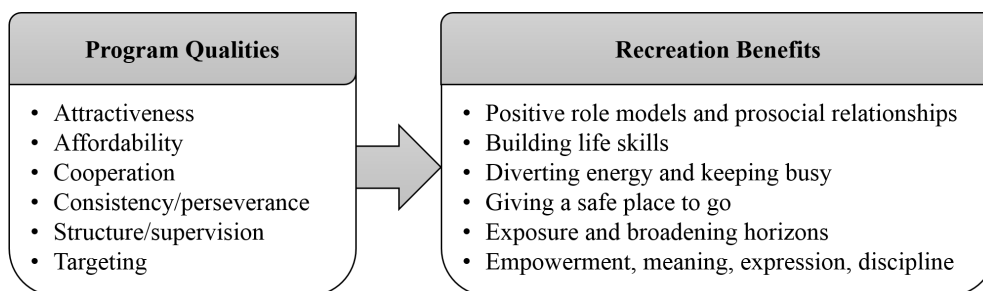
### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

The aforementioned qualities have been successfully implemented by many agencies providing prevention and intervention programs aimed at addressing gang involvement and reducing violence. These "best practices" can serve as a road map for other recreation programs targeting gang-affiliated youth. For instance, Cure Violence in Chicago employs former gang members as mentors and violence interrupters to reach out to young gang members using a range of recreation and sport activities to entice them to participate in intervention counseling and to expose them to various prosocial alternatives to the gang lifestyle. Chicago Dream Center implements a curriculum combining educational and recreational strategies to help troubled and gang-involved youth cope with psychological traumas, express themselves, and reach palliative reappraisals to change their life course. New Life Centers of Chicagoland offer youth a variety of activities (including Sports Outreach Leagues, art therapy, mentoring and tutoring, gang and substance abuse counseling, and apprenticeships and job readiness training) that take youth off the streets and provide them with safe spaces and positive developmental tasks. The study's findings suggest that recreation programs that possess the identified critical components are more likely to have positive impacts on the targeted youth. Thus, recreation programs can play a critical role in reducing gang membership and violence, but we need additional studies that demonstrate their impact so recreation agencies are recognized for the integral role they play in the national and regional gang prevention and intervention efforts. This is a socially relevant issue that requires investigation, and it is imperative that the results reach appropriate stakeholders and practitioners in the field.

**Table 1**  
*The Sociodemographic Profile of the Interviewees*

	Previous gang members	Practitioners
Gender		
Men	18	24
Women	12	4
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	8	7
Latin American	20	16
White	1	1
Unidentified	1	4
Age		
20s	9	5
30s	9	6
40s	9	10
50s and over	2	3
Unidentified	1	4

Note: A total of 39 interviews were conducted with 38 participants (one participant was interviewed twice); 20 participants qualified as both previous gang members and practitioners.



**Figure 1.** Qualities and benefits of recreation programs addressing youth gang involvement

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## **HEALING RECREATIONAL SPACES OF REFUGE FOR BLACK YOUTH**

Aishia A. Brown, University of Louisville

Corliss W. Outley, Texas A&M University

### **Rationale/Introduction: Social Justice Youth Development and Radical Healing**

Recreation centers that serve youth of color must work to ensure they are meeting the needs of the youth and the communities they live in. While the Community Youth Development (CYD) framework signifies the importance of civic engagement in the lives of young people, the Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) framework advances youth development even further because it “acknowledges social contexts and highlights the capacity for youth to respond to community problems and heal from the psycho/social wounds of hostile urban environments” (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002, p. 87). Applying the SJYD framework requires placing healing from psycho/social wounds at the forefront of youth programming and this study examined the facilitation of healing processes within a community recreational setting. Developing a social justice lens, specifically when working with urban youth of color in recreational settings is critical for their development and community engagement. The SJYD framework has become the basis for what Ginwright (2010a) refers to as the radical healing model. This model is used to build “the capacity of young people to act upon their environment in ways that contribute to the common good” (Ginwright, 2010a, p. 8). Radical healing prepares young people to shift their consciousness from blaming themselves for problems in their community and society to developing a lens of critical consciousness that examines the root and systemic causes of their personal and community problems (Ginwright, 2010a).

While the radical healing model consist of 1) recognizing the urban conditions that youth live in; 2) naming the internal and structural “social toxins” that exist in those urban environments; 3) applying a radical healing process; and 4) achieving wellness on social, community, and individual levels, this study examined the application of the radical healing process. The goal of this process is for youth of color to “envision new possibilities for their lives and their communities” (Ginwright, 2010a, p. 11). This model encourages healing in four areas: 1. care 2. community 3. critical consciousness, and 4. culture. The presence of these four areas in a young person’s life fosters a collective optimism and a spiritual transformation that contributes to a healthy development and community life for everyone overtime (Ginwright, 2010b). The purpose of this study was to advance our understanding of the SJYD framework and the radical healing process by examining the facilitation of the four areas of the radical healing process at a summer youth development program located in a community recreation center.

### **Methods: Qualitative Case Study**

A qualitative case study was conducted during the summer of 2015 on a 5-week youth development program that serves Black youth living in a historically Black urban community. Two youth focus groups and 26 in-depth interviews were conducted for this study. In addition to this, researchers also collected daily participant-observations during the five weeks. Data was analyzed using an iterative coding process that employed four areas of the radical healing process discussed above (care, community, critical consciousness, and culture). New codes were created for any data that did not fit those four areas. Five themes emerged from these codes and this session will focus on one of the five themes specifically related to care.

### **Results: Enacting Radical Care for Communal Survival**

The radical healing model views care as both personal and political, and it works as one of the four areas that make up the radical healing process. Ginwright (2010a) refers to care within Black



communities as a mode that acts as a buffer and “form of cultural armor that creates and sustains community life” (p. 68). What Ginwright (2010a) calls “*radical care*” in the radical healing model is not simply traditional notions of care related to compassion; radical care pushes communities and youth workers to think about enacting care for communal survival. Enacting radical care at the summer program was exemplified in this case study through 1) The existence of familial relationships that involve meeting expectations and providing opportunities, 2) Resisting institutions that may indirectly exhibit harm to the community, and 3) enacting survival tactics to work against policy. The radical healing process is focused on youth engaging in action to have “freedom from oppression” (Ginwright, 2010a). Through this analysis of radical care within the summer program, this community recreational facility showed that the recreational space was an integral part of the healing process for the Black youth that attended the summer program. This space provided an opportunity for youth to give and receive radical care by instituting familial relationships and forms of protection against institutions that could harm the well-being of a young person and their community.

### **Discussion: Healing in Community Recreational Spaces**

Through case study data analysis, it is clear that the component of care in the radical healing process was significant. Care was more than just the development of caring relationships. Care was actually the instances of radical care within the recreational space that attributed to the healing process for youth in the program. The facilitation of radical care was connected to youth feeling a sense of community within the recreational space. Community is all encompassing in the radical healing process because it provides what feminist scholar bell hooks (1996) refers to as profound love. The staff members applying the SJYD framework to the programming and activities brings about this profound love. Radical care was one of many ways this community recreational facility created and maintained a space of refuge for Black youth in spite of the sea of turmoil they endure as they navigate institutionalized and systemic oppression.

### **Application to Practice: Applying Social Justice Framework to Recreational Services**

Spaces of refuge or what we refer to as “*safe spaces*” within the field of youth development is in need of deeper analysis. This study added to the body of research on the SJYD framework but also shed light on the significance of recreational spaces for the facilitation of healing. When we think of recreational facilities for youth as spaces of refuge, the SJYD framework should be applied. This application requires shifting the focus from merely examining personal safety and fun activities to looking into providing safety from structural oppression. This safety is facilitated through the existence of a space where youth can seek refuge from the oppressive forces that hinder their positive development. Utilizing the data from this study, this session will provide attendees with ways to apply and practice SJYD through the promotion of healing within their recreational facilities in the following ways: 1) introduce creative pedagogical techniques to engage youth in a healing process, and 2) provide practical examples of how to enact radical care in recreational settings. If recreational spaces are to promote health, then they hold a responsibility to provide spaces of healing for oppressed people and communities. The field of leisure and recreation should make it a top priority to ensure that their facilities serve as a refuge for marginalized people who need spaces to heal from the trauma inflicted on them from oppressive institutions. Understanding that most recreation and parks departments are government entities and are very much a part of institutions of oppression, they also hold a mission that gives them the space to take radical measures for the purpose of serving community needs.



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## **TEENS AND CYBERBULLYING: PROMOTING THE INTERNET AS A SAFE PLACE**

Brooke N. Burk, Minnesota State University Mankato

Iryna Sharaievska, Appalachian State University

Rachelle Fuller, Minnesota State University Mankato

Kristi Montandon, Minnesota State University Mankato

Communication via the Internet, or information communication technology (ICT) as it is referred to in the literature, has forever changed how we see leisure, space, and relationships (Horst, 2010; Sharaievska & Stodolska, 2015; Turkle, 2011). Teens continue to be the highest users of ICT, with 92% of them reporting to go online every day and 24% reporting to go online “almost constantly” (Lenhart, 2015). Communication technology can make things more simple and uniquely makes it more difficult at the same time. For example, ICT can be used to improve the lives and social interactions among youth, it may also lead to cyberbullying. While there are multiple ways technology can be used to improve health and wellness of the individual, it may also lead to some negative outcomes such as an arena for conflict and bullying.

According to Cyberbullying Research Center, “Cyberbullying is when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online or repeatedly picks on another person through email or text message or when someone posts something online about another person that they don’t like” (pp. 1, 2014). Hinduja and Patchin’s (2011) study showed that about 20% of 11- to 18-year-old students reported they had been a victim of cyberbullying at some point in their life. It is more widely spread than face-to-face bullying because it is often anonymous, has larger audience than face-to-face bullying, and is not confined by geographical location or time of the day. As a result, cyberbullying negatively affects physical and mental health of a bullied child, as well as his or her success in school.

Problems with academic achievement and health are also often associated with bullying. It is also important to remember that “in 12 of 15 school shooting cases in the 1990s, the shooters had a history of being bullied” (pp. 1, Stopbullying.gov). Few studies explored how can we overcome or decrease cyberbullying and what role youth recreation programs should play in it. Moreover, even less is known about youth’s view on this issue. As a result, the purpose of this study was to explore youth’s understanding of cyberbullying and reasons behind it, as well as solutions they believe would be helpful to decrease it.

### **Methods**

Fifteen teens who had experience with cyberbullying either personally or had a friend who had been cyberbullied (15-18 years old) participated in the study. The teens were engaged in at least one leisure program offered by two community centers in a midwestern urban area. All youth signed minor assent forms after parents’ permission was obtained. Focus groups were conducted in private conference rooms at community centers prior to the start of their regularly scheduled programs. The teens identified themselves as 9 Black, 1 Latino, 1 Asian, and 4 White teens. Four were boys and 11 were girls. The focus groups lasted approximately 30 minutes and were conducted in groups of 3 to 4. All focus groups were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The authors read through the transcriptions to identify themes and major trends. The methods suggested by Huberman and Miles (1998) were used as a guide to code the transcripts. The first author chose two transcripts and developed an initial codebook. Next, the second author coded all the transcripts, adding, merging, and refining the themes that emerged from the data. The transcripts and codes

were then reviewed by two additional authors who provided verification check of the data (Creswell, 2007). All authors met to reach agreement on all codes.

## **Results**

Two major themes emerged from the data: a) reasons for cyberbullying, and b) suggestions to address it. Among reasons for cyberbullying youth named *easy publicity, anonymity, and crowd effect*. When asked how bullying can be addressed, the participants discussed *Internet policing, protocols, education, and parental involvement and modeling*.

The teens described the ease of publicity provided by Internet communication. Many of them mentioned that it is easier to just type something unpleasant about the person than pursue in-person interaction. The participants also believed that cyberbullying is facilitated by anonymity of online interaction. Not only does anonymity allows a bully to preserve his or her reputation and social standing, it also encourages more negative comments since interaction is mediated by the screen. Lastly, the ability to provide comments on ideas and images of others through social media, encourages “public shaming.” The participants frequently mentioned that individual comments might seem not overtly damaging (and thus, easier to make), but in combination with others, including comments of strangers, an entire steam-rolling impact could result. This type of feedback has serious consequences on the wellbeing of the young person.

Discussing the ways to address bullying, the participants explained that policing the Internet is not a viable solution because the Internet as an outlet to express themselves. However, they suggested that website administrators and adults in their social environment should create and follow more strict protocol that deter cyberbullying and impose more serious punishments than are currently being implemented. Multiple participants felt that cyberbullying happened because there seems to be no consequences for their actions. Participants felt more education is needed to understand the ramifications of negative dialogue and images placed online, whether they perceive it as cyberbullying or not. They stated that current education on cyberbullying is not effective and attitudes toward it must change. Lastly, parental involvement was discussed by participants as one solution, but it was thought to only be effective in form of education and modeling. Youth suggested that the only way to eliminate cyberbullying is to raise children “to be better people in real life.” They believed that young people reflect behaviors modeled by their parents, and thus, much bigger societal change would be the only effective solution.

## **Implications for Practice**

The increasing popularity of ICT and social media impacts the social equity of leisure spaces of young people. Online spaces are a place for youth to express themselves, connect with peers, and to enjoy leisure. However, the safety of online spaces is compromised by cyberbullying. The participants suggested several important solutions to specifically address cyberbullying. First, have youth work directly with leisure service staff to develop policies aimed at addressing cyberbullying issues. Second, educate youth about what represents cyberbullying and its negative effects. Issues such as crowd effect and public shaming should be discussed in terms of the long-term impact of these behaviors on young people. Parents must model moral behavior, thus, developing programs that include the whole family or directly share an organizational stance on cyberbullying are imperative. Recreation professionals must promote positive community building among youth, as well as open communication between youth and adults in their lives, so that we can better understand the power of our words, written or spoken. Teen center staff are particularly impacted by cyberbullying. With the nature of many centers being drop-in and activities being teen-focused, discussions about how to address negative online attention is essential. Youth often see staff as

mentors and the centers as safe spaces. Cyberbullying can compromise that sense of security with the presence of hypermedia sharing of videos, images, and text and can remove the safety or privacy of certain places.

Brooke N. Burk, Minnesota State University Mankato, (507) 389-5930, [brooke.burk@mnsu.edu](mailto:brooke.burk@mnsu.edu)

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## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: LEISURE AND ACCULURATED STRESS**

Susan Burton, University of North Texas

Selverio Pacleb, University of North Texas

Jean Keller, University of North Texas

John Collins, University of North Texas

Over a million international students are studying in universities across the United States, which demonstrates a 10% increase in international students from 2014-2015 (Redden, 2015). This represents a 14% increase over last year, and 85% more than in 2005. Students are from China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, and Nigeria, which illustrates significant diversity. International students positively impact the economic and multicultural well-being of universities. In addition to academic stress, international students face numerous pressures adjusting to cultural and behavioral norms of the host country. More recently, some international students have experienced tension caused by their increased numbers on some campuses.

Research suggest that acculturative stress is related to negative outcomes for international students, including depression, anxiety, and somatic symptoms (Johnson & Sandhu, 2007). Berry (2005) found stress occurs as a response to events that happen within the context of acculturating. Coleman and Iso-Ahola (1990) found leisure mitigates experiences that are stressful by providing participants a sense of control, competency, and companionship. Chavajay and Skowronek (2008) found acculturation stress within U.S. international university students using the ASSIS and open-ended questions. Azab (2008) looked at acculturative stress, coping techniques, and spirituality in Christian and Muslim Egyptian immigrants and determined there was a correlation between life satisfaction and spirituality. Chun, Lee, Kim, and Heo (2012) discovered that leisure activity assists individuals cope with stress while promoting stress-related growth. This study explored 1) associations between acculturative stress and leisure satisfaction across levels of leisure activity and gender, 2) differences between levels of leisure time physical activity (LTPA) and acculturative stress and leisure satisfaction, and 3) differences in acculturative stress and leisure satisfaction between male and female international students.

### **Methodology**

All international students attending a metropolitan university in the southwest were e-mailed a study invitation using Qualtrics, an online survey platform. Of the 1,800 students contacted, 136 (8%) usable responses were obtained. This study used the Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (ASSIS) (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994) and the Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS) (Beard & Ragheb, 1980) to determine whether international students' mean scores on ASSIS and LSS differed across levels of leisure activity and gender. The survey consisted of the ASSIS, which is comprised of 36 items representing seven subscales: discrimination, homesickness, hate, fear, culture shock, guilt, and significant factors. Participants also completed the LSS—short version, consisting of 24 items representing six subscales: psychological, educational, social, relaxation, physiological, and aesthetic. Responses to the ASSIS and LSS were measured on 5-point Likert-type scales, with levels of intensity ranging from 1=*low* to 5=*high*. Demographic and behavioral measures were: gender, use of recreation center, use of recreation center with whom, age, hours per week engaged in favorite leisure time physical activity (World Health Organization, 2014), and hours per week engaged in structured programs. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used for all analyses.

### **Findings**

Descriptive results are shown in Table 1; females represented the majority of respondents, and most used the university recreation center on a weekly basis for an average five hours per

week. The mean age of the sample was 25 years. The ASSIS total was 2.23, indicating a low level of stress. The highest level of ASSIS was moderate at 3.02 and occurred on the homesickness subscale. The LSS total was moderately high at 3.64. The highest level of LSS occurred in the relaxation subscale with a score of 3.96. The scales used in this study were reviewed for internal consistency and validity: A) reliability: ASSIS TOT = .93 (Cronbach alpha); B) Discrimination subscale = .91; C) Culture Shock subscale = .55; D) reliability: LSS TOT = .94; E) Physiological subscale = .94; and F) Aesthetic subscale = .87. A significant inverse relationship ( $r = -.27$ ,  $n = 136$ ,  $p = .002$ ) between the ASSIS and LSS scales was found. No difference between levels of LTPA and acculturative stress and leisure satisfaction were found. A  $t$ -test was used to determine if males' and females' scores on LSS were different. A significant difference between male (3.39) and female (3.00) mean scores on the physiological aspects of LSS occurred, with males scoring significantly higher than females [ $t(128) = 1.98$ ,  $p = .050$ ].

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

The study demonstrated that ASSIS is negatively correlated with LSS, which may indicate a need for more leisure engagement by international students to help alleviate their stress. Interestingly, Kim, Scott, and Oh's (2005) study with Korean immigrants, to their surprise, found the leisure benefits construct was not significantly related to acculturation and was positively, rather than negatively, related to acculturative stress at the .01 level of significance. Thus, replication of this study is needed with larger and more diverse populations. The level of LTPA was not a mediating factor in determining scores on the ASSIS or the LSS. Gender was not a distinguishing factor across any of the ASSIS subscales. Further research is suggested to reveal if homesickness, the highest level of acculturative stress found in this study, is mitigated by leisure time physical activity or a different category of leisure experiences. Examining possible within-group difference based on country of origin, controlling for possible language barriers, and utilizing various designs may promote optimal cross-cultural adjustment. Further study with students of differing ages, marital status, educational levels, nationalities, and experiences may advance the understanding of the role of campus recreation with international students.

Campus recreation personnel may want to study international students further due to the increasing numbers on campuses throughout the United States. Discovering use patterns of use campus recreation facilities, engagement in various leisure time activities, and involvement with student organizations may help campus recreation leaders' better serve the recreation and wellbeing needs of international students. Working collaboratively with student mental health and international office staff on campuses, may support campus recreation personnel in helping international students mitigate their acculturated stress. Areas of social isolation and cultural adjustments may be addressed during recreation activities by providing supports such as familiar foods, activities, and spoken languages. Campus recreation professionals may want to assess their American students regarding their attitudes and values about international students and use recreational activities as part of diversity education. Campus recreation professionals can also work with retention teams on campus as students who are well-connected to other students and faculty and take part in extra-curricular activities tend to persist and graduate.

Susan Burton, University of North Texas, [burtosab@uni.edu](mailto:burtosab@uni.edu)



**Table 1***Descriptive Profile of Sample*

Variable		Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D.
Gender	Male	55	42.30		
	Female	75	57.70		
Use of Rec Center	Yes	83	63.80		
	No	47	36.20		
Use Rec Center With Whom	Self	67	51.10		
	Others	64	48.90		
Age				25.22	5.54
Hrs/Wk Favorite Activity				9.98	9.81
Hrs/Wk Programs Rec Ctr				4.78	6.21
Acculturation Stress TOTAL				2.23	0.64
Discrimination				2.19	0.84
Homesick				3.02	1.05
Hate				1.82	0.83
Fear				1.68	0.84
Culture Shock				2.34	0.93
Guilt				1.93	0.99
Significant Factors				2.56	0.96
Leisure Satisfaction TOTAL				3.64	0.68
Psychological				3.63	0.87
Educational				3.76	0.96
Social				3.60	0.93
Relaxation				3.96	0.91
Physiological				3.15	1.11
Aesthetic				3.62	0.79

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## **PARTICIPATION, KNOWLEDGE, AND DESIRE ON FISHING/HUNTING BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES**

Dongwook Cho, Oklahoma State University

Curtis Clemens, Oklahoma State University

Jay Post, Oklahoma State University

Steve Beck, Oklahoma State University

Hunting and fishing are popular recreational activities. The total expenditures of fishing and hunting were 85.5 billion dollar in 2006 and increased to 89.9 billion dollars in 2011. These expenditures included cost of travel, equipment, and other needs. Participants of fishing and hunting increased from about 33.9 million in 2006 to 37.4 million people in 2011. This includes 33.1 million fishing enthusiast, 13.7 million hunters and 9.4 million people who participate in both activities (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2012).

Benefits of fishing and hunting activities have been well documented in the past decades. Previous studies indicated that fishing and hunting had a positive effect on participants' environment and health benefits (Samson & Pretty, 2006). Other gains of economic and social benefits included employment, revenues from license sales and park entrance fees, and sales of local crafts (Arnett & Southwick, 2015; Ditton, Holland, & Anderson, 2002).

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), men spent more time in leisure activities than women did. Specifically, men spent approximately twice as many hours participating in sports, exercise, and recreation. Similarly, women perceive certain constraints to participate in outdoor recreation activities such as safety concerns, inadequate facilities and information, insufficient funds, and outdoor pests (Johnson, Bowker, & Cordell, 2001). The purpose of this study intends to determine 1) whether difference exist in the participation of fishing and hunting between men and women, 2) if there is significant difference between men and women on general knowledge and desire to participate in fishing and hunting activities.

### **Methods**

A total of 541 participants (276 male and 255 female) responded to this survey at the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Expo in Guthrie, Oklahoma over a three-day period in 2015. A convenience sample was conducted by the surveyors approaching adults on a first available basis to request their participation. All of the surveys and research protocols were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for protection of human subjects. The survey aimed to identify the experience and plan to participate in fishing and hunting. Participants were asked to respond to their perceived general knowledge and desire to participate in fishing and hunting by rating how well they agreed with the statements. The six questions were measured on a five-point Likert-scale. The researchers employed the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 20 (SPSS 20) to analyze the data. Cross tabulations analysis was conducted to measure the statistical difference between males and females past experience, future plans to participate, and their responses for the knowledge and desire items.

### **Results**

Results revealed statistically significant differences between the male and female respondents that went fishing ( $\chi^2=24.96, p \leq .001$ ) and hunting ( $\chi^2=33.39, p \leq .001$ ) during the previous year and those that plan to go fishing ( $\chi^2=13.38, p \leq .001$ ) and hunting ( $\chi^2=52.98, p \leq .001$ ) during the next year. In addition, all six questions about their knowledge or desire of fishing indicated significantly difference between male and female participants for license ( $\chi^2=21.25, p \leq .001$ ), locations

( $\chi^2=12.02, p \leq .05$ ), skills ( $\chi^2=27.35, p \leq .001$ ), preparing and cleaning ( $\chi^2=90.13, p \leq .001$ ), laws ( $\chi^2=13.93, p \leq .01$ ) and interests ( $\chi^2=38.34, p \leq .001$ ). Similarly, a significant difference exists on all six questions about their knowledge or desire of hunting between males and females including license ( $\chi^2=20.51, p \leq .001$ ), locations ( $\chi^2=16.09, p \leq .01$ ), skills ( $\chi^2=85.88, p \leq .001$ ), preparing and cleaning ( $\chi^2=78.88, p \leq .001$ ), laws ( $\chi^2=11.70, p \leq .05$ ) and interests ( $\chi^2=77.92, p \leq .001$ ).

### **Discussion**

Results indicated that female respondents had less experience in the past and less desire to participate in fishing and hunting for the future. The previous study supports the results that 73% were male and 23% were female among fishers, and 89% were male, and only 11% were female among hunters (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2012). As analysis showed, there were significant differences on knowledge and desire of participation in fishing and hunting between males and females. Furthermore, female respondents had less knowledge or desire all six questions regarding both fishing and hunting. A previous study supports that men purchased more fishing and hunting licenses than women. It indicated that men purchased fishing license 2.30 times more than women (Floyd & Lee, 2002). Further supporting this study, Martin and Miller (2008) showed that women had more constraints because of their lack of skills and training. Additionally, another study showed that women tended to have a lack of information and interests with a fear of fitting in (Thomas & Peterson, 1993).

Female participation in fishing has increased from 25.3% to 26.8% in fishing and from 9.6% to 10.9% in hunting from 2006 to 2011 (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2008, 2012). However, research on constraints, experience, and participation in fishing and hunting among women are limited (Metcalf, Graefe, Trauntvein, & Burns, 2015). Further research should consider specific reasons for constraints of female participants and nonparticipants on fishing and hunting. Additionally, this study was conducted as a convenience sample in Oklahoma so similar cross-sectional studies in other regions of the U.S. are needed to develop more generalized results.

### **Implication for Practice**

The findings from this study should be considered by practitioners in the development of strategies to make fishing and hunting leisure activities more attractive and accessible especially to women in order to further increase female participation. For instance, it would be helpful to show visible representation of female fishers and hunters within brochures, web pages, magazines etc. Moreover, recreation and leisure practitioners should recognize women's lack of desire to participate in fishing and hunting leisure activities. Based on the findings, it may be beneficial for practitioners to provide classes in basic skills and general information for fishing and hunting to help people gain experience in these activities.

Dongwook Cho, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK, (850) 320-5470, dongwook.cho@okstate.edu

**Table 1**

*Pearson Chi-Square of Comparison between Male and Female Respondents on Past Experience and Future Plan to Participation in Fishing and Hunting*

		Past Experience		Future Plan to Participate	
		Fishing	Hunting	Fishing	Hunting
Male	Yes	217 (78%)	137 (49%)	253 (90%)	195 (70%)
	No	63 (23%)	143 (51%)	27 (10%)	85 (30%)
Female	Yes	148 (57%)	64 (25%)	204 (79%)	99 (38%)
	No	110 (43%)	194 (75%)	54 (21%)	159 (62%)
$\chi^2$		24.96 ***	33.39 ***	13.38 ***	52.98 ***

Note: \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table 2**

*Pearson Chi-Square of Comparison between Male and Female Respondents on Knowledge and Desire for Participation in Fishing and Hunting*

		Knowledge and Desire for Participation					
		License	Location	Skills	Prepare/Clean	Laws	Interests
Fishing	Male (M)	4.84	4.67	4.59	4.32	4.60	4.61
	Female(M)	4.57	4.54	4.26	3.15	4.35	4.23
	$\chi^2$	21.25***	12.02*	27.35***	90.13***	13.93**	38.34***
Hunting	Male(M)	4.65	4.14	4.14	3.88	4.48	4.26
	Female(M)	4.28	3.81	3.09	2.72	4.20	3.25
	$\chi^2$	20.51***	16.09**	85.88***	78.88***	11.70*	77.92***

Note: \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Individuals were asked to indicate knowledge and desire for participation on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1, “strongly disagree” to 3, “neutral” to 5, “strongly agree”

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## **IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS ON HEALTH IN A COMMUNITY CENTER**

Craig M Colistra, Independent Scholar  
Dart Schmalz, Clemson University  
Troy Glover, University of Waterloo

Increasingly, public parks and recreation organizations are recognized for contributing positively to health promotion and disease prevention (Bocarro et al., 2009; Godbey, Caldwell, Floyd, & Payne, 2005; International City/County Management Association, 2005). Indeed, a growing body of leisure research shows the use of parks and recreation settings improves moods, reduces perceived stress, enhances our sense of wellness (Hull & Michael, 1995; Iwasaki & Mannell, 2000; Orsega-Smith, Mowen, Payne, & Godbey, 2004), and influences physical activity participation (Cohen et al., 2007; Payne, Orsega-Smith, Roy, & Godbey, 2005). As a result, many researchers who examine the relationship between parks and recreation and health outcomes tend to focus on the role of the built environment (Moore et al., 2010). However, the social dimensions of these spaces also have crucial implications for health and well-being (Kaczynski & Henderson, 2008; McCormick, Rock, Toohey, & Hignell, 2010). The social networks developed, maintained, and sustained within parks and recreation environments can assist individuals in finding jobs, improving their physical and mental health, finding companionship, and building self-esteem (De Graff & Flap, 1988).

The purpose of this study was to explore the social relationships of users at a county-owned community center in the southeastern United States and their implications for health and well-being. Focusing on the social environment of community centers—specifically the resources embedded within social relationships—can give managers a better understanding of the role of their programs and services on the health and well-being of program participants. There are over 65,000 indoor recreation facilities in the United States (Godbey & Mowen, 2010), and therefore it is important to understand the wide range of contributions of community center programs and services to individuals and communities beyond the direct benefits of participation (i.e. physical activity).

### **Methods**

A qualitative approach was used to explore social relationships in the context of a community center and their role in contributing to, or undermining, the health and well-being of users. The site used to solicit participants was a county-owned community center located in the southeastern United States. The neighborhood where the center is located has a population of nearly 1,000 residents, and is situated in one of the lower socio-economic parts of the area. Data were collected from fourteen people who were over 18 years of age and had used the community center for at least three years. Face-to-face individual interviews were conducted, in addition to one focus group with participants from the individual interviews. Interviews were transcribed, and themes were identified using NVivo software, that addressed the meaning of program participants' social relationships to their health and well-being.

### **Results**

For many of the participants, making social connections was the primary driver for visiting the community center. These social connections with others at the community center were: strong connections that were “like family”; weaker connections that crossed generational, cultural, and social boundaries; and higher-level connections with representatives from organizations outside of their community. Participants indicated these social relationships were facilitated by participation in joint leisure activity, a mutual connection to the community center, and through their chil-



dren's program participation. The social relationships had a positive contribution to their health and well-being by providing access to tangible aid, such as transportation and financial aid, as well as access to advice and information. However, there were also examples of how relationships formed at the center had a negative contribution to the health and well-being of some users due to interpersonal conflict and a lack of trust.

### **Discussion**

The community center played a major role in building relationships between members of the community. It was common for participants to assert that a lot of the people who they knew in the community were social connections as a result of participating in programs and events at the community center. The social relationships developed, maintained, and sustained at the community center provided a safe place to talk with others, express one's feelings, discuss personal challenges, and ultimately relieve stress. Some participants suggested their experiences provided a spiritual health outcome through their participation in programs and their efforts in helping others, contributing to a sense of purpose in their lives. Social relationships at the community center also provided some participants with a sense of belonging, which can have positive effects on psychological well-being.

Social relationships at the community center supported health and well-being by providing access to emotional and social support and helped some participants cope with life challenges, or enhance self-esteem and self-confidence for others. The relationships also provided access to information and resources from people outside of their immediate environment such as government housing assistance, access to job opportunities, and legal services. However, social relationships also undermined health and well-being in some cases through interpersonal conflict and a lack of trust, thus increasing stress. Not only did relationships between users provide access to valuable information and resources that supported health and well-being, but collaborations and partnerships that the community center had with other organizations provided trusting relationships with representatives of formal institutions, which can be important especially to members of disadvantaged communities (Szreter & Woolcock, 2008).

### **Implications for Practice**

This study recognizes the community center as an important resource for the health and well-being of program participants. It is important for practitioners to consider the valuable contribution that relationship building can have to health and well-being when designing, marketing, and evaluating programs and events. A substantial contribution to the health and well-being of participants was access to information, resources, and services which was a result of collaborations that the community center had with local organizations such as the health care system. It would be advantageous for community centers to not only develop health partnerships that address a wide range of health topics (Mowen, Payne, Orsega-Smith, & Godbey, 2009), but also develop partnerships with agencies that can assist program participants in other domains of life (e.g. housing, employment, family). This is especially relevant for community centers that serve disadvantaged populations (i.e., low income, elderly) that may not have the knowledge or ability to access to these types of services themselves. However, it is also important to recognize that users of the community center can be skeptical to outside organizations that seek to provide assistance, especially in settings with a closed network, which may have a negative impact on participation.

Craig Colistra, Independent Scholar, (704) 840-2819, ccolistra@gmail.com

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## EXPLORING GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED CONSTRAINTS TO COMPETITION CLIMBING

Kate Evans, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

Ryan J. Gagnon, Clemson University

Leisure constraints are those factors that inhibit, prevent, or change an individual's participation in a recreation activity. Prior investigation into this phenomenon indicates that constraints are primarily *intrapersonal* (e.g., anxiety), *interpersonal* (e.g., inability to find a partner), and/or *structural* constraints (e.g., lack of financial resources) (Crawford & Godbey, 1987). Participation then becomes dependent on an individual's ability to negotiate the constraints with which they are faced (Jackson, Crawford, & Godbey, 1993). A crucial component in this process is their belief in their ability to successfully negotiate constraints, or their negotiation-efficacy (Loucks-Atkinson & Mannell, 2007). Participation in recreation may be further inhibited because of one's gender (Evans & Anderson, 2014).

Research on constraints to participation in outdoor recreation related to gender is clear and indicates that females face unique difficulties in accessing and gaining acceptance in outdoor recreation. A variety of factors affecting women's experiences have been identified including gender role expectations, a lack of exposure, a lack of knowledge, and fear (e.g., Culp, 1998; Warren & Loeffler, 2006). Despite this difficulty, research demonstrates that females who participate in outdoor recreation are more empowered and have higher levels of self-esteem, self-worth, assertiveness, self-sufficiency, confidence, and body image (McDermott, 2004; Pohl, Borrie, & Patterson, 2000). Thus, it is important for recreation professionals to not only provide opportunities, but to empower females to participate in the outdoors. It is within this gender-driven backdrop that we investigate the levels of perceived constraints and negotiation strategies to overcome them in the context of competition climbing based in part on the work of White (2008).

Competition rock climbing, at its simplest level, is made up of three sub-sports (bouldering, sport/lead climbing, and speed climbing). To be successful and advance in the sport (moving from the local to regional, then national level) as a competition climber, participants must place well at competitions that rely on their knowledge, physical abilities, and efficiency at their sub-sport. Competition climbing is becoming more and more mainstream, including potential inclusion in the 2020 Olympic games (USA Climbing, 2016b). Also, according to the Outdoor Foundation (2015), rock climbing is the seventh fastest growing outdoor recreation activity in the United States. Thus, enhancing our understanding of leisure constraints related to climbing is timely.

This study sought to grow the understanding in current literature and continue to extend our comprehension of leisure constraints in outdoor recreation. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate perceived constraints among elite competition climbers and the differences that may exist between male and female participants.

During the winter of 2015-2016, USA Climbing in partnership with the research team as part of a larger study, investigated the benefits and constraints to competition climbing utilizing the structural model provided by White (2008). The survey was made up of 40 questions on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" measuring perceived constraints, negotiation strategies, negotiation efficacy, and motivation to climb. Survey respondents were recruited via USA Climbing's Facebook Page in the form of two announcements with the survey link embedded and via two emails sent to USA Climbing's past and current members also containing the survey link. Responses were incentivized with an invitation to win one of three \$100 climbing gear packages. The combination of these strategies resulted in 6,710 unique viewings of

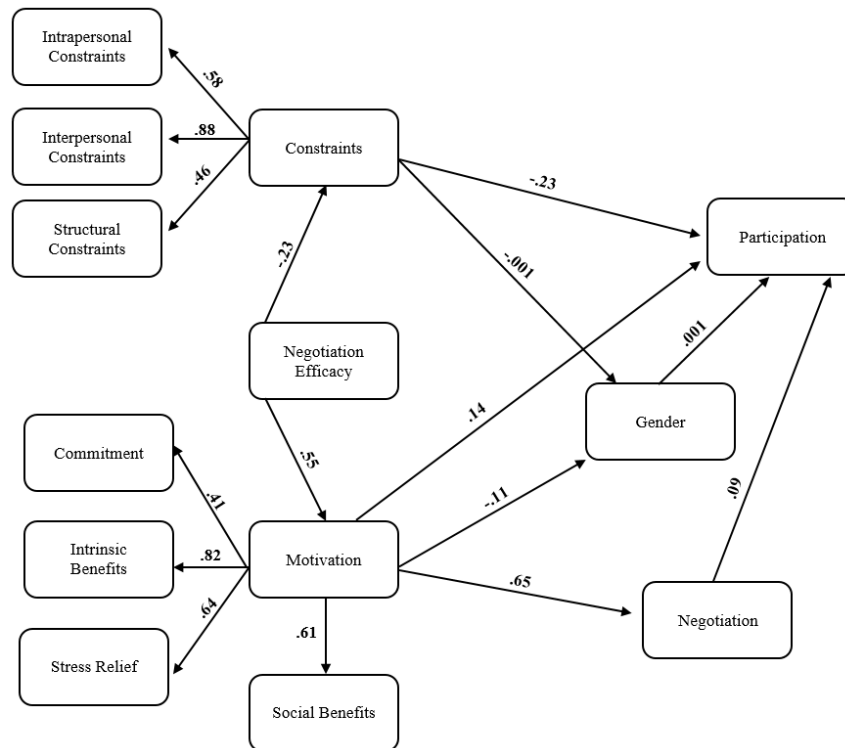
the email or Facebook post. This resulted in 1,463 respondents starting the Qualtrics survey and 1,171 completing the full survey, indicating a 17.45% response rate. Of those respondents through skip-logic in the survey, 561 completed the section relating to constraints. The completed survey data were analyzed for sample descriptive information in SPSS 23 software and then the data was transferred to EQS 6.3 software for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to ensure the validity and reliability of the scale and structural equation modeling (SEM) to explore potential relationships between constraints, commitment to competition climbing, negotiation strategies, gender, and participation levels.

Respondents reported an average of 14.45 days climbing per month ( $SD = 6.022$ ) and were fairly evenly split by gender with 301 males (53.64%) and 229 females (47.36%). The results of the CFA indicated that the final model (Figure 1) had good fit ( $\chi^2(459) = 1255.061, p \leq .001$ , SRMR = .059, RMSEA = .052 (90%, CI .049 - .056), and CFI = .929). In addition, the model indicated that constraints have a negative influence on participation ( $\beta = -.23, p \leq .001$ ), negotiation efficacy has a negative influence on constraints ( $\beta = -.23, p \leq .001$ ), and that motivation and negotiation have a positive influence on participation ( $\beta = .14, p \leq .001$ ;  $\beta = .09, p \leq .001$ ). Additionally, the model indicated a positive relationship between motivation and negotiation efficacy ( $\beta = .55, p \leq .001$ ) and motivation and negotiation ( $\beta = .65, p \leq .001$ ). In contrast to previous research, females and males *did not differ* in perceived constraints ( $\beta = -.001, p \leq .001$ ), but did vary on motivation with females reporting *higher* levels of motivation ( $\beta = -.11, p \leq .001$ ).

### **Discussion and Implication for Practice**

The results of this study provide important implications for practice as our knowledge related to constraints to leisure and outdoor recreation continue to evolve. The findings support our understanding that constraints negotiation is an essential component of leisure participation and that negotiation-efficacy, participants' belief in their ability to overcome constraints, is a key component of this process. Recreation practitioners must not only continue limiting constraints through program design and implementation, but also toward aiding participants in the ability to overcome constraints through education, support, and programming initiatives. The findings of this study also suggest that competition climbing may be more inclusive for both males and females than alternative outdoor recreation activities as demonstrated in previous research. This may be due to the gender-integrated nature of competition climbing as it exists today and the unique space that climbing creates in which "women [feel] their difference [is] accepted" (Dilley & Scranton, 2010). Thus, as practitioners seek to expand programmatic offerings and manage of changing preferences of those they serve, rock climbing opportunities may provide a worthwhile, gender inclusive option to consider. Practitioners should also work to replicate similar gender inclusive environments in other leisure settings to facilitate experiences in which men and women's participation seamlessly intertwines.

Kate Evans, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, (608) 785-8210, kevans@uwlax.edu



**Figure 1.** Final structural model. *Note:* All paths listed are both statistically significant at least at a  $p \leq .001$  level and practically meaningful.

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## **SNAP AT A PARK RUN FARMERS' MARKET: DOES IT MATTER?**

James Farmer, Indiana University-Bloomington

Angela Babb, Indiana University-Bloomington

Sara Minard, Indiana University-Bloomington

The number of farmers' markets has nearly doubled in the last eight years, from 4,685 in 2008, to the 8,497 now listed in the National Farmers Market Directory (USDA AMS, 2015). Many of these markets are facilitated via city-run parks and recreation departments (PRDs), which play an important role in market success by hosting markets on public property, providing administrative staffing, in-print and online marketing support, and by facilitating and often subsidizing the use of farmers' markets by low-income households. While the literature discussing the role of recreation, leisure, and PRDs in the local food movement is nascent, its presence continues to strengthen (Amsden & McEntee, 2011; Betz & Farmer, 2016; Cook, 2006; Farmer, 2012; Farmer, Chancellor, Gooding, Shubowitz, & Bryant, 2011; Farmer, Chancellor, Robinson, West, & Weddell, 2014; Johnson, 2013). Parks have historically operated as spaces that aligned the pursuits of recreation, relaxation and physical and mental well-being, frequently incorporating "nature" into the urban built environment, and so the move to bring fresh-farmed foods from rural areas to urban centers articulates naturally with their historical philosophy.

Farmers' markets have long been touted as a method to increase community food security (Kantor, 2001). Unfortunately, they continue to remain inaccessible to many low-income households (Farmer et al., 2014). Pricing, location, and sociocultural barriers are common factors affecting who does/does not or can/ cannot participate in farmers' markets (Garrett, 2014; Guthman, 2008; Lucan, Maroko, Sanon, Frias, & Schechter, 2015; Walker, Keane, & Burke, 2010), with initiatives to improve equitability of farmers' markets mostly focused on economic strategies (Guthman, Morris, & Allen, 2006).

In this study we sought to (1) perform an exploratory comparative analysis of supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) and non-SNAP users at the Bloomington Community Farmers' Market (BCFM) and (2) assess the efficacy and importance of financial incentives for SNAP participants at the BCFM. The following research questions guided our research: (1) What are the similarities and differences between SNAP and non-SNAP users at the farmers' market? and (2) How important are the financial incentives, particularly the double market bucks program, to SNAP users attending the farmers' market?

### **Methods**

This study was part of a larger community-based participatory research (CBPR) project working to improve food security in and around Bloomington, IN (USA) through the use of local foods. We chose the CBPR approach as it combines the knowledge, skills, and assets of local people/ organizations and those of professional scientists in order to develop practical and applied solutions to pressing issues (Fortmann, 2008; Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2003). We administered a paper/pencil survey at the Saturday Bloomington Community Farmers' Market (BCFM) in Bloomington. Bloomington is a town of ~83,300 residents and is located in south-central Indiana. Market shoppers were invited to complete a paper/pencil questionnaire, being offered a \$5 market gift certificate to incentivize participation. The questionnaire contained 28 prompts that sought data on market behavior and history, personal demographics, and food values and motives. In total, 364 individuals were invited to complete a questionnaire. Descriptive and logistical regression analyses were used to analyze the data.

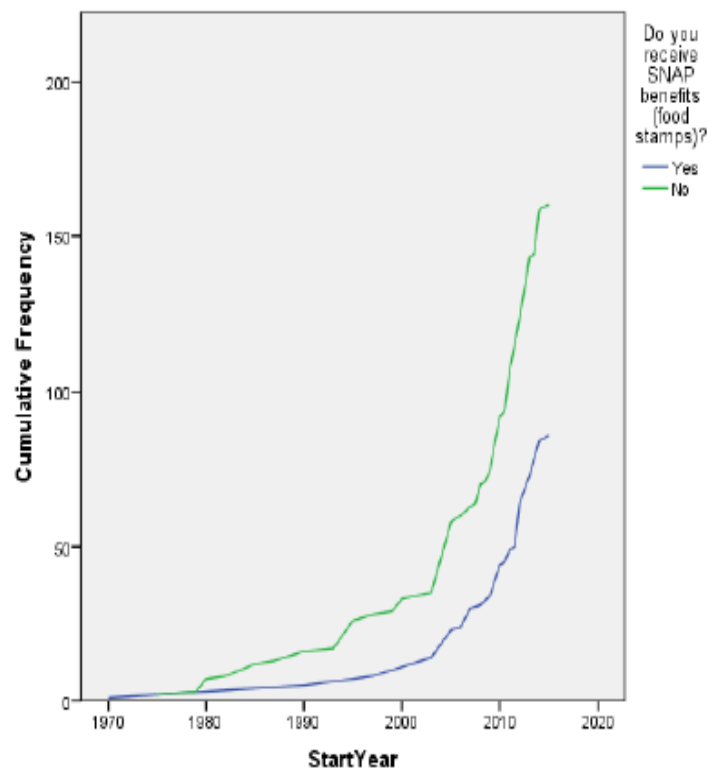
## Results

Our overall response rate was 68.4%, with SNAP users responding at 86.3% and non-SNAP users responding at 61.8%. Participants were mostly female, White, about 42.5 years of age, and had at least one child in the household. Market goers generally attended 2.54 times each month during season, had been attending for ~8.5 years on average, and spend over \$23 per visit. SNAP and non-SNAP users statistically differed on the unexpected variables of gender, age, household size, and number of children in the household, as well as expected differences in educational attainment, ethnicity, and household income. SNAP users use their benefits on average 2.8 times a month and found them to be very important (1.14 on a 1-4 scale with 1= *very important* and 4= *not important*), though 72% of them indicated that they would continue to shop at the BCFM if SNAP benefits were not accepted. When comparing SNAP vs. non-SNAP users using a binary logistic regression, money spent at the market, motives for attendance, transportation challenges, and number of children in the household were significant predictors of group affiliation. When comparing length of attendance at the BCFM, the two groups did not differ significantly (see Figure 1).

## Discussion and Implication for Practice

The results of this research provide critical insights for both scholars and professionals. Cogent evidence suggests that little distinguishes SNAP from non-SNAP users at the BCFM, the most popular farmers' market in the state. While obvious demographic differences persist between the two groups, SNAP users were found to have stronger motivations for attending and most of them would be there even without supplementary assistance. This underscores the issue of cultural homogeneity of who is *shopping local*. The current results suggest there are broader issues at play than simply the economic barriers of shopping at farmers' markets. If a chief aim of a PRD run farmers' market is to enhance food security, then approaches for attracting the "outsiders" to the market or for taking the market to the "outsiders" must be considered. As evidenced within the details of our analyses, SNAP users self-reported environmental values and motives for attending the farmers' market were stronger than their counterparts. This critical finding is reflected in recent analyses by Betz and Farmer (2016) who found that markets with higher governance structures, such as those run by PRDs, tended to draw a more privileged crowd with differing motives for attendance and outcomes of the experience than markets with low governance systems. Finally, transportation issues may be overcome by siting markets in close proximity to public transportation hubs and routes (Lucan et al., 2015) or by taking the market to the people, via a mobile market. Mobile markets are developing throughout the country, and this may be a more realistic way to facilitate access to fresh foods for those in need (Satin-Hernandez & Robinson, 2015). Planning stops in public parks would also assist in park promotion and potentially encourage park visitors. Though situated in just one market in one specific locale, this study's contribution is its comparison of farmers' market SNAP and non-SNAP users, suggesting scholars and professionals should not oversimplify the issue of market participation amongst low-income individuals to one of economic capacity.

James Farmer, Indiana University-Bloomington, (812) 856-0969, [jafarmer@indiana.edu](mailto:jafarmer@indiana.edu)



**Figure 1.** Market attendance based on year of first attending and SNAP vs. non-SNAP participant type.

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## EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF OVERPARENTING ON RECREATION PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Ryan J. Gagnon, Clemson University

Barry A. Garst, Clemson University

Over the past decade, a distinct parenting approach has emerged that emphasizes parental over-control and over-involvement in their child's life. Broadly, labelled *overparenting* (i.e., helicopter parenting, lawnmower parenting) this parenting style has been defined as "the application of developmentally inappropriate levels of parental directiveness, tangible assistance, problem-solving, monitoring, and involvement in the lives of children" (Segrin, Woszidlo, Givertz, & Montgomery, 2013, p. 569). Simply put, the primary motivation behind overparenting is parents choose this approach in a caring yet misguided attempt to improve their child's current and future success (Locke, Campbell, & Kavanagh, 2012) or to somehow protect them from real or perceived harm (Segrin et al., 2013). In the past decade there has been an escalation in overparenting research, but this work has been limited to the study of parents of college students. Additionally, in spite of the importance of understanding the potential for overparenting to have a profound influence on children's recreation experiences, few studies have examined these concepts in a recreation or leisure context (Garst & Gagnon, 2015). This absence of research is further evidenced by the lack of psychometrically sound instruments measuring overparenting within the context of recreation experiences. To address this limitation, this study examined overparenting within a common youth recreation experience, residential summer camps. Data were collected from parents to better understand anxiety that parents associated with their child's outdoor experiences and overparenting behaviors displayed by parents. In addition, we examined how parental anxiety and overparenting influenced parents' perceptions of outcomes resulting from their child's camp experience.

### Method

In cooperation with a university-affiliated youth education center that operated multiple camps across a state-level area, parents were solicited via email (and a reminder two weeks later) to complete a 121-item online survey one week after their child's camp experience. The combination of the two emails and an incentive (entry to win a \$100 gift card) resulted in a total sample of 575 parents of children aged 9-14 indicating a 36.8% response rate. The completed survey data were analyzed for sample descriptive information in SPSS 23 software and then transferred to EQS 6.3 software for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to ensure the validity and reliability of the scales and structural equation modeling (SEM) to explore potential relationships between *Parental anxiety associated with outdoor recreation* (PAAOR), *overparenting*, and *Parental perceptions of developmental outcomes* (PPDO).

The PAAOR subscale was operationalized as the extent to which parents perceived various characteristics of an outdoor setting as producing worry, anxiety, or fear and measured on a seven-point scale. *Overparenting* was operationalized as parenting behaviors characterized as overly controlling, overly-involved, and highly focused on solving their child's problems. Sample questions (adapted from Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012 and measured on a 7-point scale) included "I make important decisions for my child" and "I manage most important decisions in my child's life." The PPDO scale were operationalized as parental attitudes toward changes in skills that were demonstrated by their children and attributed to participation in an overnight camp experience. We adapted the parental perceptions of developmental outcomes measure from the instrument that was developed, yet not validated, by Baughman, Garst, & Fuhrman, 2009). Specifically, 17 of the

items in the researchers' original measure were used along with five additional items that better reflected the current literature on the developmental outcomes of camp experiences (see Henderson, Bialeschki, & James, 2007).

## **Results**

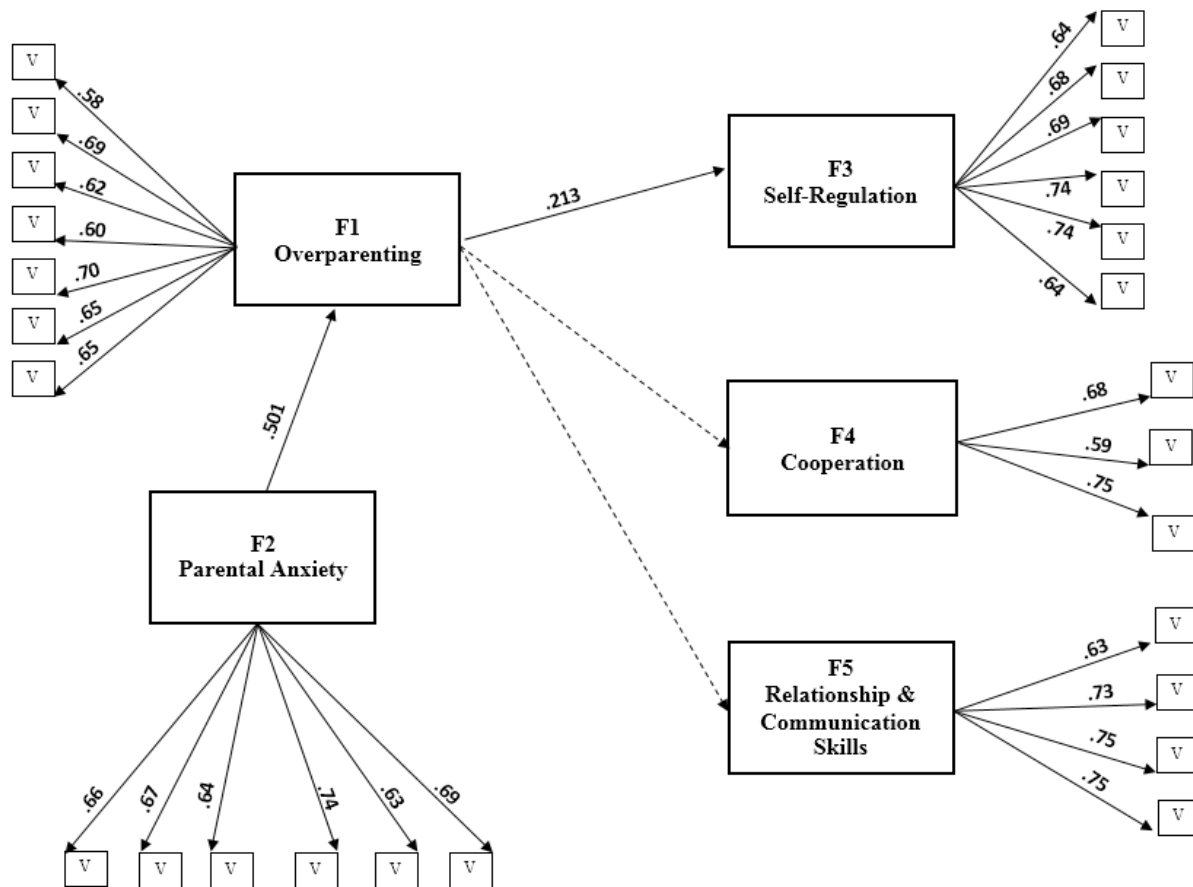
After completing the initial CFA, five additional questions were removed due to poor fit within the survey. The final overall goodness-of-fit indices suggested that the proposed five-factor measurement model fit the data well:  $\chi^2(277) = 519.918, p \leq .001$ , RMSEA = .046 (90% CI .040-.052), CFI = .950. Reliability of factors was further indicated by Cronbach's alphas ranging from .824 to .905 and relatively low between factor correlations (all factors correlated at .51 or lower). After the results of the CFA indicated that the measures were both valid and reliable, an SEM was used to explore the indirect effect of parental anxiety and direct effect of overparenting on the three outcome variables of interest. The SEM results indicated good fit for the structural model as evidenced by the overall goodness-of-fit indices:  $\chi^2(270) = 639.007, p \leq .001$ , RMSEA = .058 (90% CI .052-.064), CFI = .924. Overparenting had a significant and meaningful direct effect on self-regulation skills (.213,  $p \leq .001$ ). PAAOR had a significant and meaningful direct effect on overparenting (.501,  $p \leq .001$ ), and a significant and meaningful indirect effect on the self-regulation outcome variable (.213 x .501 = .107,  $p \leq .001$ ). As evidenced in Figure 1 below, no other significant relationships were discovered.

## **Discussion and Implication to Practice**

Interest in parental perceptions of outdoor experiences has been growing, particularly in understanding how anxiety, worry, or fear may be elicited in parents because of their child's involvement in outdoor experiences (Kingery, Peneston, Rice, & Wormuth, 2012; Prezza, Alparone, Cristallo, & Luigi, 2005). The findings in this study suggested that parental perceptions of outdoor experiences as well as parenting style (in this case, overparenting) are factors that may influence parental decisions about and perceptions of their child's recreation activities. With most overparenting research confined to higher-education settings, this study was the first to examine overparenting in a sample of parents of upper-elementary and middle-school aged youth, a population of parents for which overparenting has not been studied. Furthermore, this study provides an overparenting measure tested and validated for use in residential camp settings, a setting in which overparenting appears to be prevalent (Garst & Gagnon, 2015). Interestingly, parents who scored high in overparenting were also more likely to identify greater deficits in developmental outcomes (based on the pretest scores) than parents who scored low in overparenting. Given that overparents often recognized barriers or problems in their children's lives (Garst, Gagnon, & Bennett, in press), it is logical that overparents would be more likely to view their children as having greater levels of developmental needs and thus more likely to score their children as low in before camp outcomes.

Parents serve as gatekeepers for their children's recreation and leisure experiences. Understanding parental anxiety associated with these types of experiences, as well as factors that contribute to overparenting behaviors in recreational and leisure contexts, can help recreation practitioners tailor communication to alleviate parental concerns. This exploratory study suggests that overparenting may be prevalent in recreational settings, as evidenced by its expression in a statewide sample of parents. Recreation practitioners should consider strengthening parental communication and engagement strategies to better respond to the needs of these parents. Effective parent strategies could include: increasing parent virtual as well as physical access to youth program, enhancing parent education programs, and strengthening staffing patterns and staff preparation [see Garst et al. (in press) for a full discussion of these strategies.]





**Figure 1.** Structural model of parental influence on outcomes with standardized parameter estimates. *Notes:* Broken line indicates that the relationship is not significant at .05 level, error terms are intentionally excluded for clarity.

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## DOES INTENTIONALITY MATTER? EXAMINING CAMP DIRECTOR PRACTICES THAT INFLUENCE OUTCOMES

Barry A. Garst, Clemson University

Ryan J. Gagnon, Clemson University

Strong evidence suggests that well-designed and delivered youth programs positively enhance developmental outcomes for youth (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002). Intentionality in the delivery of youth development programs involves “deliberate, strategic decisions to create opportunities that maximize developmental outcomes” (Walker, Marczak, Blyth, & Borden, 2005, p. 401). Although intentionality has been explored within the camp literature (Bialeschki, Lyons, & Ewing, 2005), evidence of the effectiveness of intentionality for producing specific positive youth outcomes is mixed. While some empirical studies have produced findings indicating that intentionality enhanced youth growth and development (Garst & Ozier, 2015; Roark, Gillard, Evans, Wells, & Blauer, 2012; Mainieri & Anderson, 2015), other studies have produced the opposite result (Henderson et al., 2005). With these conflicting findings in mind, this study examined whether or not there is a causal relationship between director intention toward specific youth development outcomes (i.e., director intentionality and practices), camp characteristics, and the corresponding outcomes resulting from camp participation.

### Method

In the summer of 2015, a sample of camp directors and the parents they served participated in a study exploring the relationships between camp practices and youth development outcomes. Directors representing 13 residential camps completed an 85-item electronic survey following the completion of the camp season that include questions about their levels of camp industry experience, education level, practices related to intentionality and youth outcome achievement, staff training strategies, staff return rate, and staff characteristics. Directors recruited parents to participate in the study via the email parents used to register their child for camp. Parents were asked to complete a 121-item electronic survey at the end of their child’s camp experience, and a week later directors sent a second reminder email to nonrespondents. The combination of the two emails and an incentive (entry to win a \$100 gift card) resulted in a total sample of 2,779 respondents for a 23.04% response rate (total potential  $N = 12,064$ ). The parent survey included questions adapted from Gagnon and Garst (2015) that described parent and child demographic information as well as parent perceptions of their child’s growth and skill development as a result of the camp experience. The outcome measure, which utilized a retrospective pretest design (RPT) (Nimon, Zigarmi, & Allen, 2010), was analyzed to ensure that it was both psychometrically valid and reliable utilizing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in EQS 6.3 software (Brown, 2015). The final overall goodness-of-indices indicated the final-six factor solution fit the data well:  $\chi^2(335) = 2099.069$ ,  $p \leq .001$ , SRMR = .037, RMSEA = .050 (90%, CI .048 - .052), and CFI = .933.

### Results

After the reliability and validity of the measurement model was determined to be acceptable, the hypothesized model was tested within EQS 6.3 software. The final structural model exhibited good fit as evidenced by the overall goodness-of-fit indices:  $\chi^2(429) = 2740.804$ ,  $p \leq .001$ , SRMR = .036, RMSEA = .051 (90%, CI .049 - .052), and CFI = .921 (Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004). Figure 1 presents the standardized coefficients for the paths between observed indicators, corresponding latent factors, and the paths between the independent variable and the dependent variables (e.g., factors). The influence of camp director practices (i.e., staff adaptation of programs, youth engage-

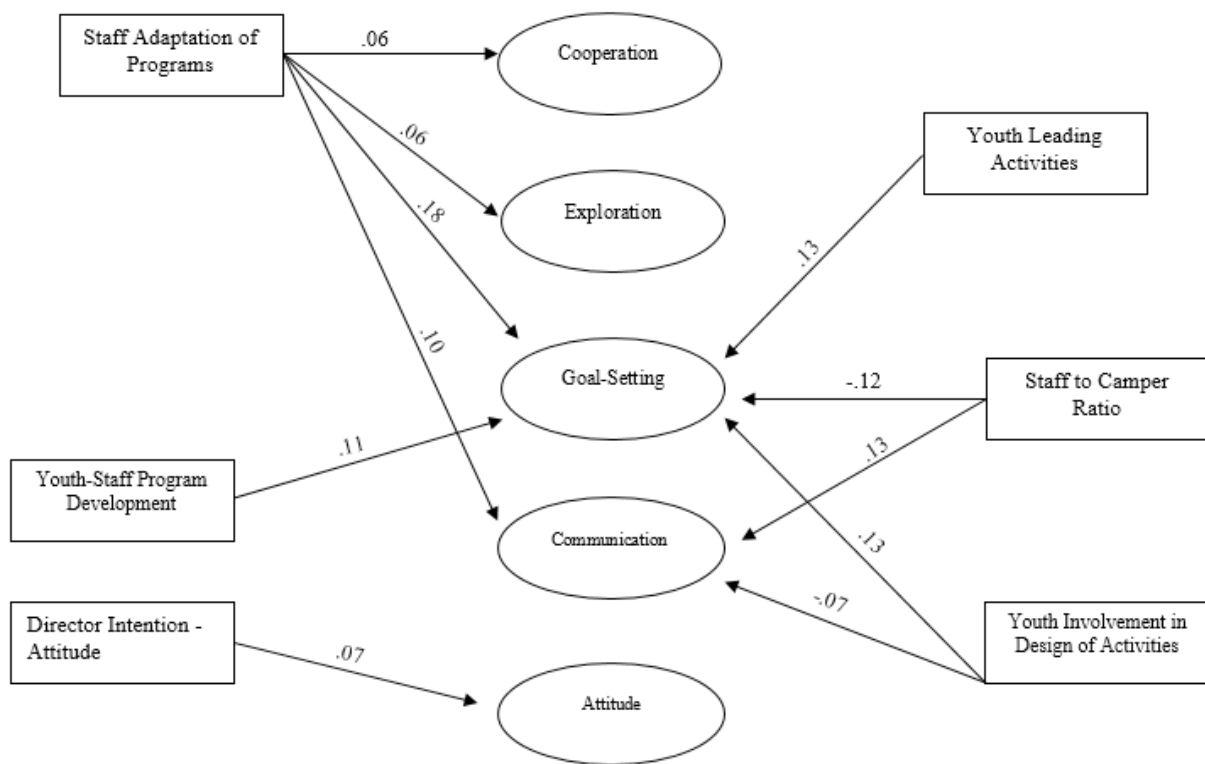
ment, ratio of staff to campers) on youth outcomes were examined. Staff adaptation of programs had a direct positive effect on multiple youth outcomes, including cooperation (.06,  $p \leq .001$ ), exploration (.06,  $p \leq .001$ ), goal-setting (.18,  $p \leq .001$ ), and communication (.10,  $p \leq .001$ ). Youth engagement, and specifically youth-leading activities (.13,  $p \leq .001$ ) and youth involvement in the design of activities (.13,  $p \leq .001$ ), was positively associated with goal setting. The ratio of staff to campers was positively associated with the development of communication skills (.13,  $p \leq .001$ ) yet negatively associated with the development of goal-setting skills (-.12,  $p \leq .001$ ).

### **Discussion and Implication for Practice**

The study findings suggest that in many (but not all) instances intentionality does *not* make a meaningful difference in developmental outcomes, at least not when those outcomes are measured from the perspective of parents. Out of six program outcomes measured in this study (i.e., cooperation, exploration, goal-setting, communication, attitude, and self-regulation), the only outcome directly influenced by director intentionality was attitude (.07,  $p \leq .001$ ). In other words, when directors focused on building a positive attitude in youth, parents were more likely to rate their child as developing a more positive attitude because of the camp experience. This finding supports previous literature asserting the role of camp in shaping attitudes (Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007). Together, the mixed findings suggested by this study reflect the conflicted nature of intentionality in the camp literature.

The influence of staff adaptation of programs on multiple youth outcomes suggests that empowering staff to make changes in programs to better achieve program goals may result in greater youth outcomes. This finding supports programming models that encourage staff to adapt programs as needed to meet the needs of participants. In addition, the influence of youth engagement on youth goal setting support the strong theme within the positive youth development (PYD) (Gambone, Klem, & Connell, 2002) and camp literatures (Henderson et al., 2007) supporting youth involvement as a feature of PYD settings. This evidence highlights the developmental importance of youth engagement in meaningful leadership opportunities, even within highly structured youth development programs. The mixed results of ratio of staff to campers with youth communication skills but not goal-setting skills may reflect nuances in how youth are organized during camp experiences. In some camps, particularly camps in which activities are structured according to small group experiences, group goals may be stressed more than individual goals. In those situations, youth may be less likely to have opportunities for personal goal setting in such a way so that growth is notable to their parents after camp.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the most impactful thing that program providers can do may not involve intentionally targeting specific youth outcomes such as decision-making, leadership, and communication, but rather to focus on the provision of the specific supports and opportunities (Gambone et al., 2002) of PYD. By focusing broadly on how PYD elements are provided to youth, such as supportive relationships with caring adults and opportunities for youth engagement and decision-making, then other youth outcomes may be achieved indirectly within a direct, intentional focus. The exception is attitudes; program providers who intentionally focus their efforts on improving youth attitudes may see measurable gains in that area of a young person's development. This study makes an important contribution to the body of empirical evidence about the relationship between director intentionality and PYD. Limitations and future directions will be addressed.



**Figure 1.** SEM results of relationships between director practices and outcomes. \*Note: All paths listed are both statistically significant at least at a  $p \leq .001$  level and practically meaningful. \*\*Note: Numbers on paths are equivalent to regression coefficients.

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## **A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMMING: THE CARE NOW PROGRAM**

Jennifer Goff, Old Dominion University

Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University

Tammi Milliken, Old Dominion University

Participation in after-school programs nationwide has increased from 6.5 million in 2004 to 10.2 million children in 2014. The unmet demand for after-school programming has also increased, with parents of 19.4 million children stating they would enroll their child in after-school programming if they had access (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). Nationally, one in five children (11.3 million) are unsupervised in the afternoons following the release from school. The current supply of after-school programming, as of 2014, is only meeting one-third of the demand (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention note that nearly one-third of all violent crime committed by juvenile offenders occurs between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. with the highest peak being between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. (OJJDP, 2014). These are the hours that many youths lack adult supervision or out-of-school activities. How adolescents navigate during this period of their life can have life-long penalties (Gutman & Midgley, 2000). Various initiatives, including after-school programs, have been found to alleviate these negative circumstances and improve academic performance, promote positive development, and prevent criminal behavior, substance use, and other problem behaviors (Bender et al., 2011; Gottfredon, Gerstenblith, Soulé, Womer, & Lu, 2004).

In Virginia, families who pay for their children's after-school programming spend approximately \$119 per week, compared to the national average of \$67. In addition, approximately 31% of all children in Virginia after-school programs qualify for free or reduced lunch programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). In 2014, the City of Norfolk where the CARE Now program operates had 66.83% of all students k-12 eligible and receiving free or reduced lunch (VDOE, 2014). In 2013, 19.4% of residents in Norfolk had income levels below the poverty line compared to 9.6% statewide. The current level of children living below poverty level is 34.4% compared 15.4% statewide (City Data, 2016). Nationwide, the main barriers for low-income households, African American, and Hispanic families are cost of programs and lack of a safe way to get their children home from the after-school program (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). In the 2006-2007 academic year, Norfolk Public Schools and the City of Norfolk's Department of Recreation, Parks and Open Space reached out to the Darden College of Education at Old Dominion University (ODU) to develop a collaborative program that would address the academic and socioemotional struggles of urban middle-school students. To tackle these challenges, the Darden College of Education created a service-learning initiative between two programs; Human Services and Counseling program, and the Park, Recreation, and Tourism Studies program (PRTS) that would intentionally target these challenges and address the issue of social equity in their community and has been implemented in the current community since 2007-2008 academic year. The CN program is a comprehensive in- and after-school program that is rooted in positive youth development and outcome-focused programming, designed to promote resiliency, character, math/STEM achievement, and overall academic readiness (Hill, Milliken, Goff, Clark, & Gagnon, 2015). This collaborative program began as a unique partnership between various agencies and has continued to maintain and grow unique partnerships within the Southeast area of the state. These partnerships between and within the local community help to ensure students not only have a variety of education options, oppor-

tunities, and experiences, but address the barriers of safe passage home and keeping the cost of participation free to all students. The current study is guided by the research question of: To what extent does an outcome-focused in- and after-school program impact participants' perception of resiliency and character?

### **Methods**

The CN program took place in an urban area of southeastern Virginia. The 21-week program, offered over the course of the full 2014-2015 academic year, was available and accessible to all 6th grade students at the school for in-school programming, and open to all 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the after-school program. Of the 472 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who attended and participated during the year, 70 students were granted permission from their parents/guardians and assented to complete the questionnaires (Resiliency and Skills Profile [RASP] and Citizenship Scale), 46 students had matched pre- and posttest data. This resulted in a 10% response rate. Of the 46 participants, 44% were males whose ages ranged from 10 to 12, with 87% of students being 11 years of age. Sixty-four percent of students self-reported as being Black/African American, 13% as other, 11% as white, 6% as Latino, and 2% as Indian. Forty-eight percent of students reported living with both of their biological parents, 27% reported living with just their mother, and 16% reported living with a parent and stepparent, with 9% as other forms of family living situations.

### **Results**

Paired samples *t*-tests were used to compare participants from pretest to posttest scores. Results indicated no significant difference between participants' pretest of the RASP ( $M = 5.07$ ,  $SD = .60$ ) and posttest scores ( $M = 4.92$ ,  $SD = .57$ ), with  $t(45) = 1.33$ ,  $p = .191$ . Additionally, a statistically significant decrease of scores in the Citizenship Scale was also found between pretest ( $M = 4.62$ ,  $SD = 0.42$ ) and posttest ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 0.49$ ), with  $t(45) = 2.011$ ,  $p = .05$ . A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of gender on resiliency and character scores. There was a slight significant effect of gender on resiliency at posttest scores with the  $p < .068$  level for resiliency [ $F(1,44) = 3.499$ ,  $p < .68$ ]. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the resiliency posttest mean score for males ( $M = 5.10$ ,  $SD = .59$ ) was significantly higher than females ( $M = 4.79$ ,  $SD = .53$ ).

### **Implications for Practice**

Partnerships between various agencies can help address social equity issues within their communities. Literature on resiliency mirrors the findings of this study, with differences between males and females and the different combination of risks and protective factors (Twenge & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2002). Males report more risks than females (Capaldi, 1992), and being female can act as a protective factor that typically leads to higher scores in resiliency (Ungar, Lienberg, Dudding, Armstrong, & Van de Vijer, 2013). Previous research and current political climate with President Obama's "My Brother's Keeper" support efforts to address males' well-being. Community-based programs and organizations can make significant contributions to youths' learning and development (Miller, 2001). The cost of quality after-school programs for middle and high school students can range from \$2,000 to \$6,900 per year per slot (Grossman, Lind, Hayes, McMaken, & Gersick, 2009). The partnership between the university, CARE Now and the school it serves allows for various costs to be avoided or absorbed to best benefit the youth being served. Partnerships with local agencies with similar mission and vision statements also provide programming that is unique and potentially free or little to no cost to the participant. These partnerships can be created through the local YMCA, hospitals, 4-H club, and other nonprofits on or around the campus community.

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## USER AND NONUSER PERCEPTIONS OF DOG PARK BENEFITS

Edwin Gomez, Old Dominion University

Lindsay Usher, Old Dominion University

Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University

### Introduction/Rationale

There are 70-74 million dogs in 40% of U.S. households, most in cities (Brittain, 2007; Shepherd, 2012). Due to population density and urbanization in the U.S., there has been a consistent increase in demand for dog parks, largely due to intense grassroots initiatives by dog owners (Gómez, 2013; Harnik & Bridges, 2006). Benefits of dog parks for dog owners include physical activity/exercise, forming bonds with community members, enjoyment from watching dogs play, enjoyment of the outdoors, and perceived safety in the dog park (Allen, 2007; Dyke & Phillips, 2000; Gómez, 2013). Lee, Shepley and Huang (2009) found that 77% of dog park users believed dog parks helped people meet other neighbors and build a sense of community in the surrounding neighborhoods. Gómez (2013) and Graham and Glover (2014) noted both individual and community benefits. However, although benefits have been reported by users, future studies need to explore the perceptions of non-user constituent groups to determine if they have similar views regarding dog park benefits, as dog parks are not always welcomed (Harnik & Bridges, 2006; Urbanik & Morgan, 2013). The purpose of this paper is to examine individual and community benefits of dog parks from the perspective of users and nonusers in order to assess the perception of benefits from community members. We wanted to investigate the role of gender, race/ethnicity, user/nonusers, and residential neighborhood variation related to perceptions of the dog park benefits. In particular, it is important to understand the nonuser perspective to assess the extent to which *nonusers who have dogs* do not use the resource, or *nonusers who do not have dogs* feel the resource is not delivering community benefits

### Methodology

Three neighborhood dog parks were selected in Norfolk, VA. Data were gathered in the fall of 2013 and spring of 2014 from households within a half-mile radius of the dog parks and onsite at the three dog parks using a two-page questionnaire. In order to increase representativeness, each data collector went out twice to the neighborhoods and once to the dog parks, and data were collected on weekends/weekdays, and mornings/evenings. Researchers sent out a flyer to the neighborhood they were surveying at least a week ahead of time to increase participation. Benefits were operationalized from concepts borrowed from Allen (2007), Gómez (2013) and Graham and Glover (2014), measured on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), and consequently factor analyzed. Dog park use (DPuse) was operationalized by asking how often respondents visited the dog park in the past month. Factor analyses, ANOVAs, and *t*-tests were used to analyze the data. All analyses were performed at  $p \leq .05$ .

### Results

Researchers gathered 437 surveys, but 400 surveys were usable: 150 (37.5%) from Colonial Park, 125 (31.3%) from Ghent Park, and 125 (31.3%) from Lafayette Park. Nearly 70% (69.8%) of surveys were collected in the neighborhoods (67.3% response rate), and 30.2% at the dog parks (86.2% response rate). The breakdown of dog park users is: 51.2% have a dog/use dog parks (*UserDg*), 15.5% have a dog/do not use dog parks (*NonUserDg*), and 33.3% have no dog/do not use dog parks (*NonUserNoDg*). Demographic information was collected for gender (51.9% women), age ( $M=41.3$ , range 18-84), race (82.4% White), and marital status (47.4% married, 40.1% single). Factor analyses revealed two dimensions of individual benefits – Dog-Based Benefits (*DogBene*;  $\alpha = .91$ ); People-Based Benefits (*PplBene*;  $\alpha = .87$ ), and two dimensions of community benefits –

Resource-Specific Benefits (*ResSpecBene*;  $\alpha = .89$ ); Broader-Based Benefits (*BrdBaseBene*;  $\alpha = .88$ ). Table 1 notes individual items for each dimension. DogBene consisted of dogs having a space to play, socialize, exercise, and be safe.

*Residency.* No significant differences were found between the three neighborhoods and their perceptions of individual and community benefits from the dog parks; however, differences were found related to *DPuse* (Table 2).

*Users.* Users were operationalized according to *UserDg*, *NonUserDg*, and *NonUserNoDg*. Significant differences were found among all three groups in terms of the following benefits: *DogBene*, *ResSpecBene*, and *BrdBaseBene*. However, no differences were found between users/nonusers and *PplBene* (nonsignificant statistics not reported due to space, but available upon request).

*Gender.* Women did not differ significantly from men on *DogBene*, *PplBene*, or *BrdBaseBene*. However, women had significantly higher scores on *ResSpecBene* than men (Table 2). Women did not have significantly higher scores on *DPuse* than men.

*Race.* To perform the *t*-test, race was dichotomized into White/non-White. No differences were found between Whites/non-Whites on any of the benefits or on *DPuse*.

## **Discussion**

The scales used to measure individual and community benefits were found to be reliable and the dimensions corroborate previous findings related to individual and community dog park benefits (Gómez, 2013; Graham & Glover, 2014). From a residency perspective, all three neighborhoods and both racial groups were perceiving individual/community benefits similarly. This speaks to the broader issue of environmental justice and resources meeting the perceived benefits across neighborhoods in a similar manner. We found that Lafayette Park had almost twice the amount of frequency of usage per month as Colonial Place. More exploration is warranted related to this finding. Is this due to density of the neighborhoods, an active neighborhood association, the size of the breed, or amenities found at the dog parks? There is also an inverse relationship between when the park was established and the amount of usage. Colonial Place is the oldest of the three dog parks, and Lafayette is the newest. Women are using the dog parks as much as men, and Whites/non-Whites are also using the dog parks with equal frequency, thereby speaking to broader social justice issues. Thus, considering both geographic and demographic diversity, the resource is (generally) providing equitable benefits and access.

## **Implications for Practice**

Currently, most research has been conducted on users, and practitioners need to know how benefits are being perceived by nonusers, especially when there might be competing land use interests. In this study, we found that user/nonusers differed on their views of *DogBene*, *ResSpecBene*, and *BrdBaseBene*. Clearly, there needs to be an increase in awareness of the benefits to nonusers. Interestingly, there were no differences between users/nonusers and *PplBene*. This means benefits for the people using the park were perceived similarly across all user/nonuser groups. An implication for practice is that perhaps this is where practitioners can use the people benefits to begin to bridge or “sell” the other benefits as part of an awareness campaign. All groups agree that people are generally benefitting. Future research should include open-ended questions on positive/negative feelings towards the dog park, and whether there is support for more/less dog parks.

Edwin Gómez, Old Dominion University, (757) 683-6309, egomez@odu.edu



**Table 1***Items and Dimensions for Individual and Community Dog Park Benefits (N = 400)*

Benefit Items <sup>a</sup>	Dimensions	M	SD
A benefit of dog parks <b>for users</b> is ...	<i>Individual</i>		
<i>dggexer.</i> that dogs can get some exercise	<i>Dog-Based</i>	4.67	0.77
<i>dgopenspc.</i> that dogs have a place with open space	<i>Benefits</i>	4.59	0.80
<i>dgsocial.</i> that dogs can be socialized to other dogs	<i>(DogBene)</i>	4.51	0.86
<i>dgsafe.</i> that dogs have a safe place to play off-leash		4.51	0.87
A benefit of dog parks <b>for users</b> is ...	<i>Individual</i>		
<i>pplxer.</i> that dog owners can get some exercise	<i>People-Based</i>	3.30	1.35
<i>pplfandf.</i> that dog owners can spend time with family and friends	<i>Benefits</i>	3.58	1.21
<i>pplscsp.</i> that dog owners can escape for a while	<i>(PplBene)</i>	3.41	1.34
<i>pplseedgs.</i> that dog owners can see other dogs		4.03	1.08
A benefit of having a dog park <b>for the community</b> is it ...	<i>Community</i>		
<i>soc.</i> helps build a sense of community in the neighborhood	<i>Resource-</i>	4.24	0.98
<i>meet.</i> helps people socialize with others/meet neighbors	<i>Specific</i>	4.30	0.93
<i>nbhdamen.</i> is an important community/neighborhood amenity	<i>Benefits</i>	4.33	0.95
<i>dghealth.</i> helps promote the physical health of dogs	<i>(ResSpecBene)</i>	4.50	0.84
A benefit of having a dog park <b>for the community</b> is ...	<i>Community</i>		
<i>recommend.</i> a dog park affects recommending my community to others	<i>Broad-Based</i>	3.21	1.25
<i>incho.</i> that having a dog park in my community/neighborhood has positively increased the resale value of my home/property	<i>Benefits</i>	3.23	1.18
<i>lesscrime.</i> dog parks generally help decrease crime in the neighborhood	<i>Dimension</i>		
<i>rsntomove.</i> if I were to move to another place, I would consider the presence of a dog park as a reason to move to a new community	<i>(BrdBaseBene)</i>	3.06	1.22
		3.49	1.34

<sup>a</sup>– Benefits measured on 5-point Likert-type scale where 1=*strongly agree*, 5=*strongly disagree***Table 2***Dog Park Variables with Significant Mean Differences*

	Variables	n	M	SD	df <sub>bn</sub>	df <sub>wn</sub>	SS <sub>bn</sub>	SS <sub>wn</sub>	F-test	t-test	p-val.
DgPkUse	Colonial Park	80	9.86	8.48	2	200	2921.49	60137.4	4.17	--	0.009
	Ghent Park	54	11.02	11.71							
	Lafayette Park	69	18.27	26.34							
DogBene	DPuser	205	4.74	0.46	2	397	13.75	201.08	13.57	--	0.0001
	NonUserDg	133	4.43	0.91							
	NonUserNoDg	62	4.29	0.92							
ResSpecBene	DPuser	205	4.51	0.63	2	397	11.37	247.91	9.11	--	0.0001
	NonUserDg	133	4.18	0.94							
	NonUserNoDg	62	4.15	0.92							
BrdBaseBene	DPuser	205	3.52	0.86	2	397	32.17	421.91	15.14	--	0.0001
	NonUserDg	133	2.96	1.15							
	NonUserNoDg	62	2.96	1.27							
	Men	189	4.27	0.86	391	--	--	--	--	-1.95	0.05
	Women	204	4.42	0.73							

<sup>a</sup>– Benefits measured on 5-point Likert-type scale where 1=*strongly agree*, 5=*strongly disagree*



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## **“ARE THERE ANY ACTIVITIES?” BLACK MOTHERS’ BELIEFS AND CHOICES**

Augustus W. Hallmon, Northwest Missouri State University

Research has shown that Black mothers have a tendency to enroll their children in certain recreational activities for the potential physical, cognitive, and social characteristics that may be developed through participation (Basch, 2011; Mandara, Murray, Telesford, Varner, & Richman, 2012; Varner & Mandara, 2013; White & Gager, 2007). One popular form of out-of-school recreation activity within the Black community is sport (Beamon, 2009; Beamon & Bell, 2006; Pitter & Andrews, 1997). This is not to suggest that there aren’t other activities that could facilitate positive youth development characteristics in Black children, just that not many activities have been an area of concentration within recreation scholarship at the level of sport participation. This study uses the theoretical framework of positive youth development as its bases. An effective positive youth development approach should work toward mitigating negative behaviors (e.g., deviant behavior, drug use, gang activity), while at the same time enabling youth to develop their social, healthy (emotional and physical), vocational and civic competencies needed to be contributors to society (Bocarro, Greenwood, & Henderson, 2008; Hersherberg, DeSouza, Warren, Lerner, & Lerner, 2014; Kenyon & Hanson, 2012; Witt & Crompton, 2003). For this reason, the purpose of my study was to address the role of positive youth development and perceptions and parental beliefs in the extent to which they influence Black mothers’ choices on out-of-school recreational activities for their children.

### **Methods**

For this study, qualitative measures were deemed to be most effective since Black mothers’ beliefs are partly created through their lived experiences. Framing this study from an interpretive descriptive methodological stance provides a rich understanding of Black mothers’ beliefs about Black children out-of-school free time and the influence these beliefs have on recreational activity choices for their children. The sample consisted of 11 Black mothers with a child aged 7-15 years. The goal was to recruit enough Black mothers to capture the conceptual density of the influences that impact Black mothers’ choices and descriptively convey the beliefs they have in relation to out-of-school recreation activities as a means of preparing their child to develop positive characteristics that are valued in society (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

### **Results**

The research findings of my study were able to give us a better understanding of how Black families were using their out-of-school free time. Black mothers responses fell into one of the following categories (see table 1). The primary purpose that Black mothers expressed for their weekend activities was for relaxation and maintaining/strengthening family bonds. This reinforces the literature about the importance of family bonds to the Black community (Brown, 2008; Lesane-Brown, 2006; Scottham & Smalls, 2009). Black mothers expressed their understanding that their weekdays are busy and don’t allow much time for them to bond with their children. Hence, they focused their attention on protecting their weekend time for their family. When selecting out-of-school activities, there were some families in which primarily the mother made these decisions, while in other families the child made these decisions. Black mothers expressed their choices were based mainly on what they perceived to be in the best interest of their child. When children were allowed to make their own decision about their out-of-school activities, it was simply a matter of their interests and preferences. There are a large number of activities that Black mothers feel are not available for their children in their community. Cost was a factor mentioned when it came to some activities, but this dealt more with the price point of the activity and Black mothers’ feeling that the benefits didn’t match the financial investment. There were times when mothers

commented that the activities seemed to be priced higher than what they would expect (e.g. golf, STEM activities, and theater programs). Responses similar to this have been talked about at length in the recreation literature. What the literature doesn't provide is a better understanding as to why mothers (especially Black mothers) choose these specific out-of-school recreation activities for their children.

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

The findings of my study indicate beliefs regarding recreational activity selection did not explicitly focus on positive youth development. Rather, Black mothers focused on achieving a desired effect in the way sons and daughters should behave and develop. Black mothers talked about several benefits they perceived to result from recreational activities for their children such as character development, exploring other opportunities, and cultural enrichment. Most of the benefits described have been discussed at length within the recreation literature (Barnett & Weber, 2008) the mother determines what extracurricular activities a child will be involved in, and the extent to which she or he participates. Thus, it is crucial to consider the perceptions of mothers when investigating the benefits that accrue to younger children from their participation in extracurricular recreational activities. The recreational participation of kindergarten through third grade children from two communities was explored, and mothers were asked about the benefits (if any and reflect a positive youth development approach. This includes activities that build character, and those that provide cultural enrichment for Black children (Fuller, Percy, Bruening, & Cotrufo, 2013; Hornberger, Zabriskie, & Freeman, 2010; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Murray & Nettles, 2013). This study found support for all of the previously described benefits of out-of-school recreational activities, particularly character development and exploring other recreational activities. As well as, support for other benefits (e.g., evaluating friendships and discriminatory behaviors, and as a therapeutic outlet for at-risk youth).

Black mothers revealed several influences impacting their choices for activities for their children. Several have been significantly discussed in the literature, such as the cost, a child's interest, character development, staying busy, and safety (Carver, Timperio, & Crawford, 2008; Popkin, Leventhal, & Weismann, 2010). Most of the activities mothers desired to be more widely available were not unique to the Black community. Research has shown that Black mothers want their children to be involved in activities similar to those of their peers (Fredricks & Eccles, 2005, 2008; Fuller et al., 2013). Activities such as mentally stimulating activities (e.g., STEM club, visits to university buildings, participation in developmental programs, etc.), mentorship programs, and sport activities, and other educational topics (e.g., foreign language) were suggested by Black mothers as being strongly desired. The addition of "exploration" as a perspective to consider is significant because it is not discussed much in the current literature. Ultimately, the reasons expressed were because being exposed to various activities would allow Black children to become better-rounded in their knowledge and experiences.

The contribution of this research to practical application is that there seems to be a disconnection between what opportunities recreation professionals are providing and how the populace perceives those opportunities in their community. If the perception of some Black mothers is that sports programs are the primary out-of-school activity available in their community, it is important that recreation professionals understand this is the case. There are a variety of other recreational activities that could be provided in Black communities or that may already be there but the impression of Black mothers is that they are not accessible.

**Table 1***Black Mothers' Beliefs and Choices: Analysis and Sample Quotes*

Questions	Themes	Sub-Themes	Sample Quotes
Current Activities	-Weekday -Weekend	-Sports -Homework -Education/Learning -Family Time/Bonding -Unplanned Free Time	<i>Either Friday night if we are not too tired or Saturday the matinee, we would try and go and catch a movie...Sunday we just sit down and try to take it slow and that is the prep day for the week to come.</i> <b>(Katie, daughter 13, son 10 years)</b>
Ideal activities	-Sports -Educational/Learning Activities -Family Time		<i>Learning something...I don't want to tell him what to think of...I just want to teach you how to think, learn something. It doesn't matter what it is.... just anything that catches his interest that would give him the desire to learn and master it.</i> <b>(Sylvia, son 9 years)</b>
Factors influencing choice	-Parent Choice -Child Choice	-Cost -Child's Interest -Character Development -Diverse Opportunities -Something to do -Therapeutic -Being safe and convenient	<i>I don't know her interest is volleyball and it just like came up out of nowhere because I didn't play volleyball or basketball or anything and so I just tried to make it available to her.</i> <b>(Allie, son 13, daughter 13 years)</b>
Perceived benefits	-Building Character -Exploration -Accessibility	-Interests/Preference -Peer/Parental Participation	<i>It would be nice if some of the programs that already exist cost less. Or, if there was a way to find these programs out...And I wish transportation to these things went as far as my house.</i> <b>(Shea, daughter 15, son 9, son, 7 years)</b>
Not available in the community	-Mentally Stimulating Activities -Specific Educational Topics -Mentorship -Other Community Resources		<i>There are not programs for teen parents because that's something they need also...They need stuff for teen parents cause I was a teen parent...</i> <b>(Angel, daughter 7 years)</b>

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## LEISURE PARTICIPATION BEFORE AND AFTER SUBSTANCE ABUSE RECOVERY

Justin Harmon, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

It has been said that when the use of drugs and alcohol occurs in a leisure context and progresses to a state of dependence, leisure often becomes secondary to the use of alcohol or drugs (Faulkner, 1991). The purpose of this study was to present parallels of participation in leisure during a period of substance abuse as well as participation in the same leisure activity after attaining sobriety. Beneficial to this project was the work of Henderson and Gardner (1996) who outlined four steps along the alcoholics' leisure timeline: leisure as a precondition where substance abuse is secondary and done in conjunction with the primary activity; false leisure where the substance abuse takes the lead in perceived importance and the original activity is demoted; the transitional leisure stage is when the user is confronted with the detrimental effects of substance abuse on his or her life and those of others; and finally, reclaimed leisure, where the person with a substance abuse disorder takes back the control of his or her life, and thus his or her leisure, from that disorder. Additionally, this paper challenges an assertion of McCormick and Dattilo (1995) that the types of leisure people with substance abuse problems engage in is *different* from those of people without substance abuse problems. What this study sought to surmise was: How does a person with a substance abuse disorder's<sup>1</sup> participation in a leisure activity change after becoming sober?

### Methods

Participants were fans of a traveling rock band with extensive tenures of involvement. The population was drawn from a larger project that included 35 participants. As interviews were conducted, it was evidenced that there were a high number of fans who were either sober or had discussed wanting to become sober. There were three participants who were newly sober at the time of interview (less than three months) and four others who became sober after an initial interview, making for seven participants. Follow-up interviews were conducted with the four informants who had attained sobriety after the initial interview. Participants for follow-up interviews were chosen through convenience sampling (Patton, 1990) based on the informants' having taken steps toward becoming sober. Data were generated from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the seven participants between December, 2012 and July, 2015. Some of the questions for the follow-up interviews included: Did you use the music of the band to help you become sober? Have any of your friends within the music scene been helpful during your transition to sobriety? And, how has your level of involvement changed since becoming sober?

### Results and Discussion

Evoking the liminality of Turner (1969), the concert setting was a place where all fans, substance abusers or not, could escape from the mundanity of life (Crabbe, 2006) through the use of drugs and alcohol. Unfortunately, for some fans, this provided a false sense of acceptability that further fueled their substance abuse disorders and led to numerous problems in their lives. Many operated from the viewpoint that they "didn't want to miss out on the fun" that everyone else was a part of which was in line with Rosenberg's (1978) definition of an alcoholic as one who "can't" do what others "can" do (p. 33). By interacting with others who *could* control their alcohol/drug intake, those who *could not* felt they were still in close company (Thorlindsson & Bernburg, 2006), and this may have led those who developed dependency problems to have a false sense of invincibility by justifying their behaviors as acceptable. But luckily, for these fans, each was aware

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<sup>1</sup> Substance abuse disorder is the preferred terminology in place of 'addiction' (Michael Botticelli, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy)



of the negative ramifications of their overindulgence and all hoped to find the strength to overcome their destructive patterns.

After making the decision to become sober, participants' statements spoke directly to Henderson and Gardner's (1996) final step in the substance abuser's life course: reclaimed leisure, taking back the control of one's life and claiming leisure for themselves, not for the benefit of indulging in drugs and alcohol. One participant said that now he was "going [to shows] for the friends and the music" whereas before he was only "going to rage" (party excessively). Another fan said, "Taking drugs was an escape for me. [Now the] music is what I turn to in order to come back to life. To hold on to. It allows me to hold on to [my] life." It is important to note that all seven participants maintained a high level of involvement as they transitioned from people with substance abuse disorders to those who were attempting to become sober.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

While this study was exploratory in nature and comprised a small sample size, therefore not making the findings generalizable to larger populations, the results indicate that McCormick and Dattilo's (1995) earlier claims that substance abusers participate in *different* activities than nonusers was found not to be a conclusive statement. Their work followed Sessoms and Oakley (1969) who said those with substance abuse disorders prefer activities that do not require commitment and Young and Kronus (1977) who said that at the peak of substance abuse leisure participation declined. For the participants of this study, both claims were found to be not true. While the *frequency* of participation stayed high during their period of substance abuse, it is true that the *quality* of informants' participation, especially in retrospect, was deemed low by the informants. Additionally, Henderson and Gardner (1996) found that their participants needed a period of abstention from leisure participation while they navigated the earliest stages of their recovery. This was also found to not be the case for those involved in this study. In fact, all stated that the music was a key component of their recovery, and without it and their involvement in the music scene, many thought they might not have found the strength to overcome their habits.

For the participants of this study, then, maintaining a continuous thread of leisure participation was integral to their success in recovery. While the forum of the music scene initially allowed for an acceptable place to indulge their destructive habits, their primary reason for involvement was due to a passionate connection to the music and the friends they had made through lengthy tenures as fans. Numerous factors led to their crippling dependence on drugs and alcohol, and while the end result of those substance abuse disorders negatively impacted their level of enjoyment and interaction within the music scene during their period of indulgence, those destructive tendencies were never able to completely dethrone their involvement as integral to their livelihood. Leisure associations, then, have great potential to serve as positive identity markers during the period of substance abuse *and* recovery (Hill & Leeming, 2014).

According to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (2015), one in 12 adults (8%) in the United States suffers from substance dependency. Leisure providers, then, should seek to offer resources for its patrons that aid in leisure continuity as a complementary resource for those pursuing sobriety. This should be done so as not to alienate or stigmatize those in recovery. Providing support groups in leisure contexts and activities that emphasize the therapeutic elements of leisure, as well as national campaigns which combat the stigma that often accompanies substance abuse disorders, would be effective methods of inclusion and support.

Justin Harmon, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, (303) 875-3977, justinharmon77@gmail.com

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# **RECREATION MANAGEMENT IN COUGARTOWN**

Jonathan R. Hicks, Minnesota State University

## **Introduction/Rationale**

For a century and a half, apex predators such as bears, wolves, and cougars were missing from the Illinois landscape. However, by the 2000s, sightings of each were being reported not only in Illinois, but in several Midwestern states where they were long thought to be extirpated. Reports of bears, wolves, and cougars have historically been met with skepticism. Then in 2008, a cougar was shot within the Chicago city limits, not far from Wrigley Field. Suddenly, almost anything seemed plausible.

Since 2000, bear, wolf, and/or cougar sightings have been confirmed in Missouri, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Wisconsin, among others (LaRue et al., 2012). These sightings present a potentially challenging dilemma for park managers, many of whom oversee lands thought to be traveled by the predators. This study sought to explore recreation manager feelings toward the return of potentially dangerous wildlife while considering the potential recreation and tourism implications of such species. In addition, the author will identify potential strategies for both wildlife management and public engagement.

## **Methods**

Data collection methods for this study focused on a population of Illinois county-level park managers, each of whom was responsible for overseeing and making decisions related to public use and wildlife-related policy. Ten purposive semi-structured interviews were conducted in 2013 via phone, representing 53% of the total county recreation agencies in the state. Data analysis utilized an inductive coding process consistent with previous efforts by Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) and Strauss and Corbin (1998). Emergent themes were identified and member checks were conducted with all participants to increase trustworthiness.

## **Results**

Analysis revealed four emergent themes, including: Reluctance toward public engagement, conversational rather than policy-based management responses, conflicted personal emotions, and the promotion of recreation and education in developing public acceptance. Specifically, managers were hesitant to engage the public in a topic they perceived to be divisive. Informed by previous experiences with members of the public fearful of coyotes, a common source of public complaint, one participant suggested “Based on the reaction of a confirmed cougar presence in northeastern Illinois, there is no reason to think (predators) would be welcomed.”

As such, management responses to a potential threat have been limited. Managers reported that bears, wolves, and cougars were discussed during closed-door meetings and private conversations, but no policies had been developed nor had the public been engaged. It was thought that predator-related policy could trigger an unnecessarily alarmist public reaction, and the vast majority of participating agencies determined that no response was the best response: “It’s just something that pops up every once in a while through conversation with people. But as far as working it into some kind of a management plan, no, that never has come up.”

While inaction was often preferred, that decision did not come lightly or without personal trepidation. Participants lamented the challenge of managing public reaction toward the presence of predators, while simultaneously feeling pride that their conservation efforts had resulted in the (at least occasional) return of key species. “The way that nature has rebounded in my lifetime is stunning. And the fact that we have credible, verified evidence of big predators coming back, I just love it.”

In the hope that the public would shift its views, participants suggested that education and recreation development were vital parts of potential strategies to encourage human-predator coexistence. Put simply, managers identified that if bears, wolves, and cougars were to be welcomed back to the landscape, education and recreation would have to be at the center of that movement. “Public awareness would be the biggest thing to tackle. We’re going to have to address it with a lot of education about the new reality of living with different types of wildlife than are typically found around here.”

### **Discussion/Implications for Practice**

Potentially more than any other wildlife species, the successful management and viability of large carnivore populations is as dependent on social acceptance by the public as on biological factors (Kellert, Smith, Nielsen, & Hellgren, 2014). At least occasionally, and possibly more frequently, predators are roaming into places only their ancestors had ever known. Just as the bear, wolf, and cougar seem to be adjusting, so too, are people making sense of these new visitors. Each species has been historically hated and feared. Conversely, their return might never have occurred without human respect and admiration. For park managers to acknowledge that fear while nurturing that respect will be central to their success. Recreation will play a vital role in that achievement. Specifically, citizen science will be key. Regular visitors/birders should be recruited as volunteers. These recreationists are typically already in the park and can easily be trained to be on the lookout for signs of predators, including but not limited to scat, fur, and tracks. This early detection and oversight process will cost very little and will achieve park mission and visions without alarming less frequent, less informed users.

To this point, migrating apex predators have been widely viewed as a challenge to overcome. As this study illustrated, that view is well founded. Though personally excited about the prospect, participants were reluctant to engage the public about the potential presence of apex predators. In the unlikely event that a person is threatened by a bear, wolf, or cougar, it will be too late for an appropriate response; indeed organizational credibility will be critically damaged. Instead, by proactively equipping staff members and frequent recreationists with the tools to evaluate park safety and communicate safety protocols to interested stakeholders, the already small odds of an incident will be even further minimized.

Though potentially unpleasant, engagement is key. Hudenko, Siemer, and Decker (2010) noted that tolerance of wildlife is more dependent on acceptance of the impacts that result from coexisting with a species rather than acceptance of the species itself. As such, in places such as the Midwest, where predators have been absent for generations, engaging with the public to tout the benefits of predators may be more critical than downplaying public fears through education campaigns. The public will almost certainly retain some degree of trepidation; but if recreation- and tourism-related gains are evident, research suggests public support is likely to increase.

The benefits of returning predators can outweigh the drawbacks, but only if managed proactively. Agencies need to be able to communicate to their stakeholders that you are probably not going to see a predator, but if you do, there are protocols in place to keep you safe. Moreover, decision makers should emphasize benefits of predators alongside discussions of risk. Park managers who can accomplish these tasks will not only stave off potentially negative public response, but put themselves in a position to re-brand predators as less of a problem and more of an asset.

Jonathan R. Hicks, Minnesota State University, (507) 389-2747, [jonathan.hicks@mnsu.edu](mailto:jonathan.hicks@mnsu.edu)

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# THE EFFECTS OF WILDLIFE-INSPIRED AWE ON PARKS AND PEOPLE

Jonathan R. Hicks, Minnesota State University

## Introduction/Rationale

When the great American environmental authors others described their awe-filled experiences in nature, they did not just reference mountainous landscapes and pristine waters. In many cases, wildlife was at the center of their awe. Thoreau (1854) stood in awe as a bird landed on his shoulder; Muir (1911) was transfixed as he locked eyes with a bear; Leopold (1949) knelt in stunned silence as he watched a wolf die. These and other great authors knew awe. It changed them; it made them see the world differently, and it informed their understandings of the natural world, sustainability, and environmental ethics.

This study did not seek to determine if wildlife-inspired awe exists; its existence is well documented in many of the great environmental texts of the last 200 years. Rather, this study sought to empirically explore the ways in which park visitors make sense of wildlife-inspired awe as part of recreational experiences and how memories of those experiences subsequently influence park visitors' day-to-day lives.

## Methods

In this study, wildlife-inspired awe experiences utilized sequential mixed methods (q/Q/q), in which each stage of data collection built upon the one previous. Specifically, intercept interview data informed the development of a questionnaire, which informed subsequent in-depth interview protocol. Interview data is the focal point of this manuscript, as personal descriptions of lived experiences provide a unique depth of analysis (Glover, 2003; Polkinghorne, 1988). A total of 19 interviews were conducted in person or via phone with a sample of Illinois park visitors. Interviews were conducted between September 2014 and March 2015. Data analysis utilized an inductive coding process consistent with previous efforts by Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) and Strauss and Corbin (1998). Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) (Kolb, 1984; 2000), and Theory of Emotional Memory (TEM) (LeDoux, 1996; 2012) were considered in an effort to frame different aspects of this study.

## Results

*Making sense of wildlife-inspired awe.* In the initial intercept interviews, participants reported: 1) Awe is a potentially transformative experience, 2) The term "awe" did not do justice to their experience, and 3) Experiences of wildlife-inspired awe encourage further recreational pursuit of wildlife.

*Memories of wildlife-inspired awe.* During subsequent interviews, themes emerged that suggested relationships between wildlife-inspired awe experiences and subsequent learning behaviors. Specifically, participants noted increased: Awareness of leisure preferences, commitment to professional pursuits, changes in social behaviors, taking action for environmental advocacy, and recognition of environmental connectivity.

## Discussion/Implications for Practice

Looking at the data in totality, there is evidence that the effects of wildlife-inspired awe were felt across virtually every aspect of the participants' lives; from an increased likelihood to pursue recreation to stronger connections with the natural world as expressed via new or modified learning behaviors. The implications for these findings could be important for research and practice. Environmental educators might begin to adjust their content and delivery system to encourage wildlife-inspired awe. Land managers can write and revise policies that maximize the benefits of spending time in the out of doors, indirectly encouraging positive interactions with wildlife. Landscape architects can sculpt spaces that recognize the role of wildlife in encouraging positive experiences. Health advocates utilize wildlife as one strategy to encourage mental and physical wellness via personal reflection.

Among the benefits of using awe experiences as a teaching tools is that it does not necessarily need to be expensive or require a great deal of people power. Indeed, with awe, a little goes a long way. While formal environmental education lessons can be taught and forgotten within moments, the wildlife-inspired awe experience was one that was demonstrated almost without fail to be committed to memory. For participants in this study, their memories continued to resonate long after the experience was over.



This finding has precedent: “Emotionally laden thoughts are highly salient and more readily encoded than non-emotional thoughts” (Bernstein et al., 2006 via Hudenko 2012, p. 21). In other words, situations infused with emotion are more frequently committed to memory, or learned. Woods and Mascardo (2003) posited that when tourists are emotionally engaged by a wildlife encounter, they are more likely to remember details of their trip and to commit the interaction to memory. Previous studies have identified how emotional response to wildlife (including but not limited to awe) can influence one’s wildlife value orientations (Hartel, Carlton, & Prokopy, 2015), travel experiences (Ballantyne, Packer, & Sutherland, 2011; Curtin & Kragh, 2014), attitudes toward wildlife conservation (Nelson, Bruskotter, Vucetich, & Chapron, 2016; Skibins, Powell, & Hallo, 2013), and perceived importance of wildlife stewardship (Larsen, Cooper, & Hauber, 2016). Other authors have considered the influence of emotional dispositions on wildlife management preferences, each finding that certain emotions (fear, disgust) predicted the level of support for controlling predatory wildlife (Frank, Johannson, & Flykt, 2015; Jacobs, Vaske, Dubois, & Fehres, 2014; Sponarski, Vaske, & Bath, 2015).

It is becoming increasingly apparent that wildlife are important characters in the story of the human desire for outdoor experiences. Like bridges, gazebos, and nature centers, wildlife is an amenity, one with the potential to be maintained and valued as much as the landscape itself. Indeed, for many people, natural areas without wildlife are not natural at all. Wildlife is central to many people’s leisure experiences, just as they are central to daily human life. It is not coincidence that as Challinor (1989) suggested, wildlife have been viewed historically as gods, demons, machines, tools, children, and prophets, to name a few.

Frederickson and Anderson (1999) documented the awe and wonderment in their respondents who, having not seen but merely heard the sounds of wildlife felt “a reawakened sensitivity” (p. 26) toward nature. This “sensitivity” toward nature is among the goals of many parks and recreation agencies. This study suggested that wildlife may be a key ingredient in developing the next great environmental thinkers – and in turn, the next generation of park goers.

Wildlife will remain a vital part of how people see the world, because wildlife is among those rare phenomena that has the power to inspire positive feelings. The value of those positive feelings cannot be overstated and should not be discounted. As such, it is vital that human-wildlife experiences and wildlife-inspired awe remain as fundamental considerations in our ongoing exploration of the how people benefit from parks.

Jonathan R. Hicks, Minnesota State University, (507) 389-2747, [jonathan.hicks@mnsu.edu](mailto:jonathan.hicks@mnsu.edu)

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## **FAMILY DIABETES CAMP: FOSTERING RESILIENCY AMONG CAMPERS AND PARENTS**

Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University

Ron Ramsing, Western Kentucky University

Jennifer Goff, Old Dominion University

Melissa Turnage, Old Dominion University

Betsy Kennedy, Old Dominion University

Takeyra Collins, Virginia Wesleyan College

Youth who are resilient, when faced with adversity, are positioned to carry this capacity into adulthood (Masten, Obradovic, & Burt, 2006). With type 1 diabetes being the second most common chronic illnesses facing teens, it is also one of the most psychologically and behaviorally demanding diseases (Borus & Laffel, 2010). Adherence rates for youth are typically poor and as evidence in a recent meta-analysis, adolescents have significantly more mental, social, and academic problems than their healthy peers (Pinquart & Shen, 2011). Fortunately, diabetes camps are an effective medium for peer support, whereby campers are encouraged to share experiences, develop self-management skills, and participate in realistic practice of exercise, glucose monitoring, diet, and injection control (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). The American Diabetes Association (2012) states “camps for children and youth focused on diabetes are invaluable” (p. 75). The camp setting uniquely offers participants the opportunity to share common experiences, form meaningful friendships (Garst, Browne, & Bialeschki, 2011), and make decisions about behaviors that impact their diabetes. Medical specialty camps have grown in number (American Camp Association, n.d.) and importance as a means to better serving a variety of illnesses groups. Many youth programs (e.g., diabetes camps) can assist youth in developing skills and coping mechanisms necessary for youth to successfully navigate and manage the adversity of having diabetes (Hill, Milliken, Goff, & Turnage, 2015). Resiliency is seen as the ability to make positive adaptations to life’s circumstances, despite exposure to severe adversity, and a multitude of risks (Jones, 2012). Resilient characteristics that are fostered in youth are often carried into adulthood (Masten, Obradovic, & Burt, 2006). Youth with a type 1 diabetes diagnosis live in a new normal that will invariably impact everything they do. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to determine if a family diabetes camp can positively impact participants’ resiliency and positive youth outcomes.

### **Methods**

This southeastern VA camp was a collaborative effort between a local university, diabetes center, and the Lions Club. The three-day family diabetes camp has many components of a traditional camp, as well as workshops and parent breakout sessions focused on developing resilient youth and proper diabetes self-management. Data were collected through three approaches: a pre- and posttest, resiliency-based questionnaire; the retrospective American Camp Association’s (ACA) Camper Learner Scale; and open-ended questions for parents during the three-day family diabetes camp. Campers and parents completed self-report questionnaires immediately prior to the camp beginning and immediately upon its completion. The modified Resiliency and Attitude Skills Profile-Modified (RASP-M), grounded in Wolin and Wolin’s (1993) framework, consisted of 24 “I – statements” focused on each of the seven resiliency traits (e.g., insight). The ACA’s Camper Learner Scale is part of the Youth Outcome Battery (YOB), and has been found to be effective at measuring the seven common positive youth development outcomes. (Hill, Holt, & Ramsing, 2014; Hill, McClellan-Holt, Ramsing, & Goff, 2016). The 14-item scale targets the ACA’s original seven areas for positive youth development (e.g., friendship). Three open-ended questions were

included at the end of the survey. Researchers used a traditional qualitative approach with directed content analysis to study the written responses.

## **Results**

Data were collected during the summer of 2015 with a total of 32 matched pre- and posttest of the modified Resiliency and Attitudes Skill Profile (Parents:  $N = 14$ , Youth:  $N = 18$ ). Thirty-five campers completed the retrospective Camper Learner Scale, and 34 parents completed the qualitative portion of the measure. The camper demographics were 55% male, with a mean age of 10 and primarily Caucasian (71%). The average HbA1c Level (self-report blood glucose) was 7.84. Campers' time having diabetes: 5% under one year; 30% = 1-2 years; 47% = 4-5 years; 18% = 5 years or more. Wilcoxon  $T$  tests were used to analyze any differences from pre- and posttest scores on resiliency. The results indicated a positive increase (approaching statistical significance) of parent respondents ( $Z = -1.833$ ,  $p = 0.67$ ). Campers also completed the 14-item Camper Learner Scale, and the findings indicate that 77.14% of campers felt they *learned a little* or *learned a lot* about critical youth development outcomes (e.g., friendship). Finally, direct content analysis of the qualitative measures indicated several themes among parent respondents. The themes were generalized into three categories: motivation, community and challenges.

## **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

Camps nationwide are a driving force for positive youth development (Sibthorp, Bialeschki, Morgan, & Browne, 2013). Previous research has explored the impact among youth at diabetes camp grounded in self-determination theory (Taylor, Piatt, Hill, & Malcom, 2012) but has not looked at the impact on the child's resiliency. Specialty medical camps need to not only involve more opportunities to foster resiliency, relationships, family support, and autonomy but also collaborate with professionals who are certified, trained, and passionate in assisting youth on their journey to a well-managed disease. Providing this type of opportunity can better assist youth as they deal with various aspects that develop as they age. Furthermore, as recreation programmers continue to make inclusion a reality, models like this study can assist them and recreation college majors, training to be programmers better equipped to address the trend of having youth with type 1 diabetes in their programs. As programmers strive to better incorporate and measure the National Recreation and Park Association's three pillars, camp settings are an appropriate vehicle to target these needs. Medical specialty camps that target effective management and coping with type 1 diabetes mirror the three pillars—conservation, health and wellness, and social equity. The first pillar, conservation, can be discovered and explored in this type of environment as it truly provides youth with the opportunity to connect to nature and better understand conservation practices. The second pillar, health and wellness, is valued in this type of camp as it enables the medical professionals and counselors to plan, provide, and promote opportunities for the improvement in overall health and prevention of disease, as a family unit. Lastly, the third pillar, social equity, ensures universal access to resources and programming that is essential in fostering a positive community impact through parks and recreation services. This Family Diabetes Camp applied evidence-based practice with the expertise of the medical staff, Lions Club, and the college recreation majors as camp counselors. This collaborative family diabetes camp is a great example of the power of recreation and its ability to address societal challenges.

Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University, (757) 683-4881, ehill@odu.edu

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## **COMMIT TO HEALTH: IMPROVES NUTRITION KNOWLEDGE AND HEALTHY EATING BEHAVIORS**

Danielle Hollar, Healthy Networks Design and Research

Marla Collum, National Recreation and Park Association

Kellie May, National Recreation and Park Association

### **Introduction**

#### *Commit to Health*

Since the launch of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)'s five-year Commit to Health initiative, millions of children in low-income communities nationwide have been provided nutritious summer and after-school meals during out-of-school time (OST), and hundreds of thousands have been educated about healthy eating and physical activity habits in park and recreation sites. Through Commit to Health, park and recreation agencies are playing a critical role in improving the eating and physical activity behaviors of children, their parents, as well as recreation providers by 1) providing healthy environments for recreation activities that align with the National After-school Association's Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards, 2) improving access to nutritious foods, 3) providing nutrition literacy programming, and 4) ensuring opportunities for physical activity during recreational programming.

### **Methods**

#### *Study Interventions*

This study included three interventions: 1) provision of meals as part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP); 2) provision of multi-media, fun nutrition literacy programming that integrates well into traditional summer camp activities; and 3) focus on increasing variety and frequency of physical activity, and implementation of the HEPA standards (that ensure recreational sites, encourage nutritious foods, limit less nutritious foods, encourage physical activity, and work toward the creation of policies to support such efforts).

Approximately 875,000 children participated in two Commit to Health interventions (summer and after-school meals and HEPA). A subgroup of 557 Commit to Health sites including ~257,000 children (grades K-6) participated in three interventions: summer meals, nutrition literacy programming, and HEPA implementation. To assess the impact of the combination of the three interventions, a nationwide representative sample of the subgroup participated in pre- (June) and post- (August) surveys. In all, 426 children (having just completed grades 4 or 5), 92 staff, and 116 parents completed both pre and post-surveys, and thus comprise the sample presented herein.

### **Results**

#### *Children*

Children increased their knowledge of nutritious foods, the organs of their bodies, and how to become healthier overall due to the implementation of a nutrition literacy program. Many changed their eating behaviors as a result. Specifically, statistically significant improvements in correct responses from pre- to post-survey were found regarding nutrition knowledge topics:

- The main antioxidants/vitamins found in fruits/vegetables (14.8% to 34.0%, McNemar Test;  $p=0.000$ ) – “What are the three main antioxidants/vitamins that are found in fruits and vegetables?”
- Which type of cereal is best (57.7% to 72.3%;  $p=0.000$ ) – “Pretend you are getting ready to choose which cereal you would like to have for breakfast. Which of the following would be the best choice?” (options included varying levels of fat and fiber)



- The types of food that are proteins (64.1% to 72.5%;  $p=0.000$ ) – “Which food is a protein? (egg, whole wheat bread, or broccoli)
- The types of foods with most fiber (43.9% to 65.3%;  $p=0.000$ ) – “Which food below would have the highest amount of fiber?” (white bread, brown rice, white rice)
- Which organ regulates sugar (39.7% to 51.9%;  $p=0.002$ ) – “Which organ of the body helps regulate sugar in our body?”

Children were asked about their consumption of foods that were part of the Foods of the Month educational efforts. Statistically significant improvements in child eating behaviors were found regarding increases in fruits ( $z=2.801$ ;  $p=0.005$ ) and bell peppers ( $z=2.483$ ;  $p=0.013$ ). Improvements that did not quite reach statistical significance were found for spinach and low fat dairy, as well as a decrease in consumption of sugary beverages.

#### *Parents*

Parents (of children that received nutrition literacy in summer camp locations) also learned and made changes to improve eating habits. Increases in consumption vegetables ( $z$ -score  $-2.22$ ;  $p=0.026$ ), bell peppers ( $z=2.166$ ;  $p=0.030$ ), spinach ( $z=3.213$ ;  $p=0.001$ ), summer squash ( $z=2.867$ ;  $p=0.004$ ), and fish ( $z=2.553$ ;  $p=0.011$ ) were found.

#### *Staff*

Park and recreation staff (who instructed nutrition literacy during summer camps) changed their eating and physical activity behaviors. Staff knowledge of nutrition and healthy living behaviors increased by the end of summer, but due to small sample size statistical significance is not reported.

### **Discussion and Implications**

The core components of Commit to Health, comprised of healthy meals served through the USDA meal programs (SFSP and CACFP), nutrition literacy education with a physical activity component, and improvements in healthy environments of park and recreation agencies that implement the HEPA standards, are helping agencies make a difference in the children (and their parents) they serve! This study illustrates the strong role recreation providers can play in improving child and adult healthy eating and physical activity behaviors during a short summer time period.

Danielle Hollar, Healthy Networks Design and Research, (305) 992-4085, [DanielleHollar@gmail.com](mailto:DanielleHollar@gmail.com)

## **FOCUS GROUPS CONFIRM IMPROVEMENTS IN NUTRITION KNOWLEDGE AND HEALTHY BEHAVIORS AT LOCAL PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES**

Danielle Hollar, Healthy Networks Design and Research

Allison Colman, National Recreation and Park Association

Kellie May, National Recreation and Park Association

### **Introduction**

Commit to Health, led by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), is a nationwide five-year program in low-income communities that helps park and recreation agencies serve nutritious summer and after-school meals during out-of-school time (OST) and educate children about healthy eating and physical activity habits. The core components of Commit to Health, comprised of healthy meals served through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), nutrition literacy education, and improvements in healthy environments of park and recreation agencies that implement standards based on the National After-school Association's Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards, are helping agencies make a difference in the children they serve! A Commit to Health quantitative study including 426 children, 92 staff, and 116 parents showed statistically significant improvements in 1) child knowledge of nutrition education and associated healthy eating behaviors and 2) adult eating behaviors.<sup>1</sup> The present study extends the evidence-base for Commit to Health by examining the impact in a qualitative fashion, via nationwide focus group sessions.

### **Methods**

This qualitative study assessed three interventions of Commit to Health: 1) USDA meal programs (SFSP and CACFP), 2) nutrition literacy programming, and 3) implementation of the HEPA standards.

Park and recreation agencies across the United States led the three interventions, aimed at improving health of just under a million children. To assess the impact of the combination of the three interventions, a nationwide representative sample of 10 agencies participated in focus group sessions at or toward the end of their summer 2015 programming. Three groups at each agency participated, with overall participants being: 125 Children (having just completed grades 4 or 5), 100 staff, and 75 parents.

### **Results**

Confirming what was reported in the quantitative study, children and adults were able to provide specific examples of how they increased their knowledge of nutritious foods, the organs of their bodies; how they improved eating and physical activity behaviors due to nutrition literacy programming and physical activity standards; and improved the food/environment. Some key points raised during focus group sessions that show impact are below:

#### *Children*

- Children learned that milk is good for your bones, eating too much sugar is not good for you/your organs, how to read a nutrition label, and what MyPlate is all about, and that they need to drink lots of water each day.
- Children reported they are eating new fruits and vegetables and whole grains, eating according to the MyPlate recommendations, drinking more water and milk, and less sugar-sweetened beverages—consumption behaviors they said they were not doing prior to Commit to Health.
- Children reported learning the names and functions of their bodily organs, what they do, and how to keep them healthy.

- Children shared that they and their families are taking more walks, doing calisthenics, playing in the park—all as a family, more now than before.

#### *Parents*

- Parents said that “the camp reinforces healthy eating principles” and have changed eating behaviors among the family members—adult family members are eating fruits, vegetables, and trying new foods (fish and peppers for example), cooking/plating according to MyPlate, cooking as a family, reducing portion sizes, among other changes.
- Parents confirmed improvements in child eating behaviors: they were buying and preparing new foods for their children, taking children to the grocery store who ask for nutritious foods, finding it easier to convince their children to eat healthily, changing snacks from junk to nutritious foods, reducing portion sizes, reducing sugars in meals and snacks, serving more water, and some even said they were cooking according to MyPlate.
- Parents said they like that their children were learning physical activity techniques and skills, as well as having fun while being active; many said they were so active that children came home exhausted every day. They indicated the variety was great: dancing, swimming, soccer, morning walks, dodgeball, frisbee, jump rope, archery, rock climbing, water balloon fights, etc. Many parents also said that they learned that children need 60 minutes of physical activity a day, and that they should walk 10,000-14,000 steps per day—facts they did not know before their child told them, facts that the children learned at camp.
- Children shared that their parents (and families) are taking more walks, doing calisthenics, playing in the park, riding bikes, and doing other physical activities more now than before.

#### *Staff*

- Staff shared that the whole grain requirements of the nutrition policy was a challenge, mostly due to children’s lack of familiarity of whole grains. Some locations experienced push back from children when they were told they could not bring in junk food. Staff role-modeling was difficult in some locations—staff continued to eat fast food and junk in front of kids.
- Staff reported that the physical activity requirements were the easiest component to implement—weather seemed to be the only real challenge—children loved being active!
- Staff shared that children and parents told them many stories, provided many examples of how camp nutrition literacy programming has changed their consumption behaviors at home.

### **Discussion and Implications**

Commit to Health recreation providers are playing a critical role in improving the health of children by providing access to nutritious foods, knowledge and experiential activities about nutritious foods, and opportunities for physical activity—all within healthy park environments that align with HEPA standards. This qualitative study shows the specifics of just how this is operationalized in the summer camp setting: 1) through the creation of policies (rules!) to support healthy, wellness-supportive environments; 2) provision of guidance for planning and creating nutritious OST meals; 3) and leading Nutrition Literacy programming with a physical activity component.

Danielle Hollar, Healthy Networks Design and Research, (305) 992-4085, [DanielleHollar@gmail.com](mailto:DanielleHollar@gmail.com)

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## POSITIVE OUTCOMES OF LEISURE EDUCATION IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Katherine Ann Jordan, Clemson University

Ryan J. Gagnon, Clemson University

Brandon S. Harris, Clemson University

Kellie Walters, Clemson University

Denise M. Anderson, Clemson University

June J. Pilcher, Clemson University

The transition from high school to college may represent one of the most stressful times in a young adult's life. This stress is often due to an increase in both responsibilities and expectations (King, Singh, Bernard, Merianos, & Vidourek, 2012; Kuh, 2003). This stress may negatively influence both self-esteem and the young person's ability to connect with others (Stupinsky, Perry, & Hladkyj, 2013). Ample evidence suggests that a sense of belonging to a social group and connection with campus act as mechanisms in combating stressors and are key factors in both student development and retention (Elkins, Forrester, & Noël-Elkins, 2011; Kampf & Teske, 2013; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2011; Welle & Graf, 2011). Moreover, positive self-esteem, the formation of social groups, and sense of community grow more when a student is engaged in activities that do not revolve around the stresses of academic work (Elkins et al., 2011; Kuh et al., 2011). Recreational endeavors, in the form of leisure education (Clark & Anderson, 2011; Evans, Hartman, & Anderson, 2013), have proven to have a positive impact on students' sense of community, socialization, and overall well-being (Artinger et al., 2006; Cheng, 2004; Elkins et al., 2011; Kampf & Teske, 2013). Evidence suggests leisure education improves self-esteem, builds social skills, and provides a foundation of skills from which to draw from throughout life (Datillo, 2008). Given the high potential for leisure education to aid in the development socioemotional skills and coping mechanisms the purpose of this study was to comparatively explore potential changes in school belonging and self-esteem across the semester in students who were enrolled in leisure education courses and those who were not enrolled in leisure skills courses.

### Methods

Three questions guided the research: Do school and life satisfaction, school belonging, and self-esteem change over the course of the semester? If so, do these changes significantly differ between those enrolled in leisure skills courses and those who are not enrolled in leisure skills courses? For those enrolled in leisure skills courses, does type of class (dancing, yoga, and meditation) impact any changes across the semester? Data were collected in September and November of the fall 2015 semester. Participants enrolled in leisure skills courses were administered questionnaires in class via iPads and paper surveys. Participants not enrolled in leisure skills courses took the survey online through the university's research pool. School satisfaction, school belonging, student life satisfaction, and self-esteem were measured. A doubly multivariate repeated measures MANOVA, controlling for gender, year in school, and age, was used to analyze the results ( $N = 553$ ).

### Results

The main effect of leisure skills courses across the semester was significant ( $p < .001$ ;  $\eta^2 = .032$ ). Significant changes across the semester in those enrolled in leisure skills courses ( $n = 444$ ) and those not enrolled ( $n = 109$ ) were found in school satisfaction ( $p < .05$ ;  $\eta^2 = .008$ ), student life satisfaction ( $p < .01$ ;  $\eta^2 = .013$ ), school belonging, ( $p < .01$ ;  $\eta^2 = .015$ ) and self-esteem ( $p < .01$ ;  $\eta^2 = .018$ ) (Table 1). Students enrolled in leisure skills courses experienced a slight decrease in school satisfaction, maintained stable life satisfaction, and increased school belonging and self-esteem.

Students who were not enrolled in leisure skills courses experienced greater decreases in all of the dependent variables (Table 2). The main effect of type of leisure skills course across the semester was significant ( $p < .05$ ;  $\eta^2 = .018$ ). Significant changes occurred in school satisfaction ( $p < .05$ ;  $\eta^2 = .017$ ) and school belonging ( $p < .01$ ;  $\eta^2 = .026$ ) (Table 3). Of those enrolled in leisure skills courses, dance students ( $n = 237$ ) experienced significant increases in school satisfaction and belonging while yoga ( $n = 136$ ) and meditation ( $n = 67$ ) students experienced significant decreases in school satisfaction and belonging (Table 4).

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

While both school satisfaction and life satisfaction decreased for both groups, those not enrolled in leisure skills courses experienced greater decreases, suggesting that leisure education may stymie decreases in satisfaction. Leisure skills students experienced an increase in self-esteem and school belonging, while those not enrolled experienced decreases. These findings seem congruent with previous research suggesting students involved in recreational pursuits are better equipped to manage the stressors of college life. These findings suggest the importance of leisure education in the lives of the students. Over the course of the semester, students involved in leisure skills classes were more stable in regards to university belonging and self-esteem than their counterparts. A closer examination of differences based on type of course (dance, yoga, and meditation) found that dance students experienced an increase in school satisfaction as well as school belonging while yoga and meditation students experienced a decrease. These findings suggest that social non-academic pursuits may have a greater positive impact of belonging and satisfaction within the school community than lone pursuits.

Overall, findings suggest that young people who participate in leisure education programs are better off than their peers in multiple socioemotional areas. In an academic setting, student health and well-being should be a high priority for higher education institutions. A healthier campus community is a happier community as suggested by our findings. Ultimately leisure education may provide gains for the institution in regard to productivity, retention, and even in alumni support. It is important for higher education institutions to think creatively about ways in which to get students involved in recreational and nonacademic pursuits. Outside of academic settings, parks and recreation departments can take this information and think about how to create opportunities for community members to be more involved in recreational or nonwork pursuits in and around the community. For instance, partnering with local dance instructors and hosting Shag socials could entice people seeking shared experiences to support local parks and recreation departments. Programs focusing on high school-aged students could also develop the pro-social and pro-wellness habits in preparation for college. For example, offering nontraditional organized youth sports such as ultimate Frisbee or disc golf could attract and promote healthy lifestyles for youth who are not interested in traditional organized sports. For those young adults who are not in college, it is important to foster an environment that promotes connecting with others in the community while also creating an environment conducive to learning leisure skills. Ultimately, moving beyond traditional recreation programs to a more inclusive model could open the door to community members who are not being served which in turn could improve satisfaction and sense of belonging within the community.

Katherine Ann Jordan, Clemson University, (706) 614-0731, [kjorda5@clemson.edu](mailto:kjorda5@clemson.edu)



**Table 1***Doubly Multivariate Repeated Measures by Enrollment*

	<i>F</i>	Sig.	$\eta^2$
School Satisfaction X Enrollment	4.679	.031*	.008
Life Satisfaction X Enrollment	7.435	.007*	.013
School Belonging X Enrollment	8.275	.004*	.015
Self-esteem X Enrollment	7.435	.007*	.012

\*Significant at the .05 level

**Table 2***Average Change Over the Course of the Semester by Enrollment<sup>a</sup>*

	Enrolled in leisure skills course	Not enrolled in leisure skills course
School Satisfaction	-.128	-.972
Life Satisfaction	-.052	-1.248
School Belonging	+.036	-.358
Self-esteem	+.137	-1.256

<sup>a</sup> Groups significantly differed at the beginning of the semester in school satisfaction and self-esteem**Table 3***Doubly Multivariate Repeated Measures by Type of Class*

	<i>F</i>	Sig.	$\eta^2$
School Satisfaction X type of class	3.732	.025*	.017
School Belonging X type of class	5.691	.004*	.026

\*Significant at the .05 level

**Table 4***Average Change Over the Course of the Semester by Class<sup>a</sup>*

	Dance	Yoga	Meditation
School Satisfaction <sup>b</sup>	+.110	-.544	-.373
School Belonging <sup>c</sup>	+.215	-.250	-.119

<sup>a</sup> Groups did not significantly differ at the beginning of the semester<sup>b</sup> Significant difference between the groups ( $p < .05$ ;  $\eta^2 = .015$ )<sup>c</sup> Difference between the groups approached significance ( $p = .057$ ;  $\eta^2 = .013$ )

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## **CASE STUDY: USE OF P3s IN RURAL COMMUNITY EVENT FACILITIES**

Tricia Jordan, Western Kentucky University

Paula Upright, Western Kentucky University

Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) are collaborative relationships between the public sector and for-profit or nonprofit organizations. Through these relationships the public sector has the opportunity to enhance services, further advance economic development or supplement revenue (Becker & Patterson, 2005). For over 200 years these partnerships have been used for urban development, to develop facilities, and provide programming (Amram & Crawford, 2011). P3s provide public partners with the aforementioned opportunities and challenges. Challenges may stem from poor training and coordination, a failure to understand roles/responsibilities that guide the partnership, lack of understanding of organizational governance, or failing to understand partnership focus (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby, Thibault, & Kikulis, 2004). Regardless of their challenges, researchers have determined that successful P3s have common characteristics. These include appropriate sharing of risk, a strong private consortium, political support, community support and transparent procurement (Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2015). The partnerships are also strengthened when parties have a unifying vision, commitment, open communication, trust, and a willingness to collaborate or compromise (Jacobson & Choi, 2008).

This case study provides an in-depth description of P3 usage by a rural community as part of the design and construction of a downtown event pavilion project. The project reclaims downtown property once the site of city hall. The footprint of this lot is 140' deep x 60' wide. Main elements of the project included a performance pavilion with stage, storage, green room, and public restrooms. Stage dimensions are 20' x 20'. Shipping containers flank the stage. These containers will serve as storage space and the performers' green room. Green space immediately in the front of the performance pavilion includes an underground sprinkler system. The dimensions of the green space are 60' wide x 35' deep. A hardscape area immediately after the green space is composed of crushed granite. This area includes lighting, benches, trees, and planter boxes. The dimension of the hardscape area is 60' wide x 85' deep. Construction includes underground utilities. Two planter boxes flank the pavilion; one with a bronze plaque containing the private partner's name.

The case provides both the perspective of the public partner (city) and private partner (locally owned bank). Information gained from the study provides other professionals seeking to use P3s in their recreation facility development with the lessons learned and insights from one community's experience. With this knowledge others may better understand and/or prepare to enter into their own project's P3.

### **Methods**

A case study design allowed the researchers to examine the how and why of decision results (Schramm, 1971) and discover insights into the process of case's context (Merriam, 1998). Data collection included semi-structured interviews, document mining (project rendering, newspaper clippings, brochures, project notes), and observation of the project's construction progress. Interviews allowed researchers to see the story behind the process (McNamara, 1999). Interviews involved informants ( $n = 3$ ) from the municipality and president of the financial institution. All interviews were taped and transcribed. Interviews lasted approximately one hour. Researchers individually and collectively reviewed, analyzed and discussed finding from the interviews looking for common themes using the constant comparative method (Creswell, 2007).

## **Results**

Results provide lessons learned by both the city and bank. The bank emphasized the importance of communication. They also discussed one area of potential concern namely a process disconnect (i.e., failure to understand bidding process and time for construction projects) on the part of the bank and the benefits derived from the relationship. A key benefit from the city's perspective involved networking opportunities that stemmed from the relationship leading to potential new project partnerships and new project ideas. The bank expressed the process disconnect in terms of potential time frame frustrations. For example, "the public has a ton more hoops they have to jump through. So, that's the one thing from our perspective you know had we been doing it we would have been done two three months ago." We didn't have to bid things out three, four, five times as they do. They also emphasized the importance of project pre-planning and the project agreement. The bank concurred with the importance of communication throughout the process. Finally, they noted the importance of transparency throughout the process.

## **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

The case provides important practical implications. Communication is critical. Throughout the entire project communication should occur frequently. Within this case, the city felt frequently project planning communication should have continued. Additional communication would serve to help educate each partner about the public bidding processes and time required to complete projects with the use of in-kind manpower while maintaining other municipal projects. Frequent communication may serve to mitigate frustrations expressed by partners related to project time frame. Additionally, if a project continues beyond expectations more frequent communication would assist with resolving potential rumors. Finally, more frequent communication will keep all informed as more individuals became involved in the project. Secondly, this case highlights the importance of transparency throughout the process. Within this case the bank felt communication lead to transparency "as potential problems were eliminated by the clear project pre-planning and the establishment of a project agreement." Entering into the project agreement made it easier for the bank to say "yes" as they felt comfortable with the project's scope and quality. In this case, communication led to a good project agreement in which the partners knew exactly what the end project would look like. The importance of relationships provides the final lesson learned from the case. As part of this project, the city benefited from current relationship of their partner. This occurred through the allocation of bank capital to help begin and complete the project. The relationship also provided two additional benefits. First, as similar organizations began to see the project's development downtown they also wanted to become involved in future projects that would meet community needs and provide good exposure. Secondly, the city benefit from their partner's network. The partner provided additional creativity, expertise, and ideas for the current and future project through access to their existing network of organizations. This facilitated additional ideas for new projects and potential partnerships to address community needs. While examining only one case the project provides valuable insights into the use of P3s in rural communities. Understanding this case's context assists those considering P3 usage in their project development with project insights and considerations that may help build a successful P3.

Tricia Jordan, Western Kentucky University, (270) 745-6042, [tricia.jordan@wku.edu](mailto:tricia.jordan@wku.edu)

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# **TRUST, CONSERVATION, AND COMMUNICATION: CHALLENGES OF LETHAL DEER MANAGEMENT BY A CITY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

Eric Knackmuhs, Indiana University

James Farmer, Indiana University

Many U.S. communities, especially in the Midwest, Great Lakes, and East Coast, face ecological damages from overpopulated deer and the attendant management questions they raise (Blackmore Smith, 2016; Burnett, 2016; Kuang, 2016). While many wildlife managers may be reticent to employ lethal management, ecological impacts of overpopulated deer have been well documented ranging from overbrowsing of understory plants (Dolman & Wäber, 2008; Rooney & Waller, 2003) to concern for public safety (Sullivan, 2011) and public health (Kilpatrick, Labonte, & Barclay, 2007).

Clearly, managing for white-tailed deer is increasingly a critical priority for municipal parks and recreation departments, state, and federal agencies. Yet conservation goals, particularly those involving lethal management, cannot be achieved without cooperation from park visitors, residents, and other constituents. Citizen trust is a critical component of support for such policies (Fulton, Skerl, Shank, & Lime, 2004; Shindler & Toman, 2003) with distrust even being linked to opposition to park management (Stern, 2008). As a result, this study attempted to explain factors that influence resident trust in local government on this issue and support for the policy decision (sharpshooting).

Grippy Lake Nature Preserve (GLNP), a 1,180-acre woodland managed by the Bloomington (IN) Parks and Recreation Department recently became embroiled in the controversy of deer herd management when park officials planned a deer herd reduction for the property by hiring professional sharpshooters. Approving the plan was the culmination of four years of research, outreach, meetings, and planning by the City of Bloomington and the joint Bloomington-Monroe County Deer Task Force. However, suboptimal conditions made it difficult to attract deer to bait areas leading to the cull's cancellation. Now, the debate is likely to continue with a new, recently elected mayor and two new city council members.

## **Methods**

Data were collected through a questionnaire mailed to 500 randomly selected Bloomington addresses. Questionnaires were also mailed to the 77 addresses adjacent to the GLNP lying outside the city boundary. Respondents answered questions on their experience with and knowledge of deer, experience visiting GLNP, opinions of the decision-making process, and opinions on the sharpshooting policy. The response rate was 38% with 218 residents returning a completed questionnaire. Data were analyzed using multiple regression to determine which variables predicted support for government trust and support for the sharpshooting policy.

## **Results**

Trust in the City of Bloomington was relatively high with 51% ( $n = 110$ ) of respondents at least slightly agreeing the city could be trusted to properly balance the needs of humans, deer, and natural areas. Despite the contentiousness of the issue in the community, support for sharpshooting was also high with 58% of respondents reporting sharpshooting as either "acceptable" or "among preferred" options for managing the deer population at GLNP.

Multiple regression revealed trust in the City of Bloomington was predicted by respondents' positive evaluation of the Deer Task Force and agreement with scientific research concluding that deer at GLNP are overpopulated to the point where the ecosystem is being damaged. Trusting the city government predicted support for the sharpshooting policy. Respondents with basic under-



standing of forest ecology who had experienced negative impacts of deer firsthand were also more likely to support the sharpshooting policy.

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

Like many communities with overpopulated deer, Bloomington must readdress an emotional and contentious policy decision to achieve conservation goals. The results of this study offer important insights for similar agencies tackling this ecological issue. This study examined trust not just as an independent variable predicting policy support as in many other papers but also as a dependent variable to learn why residents trust or do not trust the city to properly balance the needs of humans, deer, and natural areas. Wildlife managers rightly make decisions informed by scientific studies; however, our results suggest that the public's interpretation of that information is mediated by trust in the agency. Therefore, trust acts as a prerequisite to understanding and supporting a controversial policy. This finding has important implications for communicating with the public. Accordingly, managers should consider how decisions are communicated, as it appears to be as important as the decision itself. Failure to do so could result in a backfire effect.

A backfire effect can occur when those most opposed to a policy become even more entrenched in their opposition after information is shared to the contrary (Nyhan, Reifler, Richey, & Freed, 2014). Our results suggest the presence of a minor backfire effect. In the mailed questionnaire respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the findings of a recent study demonstrating an overpopulation of deer at Griffy Lake (Shelton, Henning, Schultz, & Clay, 2014). Approximately 22% of respondents disagreed with the study's findings and 12% reported they were *less likely* to support the sharpshooting policy after reading the findings.

This backfire effect may be explained by Kahan, Jenkins-Smith, and Braman's (2011) cultural cognition of risk. They explain that the source individuals find most credible is not necessarily the most scientifically sound but the one that fits their worldview and values. Heberlein (2012) argues that such educational "cognitive fixes" tend to fail to change environmental attitudes and behaviors for the same reason. What this means for park managers is that they need to find ways to speak to people's values, particularly those of non-supporters. This could mean moving away from a top-down agency control style of communicating towards multiple-perspective partnerships in communicating with the community.

### **Conclusion**

Contentious issues like lethal deer management pose unique challenges to wildlife managers trying to balance the needs of humans, deer, and natural areas because it is not enough to simply make science-based decisions. Communicating "just the facts" may not help increase public understanding and support if trust is not already established. Furthermore, in the absence of trust a backfire effect is possible. This study demonstrated how trust in the local government was related to trust in the process and trust in the science used to make decisions. Government trust was a significant predictor of policy support. Therefore, it is recommended park managers build, monitor, and maintain trust through public engagement events like visitor appreciation days, volunteering days, and community partnerships (Payton, Fulton, & Anderson, 2005).

Eric Knackmuhs, Indiana University, (201) 543-9628, [eknackmu@indiana.edu](mailto:eknackmu@indiana.edu)

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## EXPERIENCING LEISURE FOR AN ENGAGED LIFE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Shintaro Kono, University of Alberta

Gordon J. Walker, University of Alberta

Hagi Yumiko, Tokai University

There is growing interest in the relationship between leisure and subjective well-being (SWB) (e.g., Freire, 2013; Newman, Tay, & Diener, 2014). Existing evidence indicates that leisure contributes to one's SWB as much as work, family, and finances (Kuykendall, Tay, & Ng, 2015). What remains less clear is: *how* do leisure experiences lead to one's SWB (Iwasaki, 2007)? Answering this question would make it possible to effectively influence people's SWB *through* their leisure. So far, researchers have used available theories to explain linkages between leisure and SWB (e.g., Iwasaki, 2007; Newman et al., 2014). However, this strategy does not allow us to explore different explanations that are relevant to lay people, but are potentially overlooked. Hence, inductive qualitative inquiries can advance this body of knowledge and inform leisure practice. Another limitation of the extant evidence is that most of past studies adopted Western frameworks, such as SWB (e.g., Newman et al., 2014). However, cross-cultural studies indicate that (a) alternative well-being-related concepts exist in non-Western cultures, and (b) these concepts may be relevant to both non-Westerners and Westerners through their leisure experiences (e.g., calmness; Spiers & Walker, 2009). Thus, further non-Western research on this subject is warranted. In Japan, there is a wellbeing-related concept called *ikigai*. It appears unique in that it covers distinct aspects of well-being (e.g., meaning of life, satisfaction, emotions) (Kumano, 2012). Mathews (1996) found this concept applicable to Americans. In past studies, young adults like college students reported a lower *ikigai* level than other age groups (e.g., Cabinet Office of Japan, 1994). Thus, the goal of this study was to develop a substantive theory to explain the relationship between *ikigai* and leisure among Japanese university students.

### Methods

Grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) was adopted to guide inductive theory development. Undergraduate students at a large-size university in Japan were recruited through purposive sampling (Patton, 2002). We first sought diversity among participants (i.e., gender, major, academic year), and then targeted students whose had specific characteristics (e.g., those with low *ikigai* levels). In mid-2015, data were collected through photo-elicitation interviews (PEIs; Tinkler, 2013). The participants provided smartphone pictures related to their *ikigai*. Semi-structured interviews, along with photo-grouping activities, elicited accounts of how they viewed and experienced *ikigai* and what factors, including leisure, affected it. Theoretical saturation was indicated by the concurrent data analysis after 27 PEIs. The interviews lasted, on average, for 106 minutes. A total of 243 pictures were collected. The iterative data analysis process included: coding transcripts paragraph-by-paragraph, clustering codes into abstract categories, making logical links among categories, and identifying sub- and core categories. The photographs made it easier to revisit the large amount of data and compare findings across the cases. Memos were written throughout by the first author that were audited by the second author.

### Results

The analysis suggested that a balance among various experiences made the students' lives *engaged*. An engaged life was a state of *ikigai* where they felt motivated for their lives in general. Personally and socially significant experiences contributed to this state. Two categories of

experiences commonly discussed in a leisure context were (a) enjoying and (b) striving (Table 1). *Enjoying* was present-focused experiences that entailed intrinsic value (e.g., fun, interest, beauty) and produced positive emotions. *Entertaining* provided the students with a small amount of enjoyment on a regular basis (see Hinata's comment). This casual fun experience motivated them for other less enjoying events and helped them distance from other overwhelming experiences. It also filled up their time that was otherwise un-engaged. *Exhilarating* occurred rarely but induced much joy and "jazzed up" a routine college life (see Mizuki's remarks). *Striving* involved a certain level of challenge. Whereas it generated negative immediate emotions (e.g., disappointment), the students, in retrospect, positively evaluated its long-term outcomes. Striving experiences with clear goals resulted in *accomplishing* among the students who then perceived greater self-confidence (see Yoku's case). They also strove for *enriching self* and growing as a person in general (see Naomi's instance). Enjoying much without striving inhibited the students from perceiving a sense of progress. Conversely, striving much without enjoying led students to feel emotionally worn out and demotivated from sticking with their experiences. Thus, a good balance between enjoying and striving experiences was the key to optimal engagement.

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

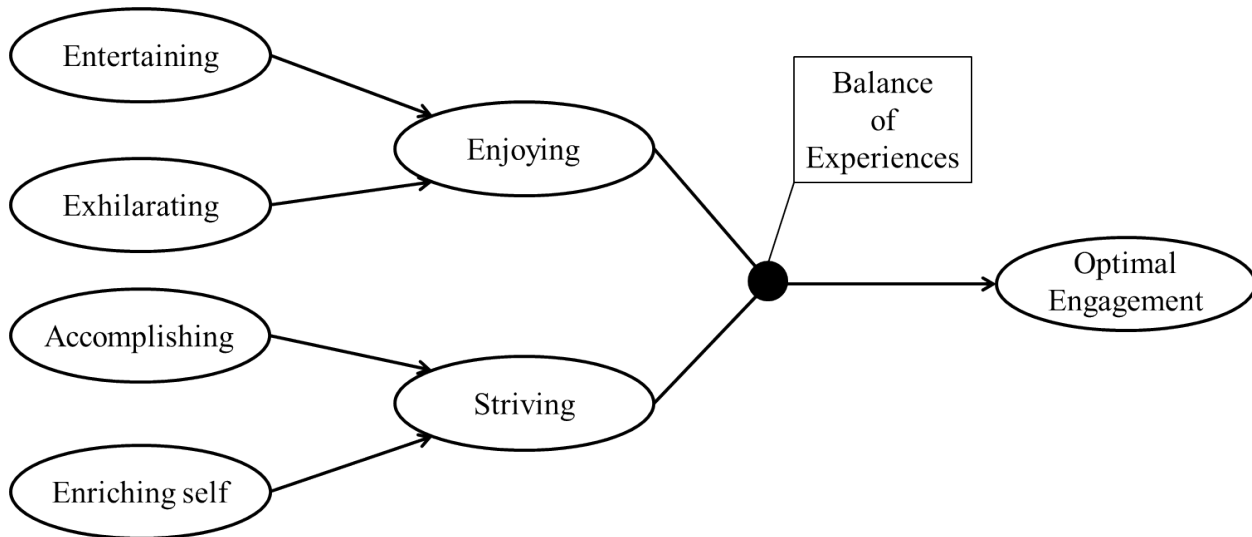
The emerging framework for experiencing leisure for an engaged life (Figure 1) parallels extant theories in the leisure and positive psychology research. Stebbins (2001) defined casual leisure (CL) as hedonic pursuits with minimal commitment and described its benefits as incidental. Although enjoying required little investment, the students purposely used it to keep their lives engaged. This mirrors rejuvenation as a benefit of CL. However, the serious leisure (SL) perspective tends to undermine effects of CL on long-term well-being. This study offers counter evidence that enjoying through leisure is an important factor in students' well-being because it allows them to adjust their engagement level. Similar to striving, Stebbins (2007) identified self-enrichment and achievement as enduring outcomes of SL. What mattered more to the students was, nonetheless, the *process* of grappling with challenges striving experiences involved. In psychology, striving has been studied in the SWB framework (e.g., Sheldon & Elliot, 1999) which is characterized by the predominance of positivity over negativity. This study, however, suggests that negative immediate outcomes are integral part of striving and could be positively evaluated in a long run. Lastly, striving also appears akin to Waterman's (1993) notion of eudaimonia as efforts to realize one's potentiality. The present findings underscore the importance of the balance between hedonic and eudaimonic pursuits.

Leisure practitioners, especially those who work with college students, can implement the present framework in their programming and service delivery. They should focus on the balance between enjoying and striving (and the subcategories). Demands for striving are usually constant in a college life (e.g., studies, varsity athletics, paid work). Leisure is a life domain in which students have greater control over the types of experiences they engage in. Practitioners can help students evaluate what experiences they are involved in across life domains. This will clarify what experiences are lacking or excessive. Then, professionals can inform students of available leisure activities that can supplement missing experiences or counter excessive ones. They may want to design leisure programs conducive to diverse experiences. This experience-based leisure education, consultation, and service can make students' lives more engaged and full of *ikigai*.

**Table 1***A Summary of Categories, Sub-categories, and Example Supporting Quotations*

Category	Sub-category	Example Supporting Quotations
Enjoying	-----	“I think <i>ikigai</i> is basically about feeling vital and feeling like, ‘this is so much fun!’ And hanging out is so fun, isn’t it?” (Violet)
	Entertaining	“[Watching movies alone] is good because it’s easy. ... If I plan to go with someone, we have to check our schedules and set a time. When I feel it bothersome, I just go alone when I can.” (Hinata)
	Exhilarating	“It was our first tournament and we beat many teams, so I was happy though I didn’t play. Because I watched games from outside, I could clearly see each player’s growth. Teammates who weren’t that good at first had grown so much over half a year. ... I was so happy and enjoyed it so much.” (Mizuki)
Striving	-----	“It’s not always fun. We have some difficult time or enjoy hanging out with friends. ... Everything related to our life is <i>ikigai</i> ” (Akihiro)
	Accomplishing	“[Our student group] host events for all students on campus, inviting some celebrities. That’s important. And we can get feedback from many people, which makes me feel accomplished. It reminds me that we are doing something on a large scale.” (Yoku)
	Enriching self	“[I learned from my varsity experience] the never-give-up spirit and ... the importance of not comparing myself to others. Hmm, what else, I became more empathetic. [Being a varsity athlete] feels like enhancing myself.” (Naomi)

*Note.* The parentheses after quotations are interviewees’ pseudonyms. Original quotations in Japanese were translated into English by the first author.

**Figure 1.** An emerging framework to understand leisure experiences for an engaged life.

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## RECREATION-AT-WORK: MORE THAN JUST FUN AND GAMES?

Andrew Lacanienta, Texas A&M University

Mat D. Duerden, Brigham Young University

Stephen H. Courtright, Texas A&M University

Mark A. Widmer, Brigham Young University

Many companies throughout the world offer recreation at work (RAW). This phenomenon ranges from amenities as simple as a foosball table to offerings as extravagant as yoga studios and basketball courts. Little to no research has looked directly at situations where organizations are intentionally directing resources to RAW, thus questions remain such as, why are companies spending money on RAW and are there real, measurable benefits to RAW? In order to explore this question, Duerden, Courtright, and Widmer (n.d.) proposed a theoretical model for RAW (see Figure 1). This model infers a positive relationship between RAW and organizational flourishing (resilience, work engagement [WE], and organizational identification [OI]) through the mediating effect of personal expressiveness (PE) as influenced by leisure as a state of mind (LSM). The intent of this study was to test the RAW Model.

### Methods

Employees from three software companies were invited to complete an online questionnaire. Respondents ( $N = 266$ ) consisted of 205 males (77.1%) and 61 females (22.9%). The average age of the sample was 33.3 ( $SD = 10.10$ ) and was predominantly married (79.7%). The questionnaire measured OI (Mael & Ashforth, 1992), WE (Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010), resilience (Block & Kremen, 1996), PE (Waterman, 1993), and LSM (i.e., intrinsic motivation [Esteve, San Martin, & Lopez, 1999], perceived freedom [Esteve et al., 1999], and positive affect [Waterman, 1993]). Participants were asked to respond to their levels of LSM in the context of both RAW and work activities. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the model.

### Results

The model demonstrated adequate model fit. LSM during both work ( $\beta = .766, p < .001$ ) and RAW ( $\beta = .704, p < .001$ ) had a strong direct effect on PE. Positive relationships were also found between LSM and dependent variables, most of which were mediated by PE. Significant paths from both work ( $\beta = .169, p < .05$ ) and RAW ( $\beta = .164, p < .05$ ) LSM to OI existed. Significant mediation occurred from work perceptions to OI through PE during work responsibilities ( $\beta = .266, p < .001$ ). Although no significant direct paths to WE existed, significant mediation occurred from work perceptions to WE through PE during work responsibilities ( $\beta = .452, p = .001$ ). The final model produced three significant paths to resilience. The first path was a direct effect from work LSM perceptions to resilience ( $\beta = .189, p = .002$ ). The second path included significant mediation occurred from RAW LSM perceptions to resilience through PE during RAW activities ( $\beta = .157, p = .001$ ). Lastly a significant path from work LSM to resilience mediated by PE during RAW ( $\beta = .035, p = .001$ ; see Figure 2).

### Discussion and Implications for Practice

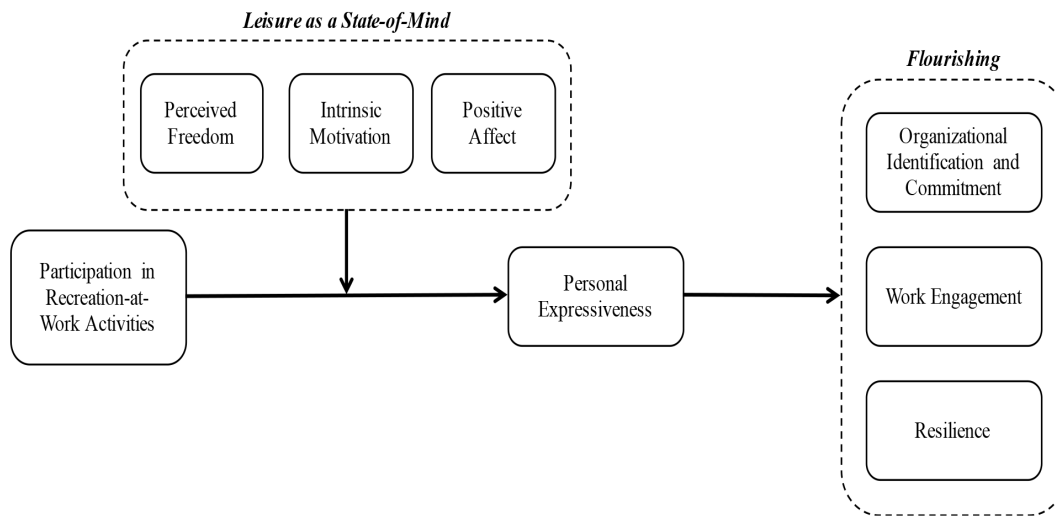
Results indicated four main areas of contributions of work and RAW activities to organizational flourishing. Contributions related to perceptions of work LSM, perceptions of work LSM mediated by PE, perceptions of RAW LSM, and perceptions of RAW LSM mediated by PE. Work duties in and of themselves had a variety of significant relationships including PE during RAW, PE during work, resilience, and OI. So it seems if employees have perceptions of intrinsic motivation, perceived freedom, and positive affect during work responsibilities, it is likely they will also experience greater PE during RAW, PE during work, resilience, and OI. Additionally, when feelings

of intrinsic motivation, perceived freedom, and positive affect during work activities lead to PE we see additional benefits. PE during work mediates significant relationships between perceptions of work duties, WE, and OI. So not only do we see relationships with resilience and OI, but when employees feel more personally expressive during work we also see a positive relationship with increased WE. RAW appears to provide added value to the workplace in similar ways. Feelings of intrinsic motivation, perceived freedom, and positive affect during RAW have a significant relationship with PE during RAW and OI. Now when those positive perceptions have a positive relationship with PE during RAW we see an additional relationship with resilience appear. We are not insinuating RAW is good and work is bad or RAW provides certain benefits work duties alone cannot. We learned RAW might work hand in hand with work duties to provide increased benefits to employees within an organization. While employees who feel intrinsic motivation, perceived freedom, and positive affect during work have positive relationships with resilience, OI, and WE, RAW may add to these benefits by way of increased feelings of resilience and OI. This also brings interesting light into intrinsic motivation, perceived freedom, and positive affect. Future research might investigate how organizations facilitate these feelings in the workplace and how that might benefit the organization. This study did not measure the presence or absence of RAW or work duties in relation to resilience, WE, or OI. It measured LSM during both RAW and work situations and how that related to the previously stated individual outcomes. So LSM plays a large role in whether or not the outcomes are reached. Further research might explore these relationships in more depth. Understanding the RAW Model can help parks and recreation practitioners understand the importance of facilitating LSM perceptions during both work and non-work situations. This in return may be related to increased employee retention and commitment. Additionally understanding RAW may be a first step to creating relevant RAW based jobs for parks and recreation practitioners. Companies are spending money on RAW and few companies have skilled professionals to manage it. Parks and recreation professionals are skilled at designing and managing meaningful experiences. RAW is relatively new a space where practitioners might apply this skill.

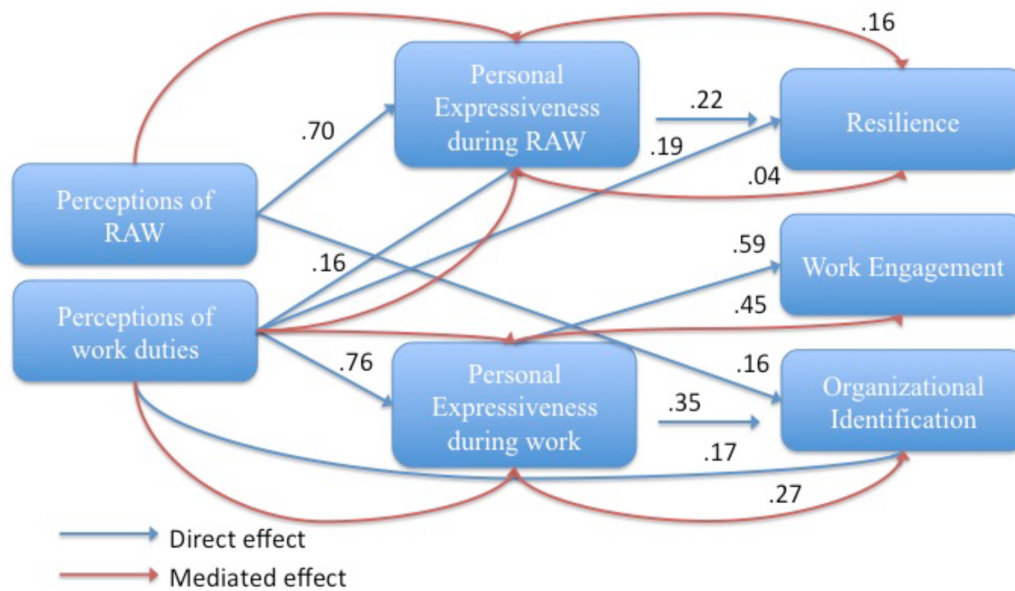
## **Conclusion**

Although our sample size was sufficient for the SEM path model a larger sample would have allowed for a more in depth analysis with more latent variables. Fortunately we were able to aggregate scores into composite observed variables and find significant results. This study was limited to self-report data and participants self selected into the study. Future research might address this limitation by conducting an experimental design with a control group without access to RAW amenities and a test group with access to RAW amenities. Participants were also all from software related companies; therefore results are not generalizable to the other types of companies. For this study we purposefully chose only software companies in order to control for industry characteristics. While there are those who hypothesize why organizations provide RAW, this study provides initial empirical evidence of reasons employers may want to begin or continue RAW initiatives. RAW activities may be the missing piece in the puzzle of greater productivity. Providing a break and the means to enjoy this break may give employees the resilience they need to get the job done more efficiently therefore adding to the bottom line.

Andrew Lacanienta, Texas A&M University, (80) 709-8926, [a.lacanienta@tamu.edu](mailto:a.lacanienta@tamu.edu)



**Figure 1.** Recreation-at-work Model



**Figure 2.** RAW Path Model

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## RECREATION-AT-WORK: THE EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

Andrew Lacanienta, Texas A&M University

Mat D. Duerden, Brigham Young University

Stephen H. Courtright, Texas A&M University

Mark A. Widmer, Brigham Young University

Many companies are beginning to offer recreation-at-work (RAW; e.g., ping-pong tables, basketball courts, massage chairs) as a perk of employment, but how do employees actually perceive these offerings? One employee's response represents the feelings of many, "I think [RAW] definitely has a positive impact on the organization and its employees." Yet, some employees believe RAW is negative. One employee said, "At times I think we waste too much time doing [RAW]." So how do employees truly feel about RAW? The purpose of this study was to increase our understanding of RAW from employees' perspectives.

### Methods

Employees ( $N = 266$ ) from three software companies in the western United States participated in the study and consisted of 205 males (77.1%) and 61 females (22.9%). The average age of the sample was 33.3 ( $SD = 10.10$ ) and was predominantly married (79.7%). Following an online questionnaire, a single qualitative question read, "We would appreciate hearing any thoughts you have about RAW, seeing it is a relatively new practice. Does it make a positive or negative impact in your life and/or your organization? What makes some RAW activities better than others? Should organizations be providing RAW activities?" Nine responses were deleted due to invalid or irrelevant information while 107 participants failed to provide an answer providing ( $N = 150$ ) for analysis. Grounded Theory (i.e., open, axial, selective coding) was used to analyze the data and explore the themes it produced.

### Results

The data produced eight codes: positive perceptions, health, positive distraction, team synergy, productivity, organizational commitment, negative perceptions, and constraints. Codes were grouped into three themes: positive aspects, negative aspects, and constraints.

*Positive aspects.* Employees' perceptions about RAW were largely positive. RAW seems to be related to greater perceptions of health, positive distraction, increased employee relatedness, productivity, and commitment to the organization. The first code was positive perceptions. Employees said, "I love our RAW programs," and "I think [RAW] definitely has a positive impact." The second code, health, related to feelings of healthy lifestyles. Employees said, "[RAW] helps keep healthcare costs down for both the company and myself," "I think RAW . . . helps us stay healthy and active," and "I appreciate the support for a healthier lifestyle." The third code, positive distraction, was evidenced by quotes such as, "It's great to break up the monotony of the day" and "I think that RAW helps give employees' minds a break, which allows them to put more focus into their job." Furthermore, the fourth code, team synergy, hinted RAW may facilitate new relationships or help established teams to grow closer. For example, "[RAW] creates bonds and opens lines of communication at work that wouldn't be there otherwise" and "[RAW] activities help me feel part of my department's team and work together better." Recreation may also create a liminal space (Turner, 1982) where employee and employer are on an even playing field. One employee said, "I realized my boss and I have a lot more in common and we are more like friends now." Between positive distraction and increased team synergy, employees may actually be more productive and committed to the organization. Twenty-three percent of respondents hinted at a relationship between RAW and productivity, the fifth code. For example, employees stated, "A break from time to time [to] do something different allows me to refocus on my work and be more productive,"

“[RAW] helps me manage work stress better...I’m more creative and clear thinking afterwards... I do my best work afterwards” and “Without any breaks or recreation, the job can be very monotonous and it is easy to lose focus or glaze over... [RAW] allows my mind to clear and my energies to refocus on the task at hand.” The sixth code was organizational commitment. RAW may help with commitment to the organization by way of retention or recruitment. This was demonstrated in quotes such as, “[RAW] is one of the biggest reasons it would be difficult to convince me to take a job elsewhere” and “I think [RAW] makes a positive impact on recruiting.”

*Negative aspects.* The seventh code was negative perceptions. While it seems the positives outweigh the negatives, negative aspects still may play a role in employees’ perceptions of RAW. Although there are hypothesized benefits to participating in RAW, some employees feel it is unproductive. For example, “At times, I think we waste too much time doing RAW.” Lastly, some employees may prefer to have more compensation instead of RAW. One employee said, “I care a lot more about pay than at-work recreation.”

*Constraints.* The eighth code was constraints. Some employees may perceive RAW positively, but feel constrained from participating. One employee said, “I think that it makes a positive impact on my company . . . but I’m personally too busy doing my work to participate.” Although RAW may be related to positive benefits, some employees feel they may be looked down upon if they participate in RAW. For example, “If I did participate in [RAW], it would reflect negatively on me due to the expectations of my team leaders/managers.”

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

This study sought to better understand employees’ perceptions of RAW. Representative quotes suggest RAW was largely accepted by respondents and may be related to positive outcomes. Positive perceptions seem to relate with perceptions of health, teamwork, and a positive distraction from work. These proximal outcomes then seem to have a relationship with distal outcomes of productivity and organizational commitment. While employees largely agreed with and appreciate RAW there was also mention of a negative side to RAW employers and practitioners need to be aware of. Practical implications of this study may guide human resource representatives and researchers to create intentional RAW experiences to further facilitate desired outcomes. As professionals in an *experience economy* (Pine & Gilmore, 1999) parks and recreation practitioners are experts at providing meaningful experiences. This places them in an excellent position to begin working in RAW related careers. Jobs in RAW may become increasingly relevant as more companies see the benefits of and begin offering RAW. Understanding employees’ perceptions of RAW may increase the marketability of parks and recreation professionals for these types of job positions. Further research may continue to explore employee and employer perceptions of RAW as well as specific relationships and outcomes of RAW. Limitations for this study largely relate to the questionnaire. Data were collected using only one question and may not have elicited the depth of data necessary to make concrete conclusions. Recreation and leisure amenities may become an important part of the workplace. Additionally, offering these amenities may provide job opportunities for parks and recreation professionals. These activities may possibly become another piece of the pie next to salary and benefits as potential employees look at hiring packages. It may be beneficial for professionals to understand RAW offerings as they position themselves for future job positions.

Andrew Lacanienta, Texas A&M University, (801) 709-8926, a.lacanienta@tamu.edu



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## **PARENTAL PERMISSION AND CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION AS MEDIATORS BETWEEN BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

Jong Seon Lee, Seoul National University

Robin Moore, North Carolina State University

Perver Baran, North Carolina State University

Jason Bocarro, North Carolina State University

### **Introduction**

An increasing amount of literature examines how the built environment (BE) supports or restricts children's outdoor physical activity (PA). In the domain of neighborhood design, studies have examined walking behavior in the association of new urbanism design principles with 3Ds framework; Density, land use Diversity, and pedestrian friendly Design (Cervero & Kockelman, 1997; Cervero, Sarmiento, Jacoby, Gomez, & Neiman, 2009). When homes are on small lots near amenities, the proximity make walking trips more feasible. Mixed use increases proximity (shorten trip distances), and thereby increases active travel. When street designs are well-connected designs and pedestrian-friendly, they provide a direct and more pleasant trip. However, most research tried to find direct relationship between BE and children's PA; however, parents grant or withhold license of going outside. Parents who know that children are vulnerable to danger from traffic and crime increase their restriction, which decreases children's outdoor activity (Kytta, 2004; Prezza, Alparone, Cristallo, & Luigi, 2005). Thus, it is critical to examine how parents decision work as a mediator; get influenced by BE features and affect children's PA behavior. This study mainly targets (1) identifying associations of BE, children's perception and attitude with children's PA behaviors, and (2) examining the role of parental permission and children's perception as mediators in the relationship between BE and PA.

### **Methods**

A group administered survey was conducted with 4th-5th grades, 367 children in conventional suburban and new urbanist neighborhoods. The period of approximately 10–12 years of age often marks a steep decline in PA. This is also a period when parental license for children to engage in PA without adult supervision increases. (Jago et al., 2009). Questionnaires were developed from validated tools and comprised of the pattern of children's PA (Kowalski, Crocker, & Faulkner, 1997); perception of neighborhood physical environment (Evenson et al., 2006) and social environment (McDonald, 2007); attitude toward walking/biking; and household profile. Height and weight were obtained from the schools' annual physical exam. Built environment variables such as distance to school, children's population density, mixed land use, street, intersection and sidewalk density, and PA locations were measured within a quarter mile buffer of each participant's home in ArcGIS. The number of PA destinations such as parks, greenway, trails, stream, pond, sports field, YMCA, school, shop, indoor sports facilities (martial arts, dance), cemetery, and bike lane were systematically counted (Figure 1).

### **Results**

#### *1. Difference in BE and Demographics by Parental Permission*

One third of participants (30.8%) lived in new urbanist neighborhoods. Almost 50% of participants were 10 years old ( $M=10.16$ ,  $SD=0.71$ ). Proportions of male and female students were similar. Two thirds of the students (67.8%) reported they had parental permission to go out on their own. The results from chi-square suggested that parental permission is more strongly associated with new urbanist ( $\chi^2 = 3.15$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p = .076$ ) than conventional suburban neighborhoods, and with white children ( $\chi^2 = 4.99$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p = .025$ ). Parental permission is also associated with longer street

lengths ( $t = 2.13, p = .034$ ), more intersections ( $t = 1.86, p = .064$ ), and more PA locations ( $t = 1.81, p = .071$ ).

### *2. Roles of Parental Permission in Children's Perception of Built Environment*

T-test showed that children with permission had positive perception of the safety of walking/biking in their neighborhoods ( $t = 3.08, df = 178, p = .002$ ). They also recognized more PA resources such as sports equipment at home ( $t = 2.24, df = 365, p = .026$ ) and sidewalks in their neighborhoods ( $t = 2.45, df = 210, p = .015$ ). Under social environments, children with permission perceived that their neighborhood environment was more socially cohesive. Children with permission tended to enjoy walking or biking to places (other than school) independently ( $t = 6.45, df = 190, p = .000$ ). Finally, children with permission had significantly higher PA score than their counterpart ( $t = 2.49, df = 365, p = .013$ ).

### *3. Influences of Built Environment, Parental Permission and Children's Perception on Physical Activity Score*

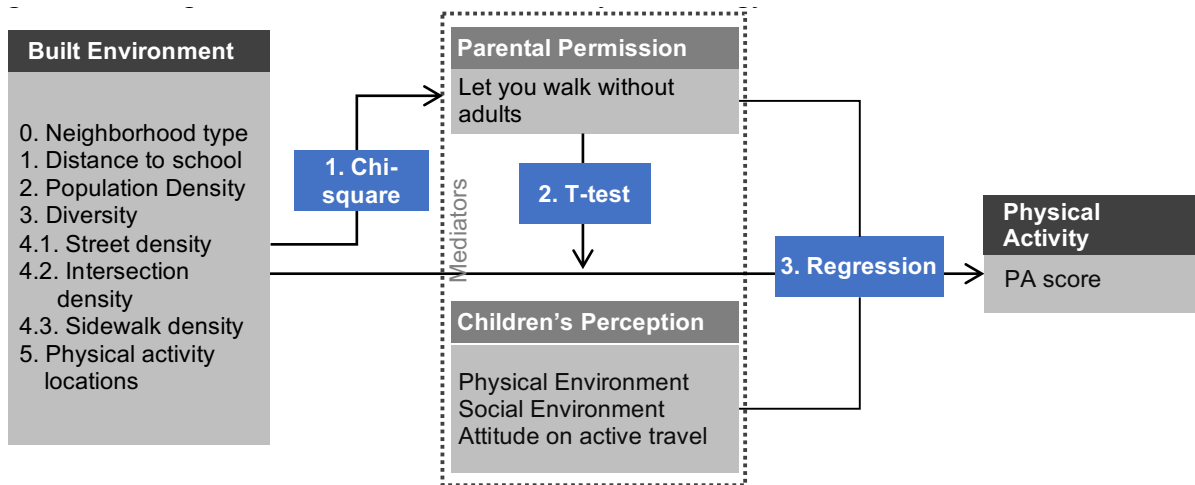
Finally, a binomial logistic regression ( $R^2 = 0.326$ ) predicting odds probability of the PA indicated that following items significantly predicted higher PA; neighborhood type ( $\beta = 1.38, p = .06$ ), parental permission ( $\beta = 1.34, p = .05$ ), often see other children playing ( $\beta = 1.46, p = .00$ ), parents allow to bike on my own ( $\beta = 1.34, p = .05$ ), and easy to walk to transit ( $\beta = 1.26, p = .04$ ).

## **Discussion**

In the series of analysis, neighborhood type was a consistently significant factor predicting children's PA and parental permission. Neighborhood type is considered a composite of sub-factors of distance, density, diversity, design, and destination access. It is important to know how each component predicts PA as well as how the combined pattern has an impact on PA. The results indicates significant associations between parental permission and children's recognition of the PA resources, positive perception/attitude on being outdoors. Items regarding perceived environment such as safety, facilities near the home, and transportation appeared to be important correlates of higher PA. In other words, children with permission perceived their neighborhood good place for PA, as a result, led to show higher PA levels. This suggested that parental permission and perception were found to mediate between BE and PA.

## **Implications for Practice**

From a recent guide (CDC, 2011), two strategies will be useful in the current study context to increase PA in the community: (1) social support interventions and (2) street/community scale urban design and PA location access. Social support interventions in community focus on building and maintaining social networks that provide supportive relationships for PA behavior change. Intervention components include setting up a "buddy" system or making "contracts" with others to complete specified levels. Along with the companionship system, parents' awareness of the positive impact of children's autonomy should be raised by schools' educational programs. Street-scale urban design supporting PA in small geographic areas includes enhancing sidewalk connectivity, street lighting and safety of street crossings, and traffic calming. Community-scale urban design supporting PA in larger geographic areas includes infrastructure projects improving connectivity of streets and bike lanes, modifying zoning regulations and sub-division ordinances for mixed land. Building or enhancing facilities for PA can require a great deal of resources. Increasing access to existing PA locations and providing additional informational outreach about existing resources will be critical.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework and Data Analyses Strategy

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## RECOMMENDATIONS BY OLDER ADULTS CONCERNING COMMUNITY LEISURE SERVICE DELIVERY

Amy Lorek, Penn State University

John Dattilo, Penn State University

Jacqueline Mogle, Penn State University

Understanding and responding to age-related challenges is a responsibility of individuals and their families; however, communities have long recognized their role in supporting and assisting elders by offering information and services to meet their needs and address challenges (United States Older Americans Act of 1965). Recently, and more widely, the World Health Organization (WHO) called for “ageing well” to be a global priority (WHO, 2014). Interventions and programs are not universal in their application across age groups. Programs designed with older adults specifically in mind offer opportunities to customize programs to meet the needs of such a heterogeneous group. Approaching and involving communities in the research process, often referred to as *community engaged research*, is a valuable strategy for improving health (Clinical and Translational Science Awards Consortium, 2011). Community-engaged research embraces the notion that since many social determinants of health exist within a community, community members should be included on study teams as key informants to identify challenges as well as practical solutions. A community engaged approach is effective in understanding barriers and facilitators of healthy aging and related lifestyle interventions since the approach includes those who are actively involved in the process of aging (Dong, Chang, Wong, & Simon, 2011).

Dattilo et al. (2015) conducted several studies to learn about ways to engage local older adults where they usually congregate to understand their health concerns and develop programs that assist them in maintaining healthy lives and pursuing leisure. During a series of focus groups and a public meeting we listened to their concerns related to challenges of aging and pursuit of healthy lifestyles that embrace leisure. Through this community-engaged process we learned about ways to improve service delivery and develop more effective programs. The purpose of this study was to synthesize recommendations for age-appropriate resources and leisure services made by older adults across multiple studies and community settings.

### Method

*Participants.* 163 community dwelling adults participated in an exploratory study. Some participants were recruited to join focus groups based on two criteria: adults who regularly (at least 2/week) used senior centers (4 groups, 8-10 individuals each group,  $n = 34$ ), and others were recruited who did not access senior centers (2 groups, 10 and 11 individuals respectively,  $n = 21$ ). These participants along with new recruits were invited to join small group member check focus groups (7 groups, 8-10 individuals each,  $n = 59$ ) to validate data from initial focus groups. Also, 49 older adults participated in a public meeting conducted as a large group member check session that involved volunteers responding to themes generated from previous sessions.

All participants were from a one-county area composed of rural, small town, and one urban area (population approximately 105,000). Consistent with demographics of the area, participants were 97% white. Not all participants indicated their age ( $n = 7$ ) but recruitment targeted individuals 60 and older. Reported ages ranged from 63 to 95 (<60 years, 5%; 60-70 years, 23%; 70-80 years, 34%; 80+ years, 37%) with 78.5% women.

*Data collection.* Data were collected from six initial small group focus groups, seven small group member check sessions, and one large group member check session. Data included: (a) notes recorded on paper mounted on an easel during sessions, (b) audio recordings of sessions and (c) written notes from participants in the large group session.



## Results

Through a constant comparative and iterative process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) data were organized into five categories that emphasize what respondents wanted available to them; two related to resources and three to services. Respondents expressed (a) recommendations about what information they wanted for aging relevant resources, and (b) desired resource delivery strategies. Three types of services were identified and include (a) content for programs, (b) site structure, and (c) created culture. Together these categories summarize differences in types of resources and services respondents expressed.

Data were also examined for major themes which emphasize similarities across the categories. The five themes were (i) social connection and engaging with others, (ii) flexibility, (iii) self-development, (iv) contributions, and (v) access.

## Discussion and Implications for Practice

Data associated with the categories offer insight into leisure service delivery with an older adult audience. Informational resources requested by respondents and ways to deliver that information may assist service providers on what and how to supply information to community elders. Relative to services, the older adults offered ideas for program content, program sites (e.g. senior center), and desirable culture associated with leisure services delivery.

The themes offer perspective for overarching concerns of respondents and recommendations for practitioners interested in program development. Respondents consistently emphasized that *social connection and engaging with others* is important to their community leisure experience. Practitioners working with older adults either as volunteers or as program participants may elect to plan programs or offer services that support and nurture connections with others. Participants also value programs and services that offer *flexibility*. More specifically, hours of operation, the ability to drop-in at their convenience, and to recreate independently or with groups. There also was consistency with an orientation toward *self-development*. Participants reinforced the idea that resources, programs, and services offer opportunities for learning new things and to continue to keep their brains active were important incentives for engagement. They also offered ideas about the desire to continue to make *contributions* to the community either to the welfare of others (e.g. volunteering) or by working part-time. Ideas about information and individual *access* were communicated. Access reflects an orientation to physical accessibility of programs, sites, and facilities (e.g., parking, bathrooms, transportation), and the provision of information in multiple formats (e.g., internet, person-to-person). Responding to access needs and desires of older adults may be valuable.

This study presents a synthesis of recommendations made about leisure service delivery by community dwelling older adults while they attended focus groups and a public meeting. Their cumulative comments offer recommendations for identification of resource and service priorities for older adults seeking recreation and leisure experiences. Leisure service providers may find these perspectives useful for anticipating and meeting needs of older adults in their community.

Amy Lorek, Penn State University, (814) 863-7903, ael13@psu.edu

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## **CAMPUS OUTDOOR RECREATION PROGRAMS: BARRIERS TO REACHING UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES**

Geneviève Marchand, Humboldt State University

Paul Sanford, The Wilderness Society

Research shows that time spent outdoors in nature can improve mental and physical health, academic performance, social inclusion and quality of life (Bowler, Buyung-Ali, Knight & Pullin, 2010; Kaplan, 1995; Louv, 2005; Thompson & Aspinall, 2011). Unfortunately, participation in outdoor recreation and education activities does not reflect the diversity of America (Pease, 2015). White Americans, particularly those who are more affluent, have historically had more opportunities to participate in outdoor recreation and education activities. Non-whites, particularly those living in urban areas, often have fewer opportunities. In some cases, this is because they live in “park poor” areas (Wen, Zhang, Harris, Holt, & Croft, 2013). In others, it is because there are relatively few outdoor recreation and education programs and leaders that provide services to their communities. Finally, some people feel uncomfortable or disinterested in outdoor activities for cultural and social reasons. As a result, these historically underserved populations may not reap the benefits of spending time learning and playing outdoors. The purpose of this study was to research the question of whether university outdoor programs are able to expand their operations beyond the university and provide outdoor programs to historically underserved citizens in their local communities. Specifically, this study sought to understand the challenges that programs faced, as well as resources needed to reach outside their traditional student population.

### **Methods**

To gain a richer understanding of the topic, focus groups were conducted during the 2015 Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education conference. Two focus groups were led simultaneously with supervisors from campus outdoor recreation programs to discuss underserved communities in outdoor recreation. A total of 11 participants attended these focus groups. The programs were mainly from public institutions, with a spread in student population size from 7,000 students to over 30,000 students.

A series of questions was used to lead the discussion. These questions mainly addressed their definition of underserved communities, barriers to serving non-student population, and specifically barriers to serving underserved communities. Questions concerning perceived benefits and resources needed were also examined. Two different individuals took notes during each group. The two researchers who facilitated each focus groups analyzed the notes, coding themes as they arose. A third researcher triangulated the findings and resolved differences in the themes.

### **Results**

Our research identified common barriers that university programs experienced in providing outdoor programs beyond the university context. The most popular barriers include administration of programs, logistics and community competition (see Table 1). Many programs reported conflicts in the mission of their programs and the potential of serving underserved communities. Campus outdoor programs are generally funded by student fees with the goal to serve students, making it difficult to justify the use of funds outside the campus population. Another common barrier described by programs was the difficulty of finding and training professional outdoor leaders who have the skills and qualifications to work with underserved communities. Transportation to the program location and costs of trips was also cited as a logistical barrier. Risk management issues, especially insurance coverage for off-campus communities was also a common theme of campus outdoor programs. Finally, many programs reported that they had non-compete clause with local outdoor outfitters, which made it difficult to serve off-campus communities.

Participants of this study were also asked to identify resources on and off campus that would help them extend services to underserved population. The most common resources needed by programs were leadership, diversity training, funding, and community partnerships. Supervisors mentioned the need to hire and train more outdoor leaders. Specifically, a need for those leaders to better understand underserved communities was mentioned. Including more diversity training was stated as an important strategy to achieve this. Some of the programs cited the need for more funding, specifically moneys that would allow them to do outreach. This is especially important for programs that are solely student funded. Finally, connecting with the right community partners and building partnerships to reach out to underserved communities was stated as a central step to serve various populations.

### **Implication for Practice**

With a better understanding of the challenges faced and the strategies used, we hope to increase the number of universities that provide these services, and expand the outdoor recreation and education opportunities available to historically underserved communities. This study identified some specific barriers that campus outdoor programs can review and address when possible. For example, we suggest that program supervisors have a larger discussion with their administrators about their mission and the benefits to campus students. Partnerships are also essential to outreach efforts and can help mitigate administrative and logistical challenges. Finally, increasing diversity training and outreach to future outdoor leaders is critical to provide programming that is sustainable.

The knowledge of barriers common to campus outdoor programs is a step closer to offering outdoor recreation to underserved population. By combining this information to the knowledge we possess about why underserved population participate less in outdoor recreation, campuses can better address appropriate strategies. Collegial outdoor programs are uniquely placed to provide their local communities with outdoor recreation opportunities because of their expertise and young future professionals. On the same side, they also have a role to educate young open-minded leaders to work with diverse population. A greater focus on underserved populations by campus outdoor programs can be an important resource for students and the local communities.

Geneviève Marchand, Humboldt State University, (707) 826-4591, [genevieve.marchand@humboldt.edu](mailto:genevieve.marchand@humboldt.edu)

**Table 1***Barriers to Serving Underserved Communities*

Themes	Summary
Mission	Campus outdoor programs' mission does not include serving non-college students or reaching out to underserved communities
Risk management	Insurance policies may not cover outdoor trips for non-college students
Transportation	Need new risk management policies specific to non-college students Transporting minors in college vehicles is not always allowed
Administration	Participants may not have access to transportation Administrative priorities do not align with outreach Time is lacking/ other priorities
Trip leaders	Marketing outside the campus is not a priority Need for more professional outdoor leaders with a better understanding of diverse population High turnover of outdoor leaders
Funding	Employment laws are a burden to hire and pay outdoor leaders Programs are student funded which limits how the money can be spent
Access	Need more funding dedicated to outreach Obtaining permits to access public land can be challenging Access to equipment or facilities can be challenging

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## **PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS IN PARKS AND RECREATION: A 10-YEAR FOLLOW-UP STUDY**

Michael Mulvaney, Illinois State University

Well-designed employee performance appraisals (PA) assume great importance by providing park and recreation agencies with information that can guide administrative and developmental decision-making about their most important asset—their human resources. Despite their importance, an agency's PA system can often be viewed by employees and management as a frustrating and unfair process. These frustrations are largely attributed to a reliance on PA instruments that (1) are not job related, (2) have confusing or unclear rating levels, and (3) are viewed as subjective and biased by staff. Responding to these issues, a study was established in 2004 to identify the steps involved in creating a pay-for-performance appraisal system for a public park and recreation agency (Elmhurst Park District) (see Mulvaney, McKinney, & Grodsky, 2008). Specifically, the study utilized an employee participatory framework that (1) identified a systematic procedure for creating PA instruments, (2) determined the appropriate training necessary for those conducting a PA interview, (3) implemented the performance reviews using the developed instruments and the results of the appraisal training, (4) examined the employees' attitudes toward the newly developed system compared to the previous appraisal system, and (5) developed a model for the distribution of merit pay increases that awarded pay increases based on performance. The participatory framework was implemented where every full-time employee was actively involved in each phase of the PA system's development. In an effort to assess the long-term effects of the Elmhurst Park District's PA system the purpose of this (10-year follow-up) study was to examine the implementation and administration of their agency's PA system over the past 10 years. In particular, a 10-year comparison of staff's reactions toward the PA system was completed.

### **Methods**

Drawing from existing management literature on pay-for-performance systems and the implementation of a participatory framework this 10-year follow-up study sought to address the following questions: To what extent are the employees' (1) overall satisfaction, (2) perceptions of accuracy of the PA ratings, (3) perceptions of procedural justice, and (4) perceptions of distributive justice with the PA system different in 2014-15 compared to 2005 and the original system in 2004? Employees' attitudes toward the newly developed system were assessed due to research suggesting that even the most well developed pay-for-performance system is predisposed to problems, if it is viewed negatively by staff (Ahmed, Mohammad, & Islam, 2013; Dewettinck & Van Dijk, 2013; Kim & Rubianty, 2011). In particular, researchers have suggested that employees' PA reactions are closely linked to the acceptance and use of an appraisal system as well as the validity of an appraisal (Kuvaas, 2011). This study sought to understand not only the immediate (i.e., 2005 data) but longer term (i.e., 2014-15) attitudes toward the appraisal system. The Elmhurst Park District (Elmhurst, IL) was selected as the public park and recreation agency for this study. The Elmhurst Park District employs approximately 58 full-time, 235 part-time, and 325 seasonal employees and is governed by seven, publicly elected board of commissioners. Data was collected at three points: (1) in 2004, prior to the start of the pay-for-performance workshops ( $n = 56$ ); (2) in 2005 at the conclusion of the workshops and initial implementation of the newly developed system ( $n = 56$ ), and; (3) in 2014-15, 10 years after implementation of the system ( $n = 51$ ). Variables of interest to the study were measured using Keeping and Levy's (2000) PA reaction instrument. MANOVAs were conducted to examine the effect PA system type/implementation year (original, 2005, &

2015) had on the four appraisal domains (satisfaction w/system, perceived accuracy, procedural, & distributive justice).

## **Results**

The multivariate result was significant for all three of the “satisfaction with the system” items, indicating satisfaction with the original system (2004) was significantly lower than employees’ satisfaction with the newly developed system in 2005 and 2015 (see Table 1). MANOVA calculations yielded significant results for two of the five perceived PA accuracy items: “the feedback was an accurate evaluation of my performance” ( $F(2,136)=6.43, p = .002$ ) and “my manager’s evaluation matched my evaluation” ( $F(2,136)=3.42, p = .036$ ). Significant differences were found across all four of the procedural justice of the PA system perceptions (see Table 1). Three of the four items found that employees’ procedural justice perceptions were higher in 2005 and 2015 compared their perceptions with the original system (2004) while one item (“the instrument and rating scale were appropriate”) indicated employees’ perceptions were significantly higher from 2004 to 2005 and from 2005 to 2015. Multivariate analysis found significant differences across all four items of the distributive justice of the PA system domain, indicating employees’ perceptions in 2015 were significantly higher than their perceptions in 2004 or 2005.

## **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

The findings suggest (1) staff are more satisfied with their PA system today (2015) than they were 10 years ago or with the original system, (2) modest support for the perceived accuracy of the appraisal system raise continued concerns over the subjectivity of PAs in the service-driven field of recreation and highlight the need for agencies to consider ongoing training/education on defining their performance standards, (3) staff continue to support the process and procedures of the appraisal system since its development and implementation in 2005, and (4) distributive justice perceptions have improved since the original system (2004) and continued to improve after its first year of implementation (2005). These findings provide additional support to the value of employee participation in the creation of an agency’s PA system. While guided by the literature, a core element of the newly developed PA system was the utilization of an employee participation model to ensure the employees were actively involved in the creation of the agency’s PA system. From the job analyses to the development of a merit pay distribution model, employees were engaged in every phase. One could argue the ongoing level of employee engagement assumes an even greater importance given some of the current challenges in the workplace. In particular, the economic recession has negatively impacted the workplace in several ways (i.e., satisfaction, turnover intentions, employee disengagement, etc.). Largely attributed to increased workloads stemming from agency downsizing and limited to non-existent opportunities for merit-based increases or promotions, employees during this time period are feeling both overwhelmed and underappreciated. These trends could lead to the frustrated workers being inclined to seek other employment opportunities. Ensuring employees are engaged in various agency activities, such as their agency’s PA system, can be a strategy to address these concerns (Ferri-Reed, 2010; Gupta & Kumar, 2013). Taken collectively, the long-term support found for this PA system and the implementation of the employee participatory framework suggests the system could serve as a model for several other agencies.

Michael Mulvaney, Illinois State University, (217) 519-1983, [mamulva@ilstu.edu](mailto:mamulva@ilstu.edu)

**Table 1***Means, Standard Deviations, and Performance Appraisal (PA) Year Differences*

	<b>2004</b> (Original PA)		<b>2005</b> (Newly Dev. PA)		<b>2015</b> (10yrs after implementation)	
<b>Overall Satisfaction w/the PA System</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
The performance review system does a good job of indicating how an employee has performed.	3.77 <sup>a</sup>	1.55	4.39 <sup>b</sup>	1.20	4.75 <sup>b</sup>	.87
The company has an excellent PA system.	3.30 <sup>a</sup>	1.56	4.29 <sup>b</sup>	1.09	4.69 <sup>b</sup>	.86
The review system provides a fair and unbiased measure of the level of an employee's performance.	3.57 <sup>a</sup>	1.51	4.23 <sup>b</sup>	1.12	4.37 <sup>b</sup>	1.00
<b>(Perceived) Accuracy of PA System</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
The feedback was an accurate evaluation of my performance.	4.55 <sup>a</sup>	2.08	5.05 <sup>a</sup>	1.76	5.80 <sup>b</sup>	1.28
I believe the feedback was correct.	4.80 <sup>a</sup>	1.95	5.14 <sup>a</sup>	1.64	5.48 <sup>a</sup>	1.38
The feedback was consistent w/my performance.	4.66 <sup>a</sup>	2.07	4.97 <sup>a</sup>	1.79	5.54 <sup>a</sup>	1.34
My manager accurately judged my performance.	4.82 <sup>a</sup>	1.90	5.37 <sup>a</sup>	1.69	5.70 <sup>a</sup>	1.36
My manager's evaluation matched my evaluation.	4.36 <sup>a</sup>	2.05	5.16 <sup>b</sup>	1.85	5.61 <sup>b</sup>	1.43
<b>Procedural Justice Perceptions of PA System</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
The instrument and rating scale used were fair.	4.55 <sup>a</sup>	1.79	5.41 <sup>b</sup>	1.69	5.77 <sup>b</sup>	1.84
The process used to evaluate was fair.	4.43 <sup>a</sup>	1.78	5.38 <sup>b</sup>	1.46	5.65 <sup>b</sup>	1.67
The instrument and rating scale were appropriate.	4.38 <sup>a</sup>	1.77	5.24 <sup>b</sup>	1.59	5.94 <sup>c</sup>	1.56
The process used was appropriate.	4.46 <sup>a</sup>	1.78	5.24 <sup>b</sup>	1.55	5.83 <sup>b</sup>	1.64
<b>Distributive Justice Perceptions of PA System</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
The performance review was fair.	3.59 <sup>a</sup>	1.46	3.92 <sup>a</sup>	1.10	4.73 <sup>b</sup>	1.63
I agree with my final rating.	3.38 <sup>a</sup>	1.57	4.11 <sup>b</sup>	1.06	4.81 <sup>c</sup>	1.54
I agree with my performance rating.	3.41 <sup>a</sup>	1.57	4.06 <sup>b</sup>	1.12	4.48 <sup>b</sup>	1.34
The review fairly represented my performance.	3.34 <sup>a</sup>	1.48	3.81 <sup>a</sup>	1.26	4.88 <sup>b</sup>	1.70

Note: Different superscripts indicate cell means are significantly different

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## UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATIONS OF LOCATION-BASED MOBILE GAMES (LBMG) PLAYERS

Linda Oakleaf, Missouri Western State University

When GPS-enabled devices became available, users quickly gamified the technology by hiding “caches” and posting the location for others to find. The popularity of geocaching increased when people no longer needed a specialized device and could use their phone. Suddenly, park administrators faced new management issues (Chavez, Courtright, & Schneider, 2004). The computing power of GPS enabled smart phones has greatly increased, and park administrators still need to understand the effect of new technologies. One emerging use of technology is location based mobile games (LBMG). LBMGs incorporate players’ physical location into gameplay.

Ingress is an LBMG in which players move through physical space to play, attacking opponents’ “portals” and gathering gear. Ingress players must stand within 40 meters to interact with virtual portals that are located at real-world public art, signs, and buildings. Since the game cannot be played without traveling, the experience of playing extends beyond the screen. Much of the gameplay happens within public parks, a potential management issue for park professionals. Understanding the underlying motivation of park users may help administrators apply more effective management strategies.

The purpose of this study was to examine the motivations of Ingress players, how the unique aspects of LBMGs relate to player motivations, and how an understanding of motivation can help administrators respond to the growing popularity of LBMGs.

### Methods

The author interviewed 27 Ingress players in the southeastern United States. The face-to-face interviews lasted between one and three hours, with most interviews lasting one and a half hour. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling. Participants ranged in age from 23 to 69 years, 11 participants identified themselves as female, 16 as male. One participant self-identified as African American, one as Native American, and the rest as white. Interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed using grounded theory methods (Charmaz, 2014).

### Results

Three themes emerged from analysis of the data. Participants were motivated to play because Ingress afforded the opportunity to *forge social connections*, *seek new challenges*, and *engage in serious leisure*.

Players forge social connections partly because the game requires cooperation. Many participants stated that what they called the “social game” had become the most important part of their Ingress experience. In addition, some participants played regularly with family members. They valued having a common interest and an excuse to spend time together. Others talked about being motivated to continue because they had the chance to meet people from around the world who were also playing the game, and with whom they coordinated to meet game objectives.

Badges awarded in the game encouraged players to choose challenges for themselves. For example, one badge was based on distance walked while playing. In the first three years that the game existed, players had collectively walked 258 million kilometers while playing (Hanke, 2016). Many participants said that they played the game because it encouraged them to be physically active and to “get out of the house.” Many participants enjoyed the fact that Ingress encouraged exploration of the world around them, even within their own towns and neighborhoods. Since historical markers often serve as portals, participants said that they learned about the places that they visited and gained new insights into their own communities when they read historical mark-

ers they had previously ignored. However, some participants admitted that they had trespassed to reach portals in locations that were closed in the evening or inaccessible to the public. Exploring of that nature might be less welcomed by park administrators.

While many players whom I interviewed had only casual involvement in the game, some of the players engaged in serious leisure through their involvement with Ingress. Some aspects of the game itself could be time consuming, requiring long-term planning and the involvement of players from both the local and distant communities. Some players spent time monitoring social media groups, training new players, and planning events. Some of these players devoted hours to doing behind the scenes work that didn't involve playing the game, but rather facilitating others' enjoyment of the game and the success of their team. This is similar to the serious leisure activities found in other gaming (Ratliff, 2015).

### **Discussion and Implications**

Stebbins (2004) listed video gaming as an example of casual leisure in the literature, but one of the important findings of this study was the role of serious leisure. While many do remain casual players, some spend a significant amount of time on tasks related to the maintenance of the Ingress community. Ingress players engaging in serious leisure host Ingress events, and foster community among other players, and sometimes travel hours out of their way to help their team meet game objectives. Over time, players gain special skills and their authority and responsibility also increase over the course of their career in Ingress. Respected players can sometimes access global networks of players from around the world. A clear ethos and culture has grown around Ingress, and is expressed through various social networks. For such players, Ingress has all of the hallmarks of a serious leisure pursuit (Stebbins, 1992).

### **Implications for Practice**

In some ways, the results of this study are not unique to LBMGs. Certainly, participants in many forms of leisure are motivated because it gives them an opportunity for social interaction (Becchetti, Ricca, & Pelloni, 2012; Hodge et al., 2015), physical activity (Berlin & Klenosky, 2014), or to engage in serious leisure (Kennelly, Moyle, & Lamont, 2013). However, what makes LBMGs unique is that it is necessary to go to specific locations in order to play a game on their phone. That can be both an opportunity and a challenge for park administrators, especially if some of those visitors arrive after hours or in areas that are not open to the public.

Administrators should take advantage of the social aspects of the game by coordinating with local groups of players. In addition to limiting undesired behaviors in their parks, administrators can encourage use of their parks by hosting events for local Ingress players that encourage physical activity and engagement with interpretation in the park.

Whether administrators choose to focus on limiting depreciative behavior or encouraging more of their preferred use within parks, they should be aware that LBMGs may be bringing new users to their facilities. In fact, new LBMGs, using similar mechanics, have already been announced ("'Pokémon Go' uses your phone for real-life Mewtwo hunting," 2015) and more are surely on their way, so administrators may need to adjust to this new type of park use.

Linda Oakleaf, Missouri Western State University, (816) 271-2032, loakleaf@missouriwestern.edu



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## **AN ASSESSMENT OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AND WILDLIFE PARTICIPATION IN OKLAHOMA**

Catalina Palacios, Oklahoma State University

Stephen Beck, Oklahoma State University

Outdoor recreation provides people opportunities to enjoy natural areas and participate in recreational activities such as nature appreciation, escape from daily routine, rest and relaxation, seeking for adventure, and spending time with others. Outdoor recreation activities provide physical challenge while provoking interest of the natural world (Boman, Fredman, Lundmark, & Ericsson, 2013). The nature-based outdoor activities chosen by Americans now differ from those chosen in the past (i.e., some forms of hunting and fishing have declined, and camping and swimming have grown more slowly) (Cordell, Betz, & Green, 2008). In a recent National Survey conducted by the USDA Forest Service, interaction with the natural environment has varied as playing/hanging out, physical activities, and technology-centered activities appeared to be more popular than nature-based activities (Larson, Cordell, Betz, & Green, 2011). In the book *Last Child in the Woods*, the author explored the divide between children and the outdoors by linking the lack of nature with rises in obesity, attention disorders, and depression (Louv, 2008). Younger generations' increasing disconnection with nature has been found to be inverse to the increasing attachment to computers, cell phones, television, and other media (Cordell, Betz & Green, 2008). New generations are a challenging market, however, Americans' interest in and appreciation of nature-based recreation and wildlands keeps growing (Cordell, Betz & Green, 2008). The Oklahoma Wildlife Expo is an annual event conducted by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) as a way to highlight Oklahoma's natural diversity by providing visitors experiential learning opportunities in numerous outdoor recreational activities (i.e., shooting sports, kayaking, bird watching, and other outdoor skills) and wildlife related recreation (i.e., consumptive activities such as hunting and fishing). This study examined demographic characteristics, interest and preferences for outdoor recreation and wildlife related recreation participation in Oklahoma.

### **Methods**

Primary data collection was conducted by an on-site survey developed in collaboration by a research team at Oklahoma State University (OSU) and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) for a visitor's assessment of the Oklahoma Wildlife Expo in September, 2014. A total of 292 voluntary participants, 18 years and above, participated in a face-to-face on-site survey. The survey was designed to inquire respondents' interest in outdoor recreation activities, the importance of children's participation in outdoor recreation and wildlife related recreation, preferred outdoor recreation activities and basic demographics. The data were analyzed using frequencies and chi-square analysis.

### **Results**

From the total of the 292 respondents, about 64% were males and 36% were females. The age ranged from 17 to 78 years and the median age was 43 years old. The majority of the respondents reported their race as White (77%), Hispanic (6%), Native American (8%), two or more races (5%), and African American (4%). The majority of respondents reported one or more children in their group (82%) and 18% reported only adults in their group. About half of the respondents reported coming from an urban setting while the others came from a rural setting (Table 1). Interest in outdoor recreation activities varied from urban to rural respondents. Interest in fishing was rated "high" to "very high" by urban respondents (66%) and rural respondents (75%). Hunting was rated "high" to "very high" by urban respondents (57%) and rural respondents (66%). Interest in shooting

sports was rated “high” to “very high” by urban respondents (61%) and rural respondents (77%). Chi-square analysis was employed to examine if urban and rural residents had different perception in their interest about outdoor recreation activities and wildlife related participation. Results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between urban and rural participants’ interest in both hunting and shooting sports. No statistically significant differences between urban and rural participants’ interest were found in fishing and other outdoor recreation activities (Table 2). Concerning the importance of children being involved in non-consumptive outdoor recreation (i.e., kayaking, hiking, birding), respondents from both urban (95%) and rural (98%) settings rated “high” to “very high.” Children’s involvement in consumptive recreation activities (i.e., hunting and fishing) were rated “high” to “very high” by urban respondents (81%) and (91%) rural respondents. Chi-square analysis did not show statistically significant differences in the ratings between rural and urban respondents (Table 2). About 44% of the respondents reported participation in a new outdoor activity they had not participated before. Kayaking (22%) and archery (13%) were the top two new activities offered at the expo in which respondents participated.

### **Discussion**

Outdoor recreation is an important resource for all individuals providing areas for escape, relaxation, adventure, and exercise. To assist public agencies and recreation providers in making informed decisions for outdoor recreation development, objective and quantitative data is required to identify the profile and preferences of outdoor recreation users. The findings showed user characteristics, interests and preferences for participation in outdoor recreation and wildlife which can help recreation agencies to identify the profile of current users and target underserved or new markets. Findings of this study suggest that outdoor recreation managers should assess recreationists’ interest, participation and satisfaction in regards to the variety, quality and novelty of outdoor recreation activities offered. An assessment of outdoor recreation participation can help recreation practitioners to make decisions in the provision of additional amenities/services to serve and attract outdoor recreationists from different backgrounds and provide outdoor recreation for all.

### **Implications for Practice**

The findings of this study aim to provide public land managers and recreation professionals information for planning, development and management of outdoor recreation and wildlife participation. It is important to gain an understanding of demographic characteristics, preferences, expectations, and constraints of outdoor recreation users. Changing demographics of the United States population, for example, require recreation agencies to expand their understanding of ethnic minorities and younger generations preferences for use of public lands. It has been found that direct exposure to nature is essential for the physical and emotional health of children and adults (Larson et al., 2011). Therefore, it is important to design and offer programs and facilities that can attract people from all generations to familiarize and enjoy a wide variety of nature-based recreation. Conducting regular research can help local authorities and recreation providers to inquire not only the needs, preferences, and motivations of an increasing diverse population but also to find ways to further the health and well-being of people through involvement in outdoor recreation.

Catalina Palacios, Oklahoma State University, (615)724-8592; [catalip@okstate.edu](mailto:catalip@okstate.edu)

**Table 1***Visitor's Assessment and Visit Characteristics*

Demographics	%	Visit characteristics	%
Residential Area		Prior Visit	
Urban	49%	Repeat visitors	51%
Rural	51%	First time	48%
Sex		Group composition	
Male	64%	With Children	82%
Female	36%	Without Children	18%
Race/Ethnicity			
White	77%		
Native American	8%		
Hispanic/Latino	6%		
Two or more races	5%		
African American	4%		
Age (Median=43)			
18-24	2%		
25-34	18%		
35-44	48%		
45-54	21%		
55-64	8%		
>65	3%		

**Table 2***Urban-Rural Participants' Comparison of Interest in Outdoor Recreation and Wildlife-Related Recreation Activities*

	Percentage (rated high to very high)		
	Urban	Rural	Urban-rural comparison
Interest			
Hunting	57%	66%	Chi-square= 10.979 ( $p= 0.027^*$ )
Fishing	66%	75%	Chi-square= 5.921 ( $p=0.205$ )
Shooting sports	61%	77%	Chi-square= 11.439 ( $p= 0.022^*$ )
Other outdoor activities	78%	73%	Chi-square= 7.411 ( $p= 0.116$ )
Importance of children's participation			
Non-consumptive outdoor recreation	95%	98%	Chi-square= 3.886 ( $p= 0.274$ )
Consumptive recreation activities	81%	91%	Chi-square= 5.877 ( $p= 0.209$ )

\* $p<0.05$

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## **FOOD ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE AMONG MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE U.S.**

Maggie Phan, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Monika Stodolska, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

### **Introduction**

High obesity rates and increasing prevalence of chronic diseases among Latinos make preservation of healthy traditional diet and promotion of healthy eating practices among this population an important public health concern (National Center for Health Statistics, 2015). Food preparation and consumption are cultural leisure activities abundant with social meaning (Harris, 2005). Immigrants in the U.S., such as those from Mexico, tend to adopt new food practices, including unhealthier eating habits, that contribute to obesity and chronic health conditions (Ayala, Baquero, & Klinger, 2008; Batis, Hernandez-Barrera, Barquera, Rivera, & Popkin, 2011). Despite a number of studies that have evaluated immigration's effects on obesity, most concentrated on how food acculturation contributes to the adoption of obesogenic behaviors and weight gain in the host country (Ahluwalia, 2007; Fitzgerald, 2006; Franzen & Smith, 2009). However, these studies contributed little to the understanding of the effects of the changing environment on immigrants' weight status. We argue that the elements of the new environment (i.e., food affordability, produce selection, access to stores, location where one eats, and perceptions of food access) in the host country may be critical factors altering food practices that eventually contribute to changes in weight status and development of chronic diseases (Delavari, Sønderland, Mellor, Mohebbi, & Swinburn, 2014). This study of first-generation Mexican immigrants residing in Midwestern U.S. focuses on the relationship between the food environment and the immigrants' dietary patterns. Its objectives were to examine the effects of the food environment on (1) food purchasing behaviors, (2) food preparation methods, and (3) food consumption patterns among Mexican immigrants.

### **Methods**

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted in two Midwestern cities with 23 Mexican immigrants who had emigrated to the U.S. as adults. Key informants in the community and snowball sampling were used to identify the study participants. The interviewees comprised of 19 women and 4 men between 25-71 years of age. They represented a variety of occupations including restaurant workers, stay-at-home mothers, day care workers, teachers, sales associates, and factory workers. The interviews (8 in English and 15 in Spanish) lasted 45-75 minutes and followed a semi-structured format in which the main questions remained the same, but additional probes were used to elucidate more detailed responses. The questions focused on the food environment, psychosocial factors and taste preferences, food purchasing behaviors, food preparation methods, and food consumption patterns in Mexico and the U.S. The analysis of the collected data was performed by constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

### **Results**

*Effects of the food environment on food purchasing.* Interviewees reported few options for grocery shopping, mentioning only Walmart, Meijer, Aldi, and a few local Mexican stores. The cost and freshness of food items, availability of coupons, and other savings were reported common factors in the selection of food items. As Anna said, "I'll select fruits and vegetables based on the way they look. But the good thing about Walmart is that there are discounts. So for my favorite apples, I was able to get them for 97¢/lb. today. That's a good deal for me." Additionally, several of the interviewees have indicated that they no longer grew fresh produce for leisure in the U.S. as they did in Mexico. They now purchased all their produce from stores even if it was not fresh.



*Effects of the food environment on food preparation methods.* Even if the interviewees tried to cook the same dishes as in Mexico, some of the ingredients needed to be adapted, resulting in the food's different flavors and tastes. As Josie explained, "The foods are available, but you can see that the fruits have a lot of chemicals and pesticides. Even the flavor changed a lot. Even the meat does not have the same flavor." Many interviewees would thus cook in similar ways as in Mexico, but some added new ways of cooking and new recipes depending on what food was available as well as the flavor quality of the meals prepared in the U.S.

*Effects of the food environment on food consumption patterns.* Interviewees developed new beliefs and perceptions of food and diet after interacting with others in the U.S. Rena described that a friend taught her: "Don't think and diet. Because diet—you can follow it for one, two, three months and then you give up. You just want to learn how to eat properly for the rest of your life so you can eat whatever you want." Some interviewees no longer followed earlier beliefs on food and diet learned in Mexico because of changes in their social environment in the U.S. As Anna said, "Before in Mexico there would be a lot more customs because of my mother. For example, when you become pregnant, you cannot eat certain foods that people like—chilis, meat, and greasy foods. I love spicy food—chilis. [My mother is not here, so] I ate chilis all the time even when I was pregnant." Several interviewees reported that they altered their meals due to weight gain and the development of chronic diseases. Rena stated, "When we came over here, I didn't have any time so I would stop at McDonald's and I would get it, so we gain pounds right away because it's easy." The interviewees also suggested that the act of food preparation has shifted from an activity of daily leisure to an activity focused on health improvement, health maintenance, and weight loss.

## **Discussion**

This study provides new understanding of the relationship between migration and dietary patterns with regards to the food environment. Food purchasing behaviors, food preparation methods, and food consumption patterns were affected in ways related to the availability, accessibility, and affordability of food items in the interviewees' new environment. These insights are important because food is not only necessary for human subsistence, but it is also the center or highlight of numerous leisure activities (Mair, Sumner, & Rotteau, 2008). How people grow, purchase, prepare, consume and value food is influenced by their beliefs, which can change with immigration and time (Andreeva & Unger, 2015; Ayala, Baquero, & Klinger, 2008). Findings from our interviews suggest, however, that after immigration food preparation and food consumption lose their leisure-like qualities and are considered more as chores and obligations.

## **Implications for Practice**

Our study has shown that the assessment of the food environment is a critical factor in the food practices and leisure among Mexican immigrants in the U.S. A range of environmental and social changes experienced by immigrants, particularly differences in food environments, can potentially impact immigrants' physical health and weight status. We recommend that recreational facilities, along with health clinics, provide workshops and information on the preparation of healthy traditional meals made from ingredients available in an individual's food environment. These workshops and information should be provided by culturally sensitive dietitians and public health practitioners whom Mexican Americans would trust and seek help. They should focus on the actual food that stores carry, the food's selection and quality, neighborhood store traits, and price trends.

Maggie Phan, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, (217) 344-6698, mphan2@illinois.edu.

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## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF YOUTH KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES TOWARD WATER SAFETY**

William D. Ramos, Indiana University

Austin R. Anderson, University of Southern Indiana

Angela K. Beale, Temple University

### **Rationale**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that approximately 10 people die each day from unintentional drowning, with two of those deaths being children age 14 or younger, making drowning the fifth leading cause of unintentional death in the United States (CDC, 2012). Given the prevalence of these incidents, research has historically found that participation in swimming lesson programs can significantly reduce the risk of drowning, particularly among children (Brenner, et al., 2009; Yang, Nong, Li, & Feng, 2007). Further, the American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended swimming lessons for children age 4 and older as a strategy for the prevention of drowning (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2010).

This investigation was performed as a pilot study, inspired by the American Red Cross Centennial Campaign, to examine the impact that Learn to Swim (LTS) programs may have on behaviors related to key water safety messages taught within the program. The study employed the Reasoned Action Approach (RAA; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010) which was determined to be a valid means to explore the issue because predicting how an individual will behave around the water is a key factor in drowning prevention. Through examination of the impact of these programs, researchers and practitioners alike can begin to assess the effectiveness of traditional programs in creating attitudes, intentions and norms toward water safety to better prevent aquatic accidents.

### **Methods**

A pre/post pictorial survey instrument grounded in the RAA was used to collect data regarding water safety education with youths aged 5-10. The survey was administered by reading it aloud to manageable groups of youths similar in age. The approach was designed to examine subject response and measure attitudes, intentions, and beliefs. The water safety learning objectives highlighted in the study were derived from those outlined in the American Red Cross LTS program. Topic areas included (a) wearing and use of a lifejacket, (b) calling for help, (c) supervision, (d) presence of lifeguards, (e) recognition, (f) water competency, and (g) rescue. This study was sanctioned through the principal investigator's Institutional Review Board.

Data was collected during a three-day period at six city-sponsored summer camps within the central and southern region of Florida. Timing was determined to intercept subjects just prior to beginning swim instruction when possible, or at least within one to two days of starting the program. The secondary round of data collection occurred in early August to coincide with the conclusion of summer LTS programs and camps.

### **Results**

All subjects completing the second round of data collection that participated in the LTS program were used for an overall view of responses ( $n = 67$ ). Only those subjects who completed both the preliminary and secondary phases were included for the pre/post comparative analysis ( $n = 50$ ). Subjects who completed both surveys but did not participate in swim lessons served as the control group for the study ( $n = 20$ ). As a result of the pre/post analysis, no significant difference was found in subject survey scores at the overall level. This indicates that, at the moment and within this group, the LTS program has no effect in either a positive nor negative direction on attitudes, intentions, and beliefs about safety messages.

When examining the individual question data from the second round of survey collection, there were several areas that emerged as being of high or low concern. For the purposes of this report, areas of low concern are those in which approximately 90% of respondents selected the ideal response to a question, and areas of high concern are those in which under 60% of respondents selected the ideal answer. Low concern items are those interpreted as effectively communicating the intended safety message. High concern items would then indicate questions concerning messages that are not being effectively communicated.

Low concern items included (a) importance of lifeguard presence and supervision, (b) lifejacket use in boats, and (c) calling for help when another swimmer is in trouble. High concern items included (a) going into the water to help a swimmer in trouble, and (b) staying on the phone with emergency personnel when making an emergency call. Specific items and response statistics will be covered in the presentation.

### **Discussion**

The information presented from the cross sectional data provides valuable discussion points about the effectiveness of water safety messages within the American Red Cross LTS Program for youth participants. Results from this study indicates that, while there were no statistically significant differences in the attitudes, intentions, norms and self-efficacy measures of participants, there do seem to be some aggregate areas of concern when it comes to water safety knowledge acquisition within the formalized learn to swim program. This study also indicates that those interested in the safety and education of youth participants within aquatic settings would be well served by increasing the attention and education given to ensuring adequate water safety messaging, particularly within the structure of formalized swimming lesson programs.

### **Application to Practice**

This area of study could produce key management policies aimed at rethinking the way in which swim lesson programs are administered to youth participants, and the information/messaging provided within such programming. Potential areas include supplementation of existing programming, instructor education, and (re)formulation of swim lesson materials and content. Continuing to administer the RAA method used in the study should culminate with results that will also serve to inform swim lesson curriculum by gaining a better understanding of the attitudes, intentions, and beliefs of youth in their perception of current safety messages. Future studies are recommended using a larger and more diverse sample involving a larger variety of geographical areas, as well as continued efforts to examine the nature of the survey tool to measure desired outcomes.

William D. Ramos, Indiana University, (812) 856-7161, [wramos@indiana.edu](mailto:wramos@indiana.edu)

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## **CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS OF YOUNG CHINESE VISITORS' TO PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS**

Nuno F. Ribeiro, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana

Leah Malsom, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana

### **Introduction**

China's outbound tourism market has been growing steadily in recent years, due to loosening of travel restrictions, growing middle class, and national population of 1.4 billion, with a sizable younger cohort of traveling age (Fountain et al., 2010). Young Chinese travelers represent a growing market segment, with sizeable financial and cultural implications for hosts and guests alike (Chan, 2006; Sparks & Pan, 2009). The coming of age of this cohort has led to significant cultural impacts on host destinations, and scholars have paid particular attention to independent young Chinese travelers (Prayag et al., 2015).

Existing research on Chinese outbound tourists continues to grow unabated (Jin & Wang, 2015). Fountain et al. (2010) analyzed the motivations, expectations, and overall satisfaction of Chinese tourists on their visits to New Zealand. Li et al. (2011) sought to understand the expectations of Chinese tourists in regards to hotels, activities, food, itineraries, and transportation. Sparks and Pan (2009) researched the attitudes of Chinese tourists towards international travel, the influences present when choosing destinations, and the use of information in the decision-making process. In one of the few studies focused on young Chinese travelers, Xu and McGehee (2012) analyzed the shopping behaviors and experiences of Chinese tourists on their trips to the U.S., concluding that while the visitors' experience was positive, cultural vehicles such as language could be improved. Missing from this body of literature is the study of young Chinese tourists' cultural expectations and behavior when traveling to the U.S., specifically in the Midwest region. Further, given the paucity of studies focusing on young Chinese travelers to the U.S., questions concerning how culture impacts this most important market segment remain unanswered (Chan, 2006). What is more, the effect of U.S. locals' attitudes towards Chinese visitors is also severely understudied.

Of particular importance to parks and recreation professionals is the fact that little research exists on the impact that (young) Chinese visitors have had, are currently having, and will have, on U.S. municipal, state, and national parks and recreation facilities. Despite the fact that increasing numbers of Chinese travelers visit the United States (UN-WTO, 2015), and U.S. parks and recreation areas routinely appear as top attractions (Cai et al., 2001; Jang et al., 2003), researchers have yet to turn their eyes towards this increasing market demographic. Further, little to no information exists on the level to which current parks and recreation professionals are equipped to deal with large volumes of visitors/users with distinct cultural expectations and behavioral norms than that of the local population(s).

### **Rationale for the Study and Methods**

To address these and other gaps in the literature, and provide practitioners with valuable information, this study sought to investigate the behavioral outcomes of the acculturation and enculturation processes when host (American) and guest (Chinese) cultures meet within the purviews of what Edensor (2001) called the "produced tourist space," in this particular case a local public recreation system in the Midwestern United States. Using a mixed-methods approach, the present study used participant observation, visitor surveys, in-depth interviews, and tourist imagery analysis to question incoming young Chinese visitors ( $N = 65$ ) visiting several local parks and public recreation areas about their culture(s) and experience(s). We asked the following research questions: Is there a visitor/guest culture among young Chinese tourists to the American Midwest? What behavioral expectations do young Chinese visitors have concerning US public parks and



recreation facilities/areas? What makes such areas attractive/appealing? How does such culture impact their visitor behavior? And lastly, we sought the opinion of parks and recreation professionals ( $N = 12$ ) in regard to use of local public recreation areas/parks by the young Chinese visitors. Cultural consensus and cultural consonance analyses (Chick, 1981, 1989; Dressler et al., 2005, 2007) were conducted to investigate whether or not a guest culture exists(ed) among them, as well as its influence on tourist behaviors.

## **Results**

Preliminary findings point towards the existence of two separate cultures, with distinct effects on young Chinese tourists' behavior: a visitor culture, representing the travelers' own beliefs and cultural mores, and a second, host-influenced culture, mass-mediated by perceptions of what young Chinese visitors are "supposed" to do wherein US public parks and recreation. A significant percentage of those queried mentioned language (i.e., insufficient mastery of the English language, inexistence of signage in Mandarin Chinese) as the most important mediating factor between their culturally-formed expectations and their behavior. In spite of the potential for cultural misunderstandings and friction, few visitors and parks and recreation professionals reported instances of negative experiences/conflict at these areas. They suggested two factors might have contributed to this: the youth of the visitors, and the multicultural aspect of the localities and state wherein the study was conducted. Findings highlighted the need to focus on culture as an operating variable when studying tourist behavior of young Chinese tourists. Lastly, cultural consonance analysis revealed that when cultural behavioral expectations for what to do clash distinct local behavioral practices, young(er) visitors tended to adopt the host country's practices.

## **Application to Practice**

The practical applications and implications of the present study for parks and recreation professionals are three-fold: First, as several leisure scholars have recently pointed out (Kim et al., 2015; Spracklen et al., 2015; Stodolska, 2015; Wei & Stodolska, 2015), the parks and recreation profession is amidst profound cultural change, with increasing numbers of multicultural users of public recreation areas, be they transitory as in the case of the present study, or more permanent as it occurs with migrant and immigrant communities (e.g., Anderson & Mowatt, 2013). Data from this study shows that, in the case of young Chinese visitors to the U.S., these arrive with preconceived, culturally determined, cognitive and behavioral expectations of how to act in public recreation areas/facilities. To understand a priori how such cultural imagery is formed, and behavioral expectations are derived, should be a priority for the parks and recreation profession. Such knowledge will assist greatly in the planning and delivery of both recreation facilities and programs. Second, while surprisingly few instances of perceived inter-cultural conflict and/or friction were reported by the participants in this study, language and lack of interpretive services emerged as one of the largest barriers for the full enjoyment of local public recreation amenities. Similarly to what is currently occurring with the proliferation of bilingual English-Spanish signs within the purview of the National Park Service, (cf. Dvorak, 2005; Sánchez & Sánchez-Clark, 2016), parks and recreation planners and managers would do well to consider allocating resources for cultural interpretation materials and personnel training in languages other than English—in this particular case, Mandarin Chinese. Lastly, as the cultural complexion of visitors to public parks and recreation shows no signs of decreasing, with increasing numbers of non-U.S. visitors to parks, recreation facilities, and publicly managed tourist attractions, it is imperative that we diversify the workforce, both at the employee and managerial levels. Should we fail to do so, we risk alienating what could be one of the largest groups of advocates for "America's best idea" (Stegner, 1983), and the providers of substantial financial resources to public recreation systems, benefiting both residents and visitors.

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## **OLDER ADULTS BENEFIT FROM A NEW COMMUNITY-BASED RECREATION PROGRAM**

Jungsu Ryu, Texas A&M University

Hyunmin Yang, Texas A&M University

Jinmoo Heo, Texas A&M University

The literature has provided the important role of leisure in older adults' lives. Among various types of leisure, continued participation in physical activity is likely to promote physical and psychological well-being in advanced age (McAuley, 2000; Morgan, 1998). Research has shown that older adults' physical activity participation is associated with numerous benefits such as enhanced sense of well-being and health, physical strength and functions, a reduced risk of disease, and a reduction in osteoporosis. Flow and Balance (FAB) is a type of nonpharmaceutical physical activity program that is known as a common health practice for older adults in Korea. FAB has been used as an alternative to Western medicine, and FAB has been practiced as a way of health restoration and maintenance. FAB program is composed of Korean traditional dance movements. It has become popular among Korean older adults because such traditional dances are known as enjoyable exercises and regarded as ways of expressing oneself. In spite of the benefits of FAB, there has been no prior research that examines the effects of FAB program beyond the Korean context. Examining the effects of such a recreation program will allow us to discuss and develop recreation intervention strategies for older adults in the U.S. and promote healthy lifestyle among aging population.

### **Methods**

Participants were recruited from a local community center for seniors in a Southern state. Participants who were able to commit to an 8-week FAB exercise program were selected. The exercise intervention consisted of 60-minute practice sessions twice a week over the course of the 8-week program. Two certified instructors taught the classes. The program consisted of breathing, balancing and tapping along to Korean traditional music. We conducted 5 in-depth interviews after the 8-week program. The average age of the study participants was 75 years (ranging from 60 to 84). All participants were Caucasian, and four participants were women. We developed a semi-structured interview guide that contained open-ended questions to explore older adults' exercise participation, benefits, and leisure experience. The interviews were audio-recorded with the interviewees' permission, and the data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed line by line (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). The data were coded and analyzed using the constant comparative method (Merriam, 1998). It allowed the investigators to identify the emerging categories in each dataset and compare the data between participants. Pseudonyms were assigned to protect the participants' identity.

### **Results**

Two central themes emerged from the data: (1) *Uniqueness of the exercise program* and (2) *physical and mental health benefits*.

*Uniqueness of the exercise program.* All participants expressed that the exercise was certainly different from any other type of dance or exercise they had practiced in the past. Most participants mentioned that the main difference was exercising the entire body simultaneously, and this allowed them to think and concentrate intensely during the exercise. Participants noted that such concentration could be mentally challenging, but they were aware that it was needed for preventive, recuperative, and therapeutic purposes. The participants also expressed the uniqueness of the music. Some participants commented that the unique music and rhythm increased enjoyment

during the exercise. The music played an integral role in the exercise rather than acting merely as a backdrop.

*Physical and mental health benefits.* The participants stated that they gained physical and psychological health benefits through the exercise program. With regard to mental health, participants mentioned that they felt a sense of accomplishment. Participants learned an extensive amount of movements using the entire body, and such experience increased self-esteem. Participants also expressed excitement before coming to the class, and the exercise often refreshed them. For physical health, some participants reported that moving their whole body at once rather than parts of it got their heart beating and helped with improving balance.

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

The finding of this exploratory study revealed various experiential characteristics associated with exercising FAB. The results showed that the unique aspect of the exercise led individuals to exhibit intense involvement and rigorous absorption in the activity. Such concentration allowed participants to become totally immersed in the activity. According to Hertzog, Kramer, Wilson, & Lindenberger (2015), engagement in activities that cause individuals to think has a meaningful impact on how effective their cognitive functioning will be in their advanced age. Maintaining cognitive functioning is crucial in improving quality of life. We found that the FAB program allows older adults to keep their cognitive functioning because they have to keep thinking to catch up with all sequences moving their body at once, which in turn enhances their quality of life.

Successful engagement in challenging educational programs strengthens a sense of self-efficacy (Mehrotra, 2003). Utilizing various movements along with unfamiliar music was often challenging to participants in this study, but they gained a sense of accomplishment once they completed the class sessions. Experiencing positive emotions from involvement in this activity implies the effectiveness of the program (Windle, Hughes, Linck, Russell, & Woods, 2010). With regard to physical benefits, our interviewees indicated that such exercise was conducive to improving balance. Maintaining balance is known as one of the effective tools in preventing falls in older adults (Gillespie et al, 2012). Therefore, the FAB exercise can be utilized as a program in improving balance and preventing falls as well as promoting physical and mental health in old age. Research has revealed that older adults, especially baby boomers, who value education are likely to seek lifelong learning opportunities. Learning increases self-confidence, motivation, and quality of life of older adults, and older adults can learn new things just like their younger counterparts (Rowe & Kahn, 1998). While they may require more time to learn, studies have shown that many older adults are captive learners (Morrell & Echt, 1996; Rogers, Meyer, Walker, & Fisk, 1998). In addition to learning new movements and music, the FAB program offers opportunities to experience a different culture. Socializing and cultural discussions added an important dimension to the FAB program. As Tam (2014) suggested, personal development, intellectual stimulation and social networking are some of the benefits of learning in later life. We found that the FAB program has therapeutic and educational aspects for older adults. The FAB program also added to the emerging literature on the benefits of community-based recreation programs for the aging population. The FAB recreation program has demonstrated subjective functional effects on the well-being of older adults. Practitioners can utilize this new program to better accommodate physical and mental health concerns of older adults.

Jungsu Ryu, Texas A&M University, (979) 739-6925, [jryu@tamu.edu](mailto:jryu@tamu.edu)

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## EVENT SATISFACTION, INVOLVEMENT, AND LIFE SATISFACTION AT A WALKING EVENT

Mikihiro Sato, James Madison University

Masayuki Yoshida, Biwako Seikei Sport College

Kohji Wakayoshi, Biwako Seikei Sport College

David Shonk, James Madison University

Participation in mass-participant sport events has gained global attention over the last decade. For example, the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, a 5K run and fitness walk event that started in 1983 with 800 participants, now attracts over 1.5 million participants in more than 150 locations around the world (Susan G. Komen, 2015). Given that mass-participant sport events can serve as a population-based opportunity for physical activity, researchers have investigated the capacity of these events to produce behavioral and attitudinal outcomes related to physical activity (Funk, Jordan, Ridinger, & Kaplanidou, 2011; Ridinger, Funk, Jordan, & Kaplanidou, 2012). Research has further begun to address whether these events could promote life satisfaction for event participants (Sato, Jordan, & Funk, 2014); however, the theoretical link between event participation and life satisfaction has not been fully elaborated. In their study of 827 running event participants in the U.S., Sato et al. (2014) found that leisure involvement in running was a significant predictor of people's life domain satisfaction; however, the study is limited because the authors operationalized leisure involvement as a single construct consisting of attraction, centrality, and self-expression, and such an approach fails to incorporate each facet's distinct contribution to the involvement construct (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997). Sato et al. also did not assess the potential mediating role of life domain satisfaction in the relationship between leisure involvement and global life satisfaction implied by prior research (Newman, Tay, & Diener, 2014). Furthermore, an important drawback of Sato et al.'s study is that the authors primarily obtained data from participants who were highly engaged in the activity prior to the event. Given that mass-participant sport events promote greater attitudinal change among the least active and most inexperienced event participants (Funk et al., 2011), their leisure involvement and life satisfaction might be enhanced more through event preparation and participation than is the case for active participants.

The purpose of this study was to address these gaps in the extant research by examining the role of a mass-participant sport event in life domain satisfaction and global life satisfaction among less active participants. Participants of distance-walking events were the focus of the study because of the global popularity of walking as a physically active leisure opportunity for less active individuals (Alliance for Biking and Walking, 2016). Global life satisfaction is viewed as an attitude that arises from a cognitive evaluation of one's overall satisfaction with his or her life. In contrast, life domain satisfaction refers to satisfaction with key areas in life. Based on bottom-up theory of life satisfaction, we first hypothesize that event satisfaction and the three facets of leisure involvement—attraction (the enjoyment derived from the activity), centrality (how central the activity is to the individual's life), and self-expression (the level of symbolism of the activity)—will be associated with participants' life domain satisfaction. We also hypothesize that event satisfaction, attraction, centrality, and self-expression will have a positive indirect effect on global life satisfaction through life domain satisfaction. The research model is presented in Figure 1.

Participants ( $N=236$ ) were recruited from a distance-walking event in a large city in Western Japan. For the most part, respondents were male, middle-aged ( $M = 56$  years), and participated in the event with family or friends. The questionnaire included (a) the 5-item Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985); (b) satisfactions with the six life domains (e.g.,



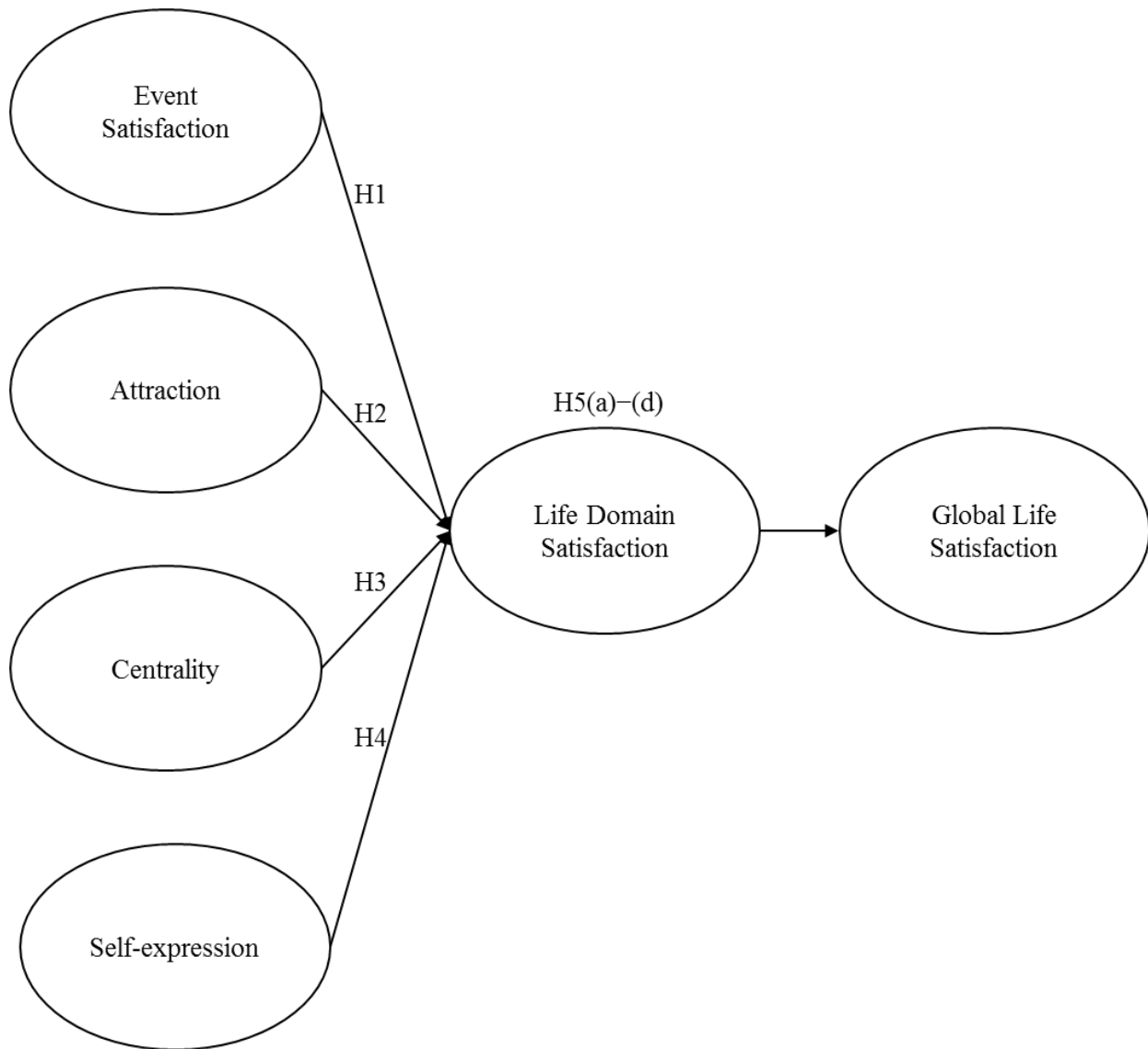
family, social; Sato et al., 2014); (c) a 3-item measure of event satisfaction (Funk et al., 2011); and (d) nine items of leisure involvement (Ridinger et al., 2012). The theoretical model was analyzed with partial least squares structural equation modelling.

Our results revealed that event satisfaction ( $\beta = .24, p < .001$ ) and attraction ( $\beta = .44, p < .001$ ) was positively associated with life domain satisfaction, supporting H1 and H2. In contrast, centrality ( $\beta = -.07, p = .42$ ) and self-expression ( $\beta = .06, p = .28$ ) were not associated with life domain satisfaction, indicating that H3 and H4 were not supported. Both event satisfaction ( $\beta = .21, p = .001$ ) and attraction ( $\beta = .37, p < .001$ ) had significant indirect effects on global life satisfaction through life domain satisfaction, supporting H5a and H5b; however, centrality ( $\beta = -.06, p = .43$ ) and self-expression ( $\beta = .05, p = .52$ ) did not have significant indirect effects on global life satisfaction through life domain satisfaction, suggesting that H5c and H5d were not supported.

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

This study represents an initial attempt to examine the role of event satisfaction and three facets of involvement in life domain satisfaction and global life satisfaction. Our results indicate that event satisfaction and attraction in walking were positively associated with participants' life domain satisfaction, whereas centrality and self-expression in walking were not associated with life domain satisfaction. In previous research, individuals who were less involved with an activity tended to participate in an event or an activity for the enjoyment of the activity (attraction), although the activity had not yet become essential to their lifestyle (centrality) or taken on any personal meaning (self-expression; Beaton, Funk, & Alexandris, 2009). As such, and similar to our study, less active participants' life domain satisfaction might have been more influenced by the pleasant aspect of a walking activity than the centrality or the symbolic value attributed to walking. Our results also found that event satisfaction and attraction had positive, indirect effects on global life satisfaction through life domain satisfaction. Given that participation in mass-participant sport events can be expensive and time-consuming (Funk et al., 2011), participants of these events might need to overcome constraints associated with various life domains to pursue their goal of event participation. Our findings confirm bottom-up theory of life satisfaction and corroborate the notion that examining the determinants of life domain satisfaction provides critical information about factors that contribute to global life satisfaction (Schimmack & Oishi, 2005). Finally, this study contributes to the literature by extending the field's knowledge about the role of mass-participant sport events among less active individuals. Combined with the study of Sato et al. (2014), our findings suggest that event satisfaction and leisure involvement are important predictors of life domain satisfaction regardless of location (U.S. and Japan), event type (running and walking events), and activity level (highly active and less active participants).

When managing distance-walking events for less active individuals, our findings suggests that event directors should focus on satisfying the participants' needs by providing more enjoyable event and walking experiences. Our results also indicate that promoting life domain satisfaction through recreational walking could be an effective way to promote global life satisfaction. For instance, incorporating activities catering to families or friends as part of the event (e.g., family or friends fun walk) might contribute to their satisfaction with the event, which thereby would contribute to their family or social life satisfaction. Another option is to promote the personal achievement of less active individuals. Consequently, the increased satisfaction with life domains might contribute to global life satisfaction through participating in these events.



**Figure 1.** Research Model

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## **AN URBAN PARK RENOVATION ALTERS CONSTRAINTS FOR NEARBY RESIDENTS**

Kindal A. Shores, East Carolina University

Andrew E. Frost, East Carolina University

Stephanie T. West, Appalachian State University

Research has demonstrated that neighborhood parks are often underutilized (Dunton, Almanza, Jerrett, Wolch, & Pentz, 2014; Kaczynski, Potwarka, & Saelens, 2008). It follows that these sites are also underutilized as physical activity venues. This is problematic because only 48% of adults meet the recommended guidelines for physical activity, and only three out of ten high school students participate in physical activity at least 60 minutes a day (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). One explanation for limited neighborhood park use is perceived constraints. Constraints are factors that inhibit or prohibit participation and enjoyment in an activity (Jackson, 1991). Neighborhood park and recreation venues are an important location for leisure time physical activity, particularly among populations who may lack the resources to engage in physical activity at commercial sites or at more distant sites that require transportation from their residence.

This study describes changes to respondents' reported constraints to park-based physical activity before and after a major park redevelopment. The study is set in the urban south in a neighborhood populated predominantly by Black residents, many of who are older and report low incomes. The objectives of this study were as follows: 1) Describe how constraints to park-based physical activity changed from pre-renovation to post-renovation, 2) Examine any differential impact of the park renovation on the constraints for population subgroups (i.e., race, age, gender, residence), and 3) Investigate park visitation as a factor that might moderate perceived constraints to active park use.

### **Methods**

Individuals residing within one-mile walking distance of the designated neighborhood park were the study population. Twelve hundred residents in this study area were invited to complete questionnaires in before (2011) and one year after (2013) park redevelopment. Questionnaires were distributed in local mail using a modified Dillman approach with the support of local council members and neighborhood opinion leaders. The 223 individuals who completed questionnaires in both years (2011 and 2013) were included in this analysis. The survey instrument contained questions designed to understand the following issues: physical activity participation, constraints to park based activity, frequency of park visitation and sociodemographic characteristics. The focus of the study are the nine constraint items. These include 1) a lack of time, 2) a lack of money, 3) having no companion, 4) feeling "too old" for an activity, 5) a lack of facilities, 6) a lack of transportation, 7) having poor health, 8) having safety concerns, and 9) not having access to a nearby park. Respondents indicated whether each constraint was relevant to their life using an ordinal scale from one to six. Respondents were also prompted to recall their physical activity participation across the last seven days as well as how often they had visited that neighborhood park. Response categories included "never," "less than once per month," "at least one time per month," and "at least once per week."

### **Results**

Survey respondents were more likely to be female, middle or older age, and Black than male, young, or any other race. Dependent *t*-tests and descriptive statistics were used to test whether were significantly different for respondents before and after the park redesign. Respondents were significantly *less* likely post renovation to report that safety ( $p < .001$ ), the lack of a facility ( $p < .001$ ) or not having enough parks close to home ( $p < .001$ ) impeded their abilities to be physically

active. Conversely, residents reported that they were *more* likely in 2013 to being constrained by time ( $p < .001$ ), having someone to participate with ( $p < .001$ ), age ( $p < .001$ ), money ( $p < .001$ ) and self-perception ( $p < .001$ ). Responses to whether they were constrained by transportation, however, did not change significantly between 2011 and 2013.

Next, the relevance of race, gender, and age and to the perception of constraints was determined. To begin this analysis the change in constraint score was computed for each respondent. Then, a logistic regression model was computed to understand the likelihood of respondents experiencing constraints to park-based physical activity (Table 1). Results indicate that respondents who are Black, over age 65, or male were less likely to face constraints to active park use than respondents who are White, non-seniors, or female. There was no significant difference based on whether an individual rented or owned their home.

Finally a moderation analysis was used to understand if frequency of visitation could partially explain the observed change in constraints. Visitation to the at least once per month or more was a significant moderator ( $p < .01$ ) of constraints to park use for all demographic groups.

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

Findings offer several points for discussion and application. First, while three constraint items demonstrated a reduction among respondents, five constraints increased in intensity. Increases in the salience for age, self-perception, money, and the availability of someone with whom to be physically active likely reflect the two years have passed for a sample of relatively older respondents. While feeling unsafe was found to have a significantly lower impact on whether respondents were able to physically active in 2011 compared to 2013, this factor (2011  $M = 3.91$ ; 2013  $M = 3.21$ ) was still the most important constraint to this sample of respondents. It is clear the issue of safety remains improved, but unresolved at this neighborhood park. Second, the reduction of constraints related to safety and facility access were most salient for facilitating participation among older adults and Black residents. This is an important finding because seniors and racial and ethnic minorities, including Blacks, are reported to have some of the lowest levels of physical activity in the nation. It is valuable to understand that a commitment to provide quality neighborhood parks had an impact on these residents at greater comparative health risk. It is also important to recognize the number of respondents who reported they agreed that their physical activity was constrained by not having a park close to their home. Although these numbers decreased from 2011 (34.0%) to 2013 (18.1%), it is important to remember that respondents all lived within a one mile walk of the newly renovated park yet still seemed dissatisfied with whether they had enough parks near their home. Perhaps they simply want *more* parks near their homes, or parks with different features.

In closing, results point to the importance of diverse on-site programming to invite all community members to park spaces to informally familiarize residents with park features, physical activity opportunities and safety measures that exist on the property. Since parks can offer many benefits beyond physical activity, we recommend that future studies consider outcomes that may accrue at the neighborhood and community level including community cohesion, the development of social capital and even economic impact of the park redevelopment on neighborhood.

Kindal Shores, East Carolina University, (25) 328-5649, shoresk@ecu.edu

**Table 1***Logistic Regression Comparing Change in Constraint 2011-2013 by Sociodemographics*

Change in Constraint 2011-2013 by sociodemographics (N=231)		
	Odds Ratio (95% CI)	P value
Race		
White (reference)		
Black	1.54 (1.53-1.55)	<.01
Gender		
Male (reference)		
Female	0.74 (0.72-0.78)	<.05
Age		
Non-senior (reference)		
Senior	1.21 (1.19-1.22)	<.01
Housing		
Own (reference)		
Rent	0.97 (0.88-1.07)	N.S.



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## **CLICKS, OPENINGS, AND IMPRESSIONS: NAVIGATING CONTEMPORARY WEB-BASED SURVEY RESEARCH**

Garrett A. Stone, Clemson University

Ryan J. Gagnon, Clemson University

Telephone, mail, and face-to-face surveying approaches have progressively been identified as both archaic and impractical forms of data collection (Farrell & Peterson, 2010). Consequently, these approaches continue to be replaced by web-based surveys, which have advanced in availability, affordability, and reputability (Frippiat & Marquis, & Wiles-Portier, 2010). However, with the constant advent of new web-based platforms it is necessary to examine whether or not data collection through these alternative platforms results in discrete response rates, length of responses, and types of responses. These distinctions are especially important for recreation professionals and scholars who regularly utilize web-based questionnaires to solicit consistent and quality member or user feedback. Prior research demonstrates that questionnaire mode (e.g., telephone vs. postal mail) may result in both differing response rates and response quality (Bowling, 2005; Denscombe, 2006/2008). However, these studies exclusively compare web-based questionnaires to paper questionnaires or phone interviews and neglect to compare differences between web-based platforms (Couper & Miller, 2008). Given these shortcomings, the purpose of this study was to compare the types of responses associated with questionnaire data collected from the USA Climbing (USAC) membership via two distinct and commonly used web-based platforms—Facebook (FB) and E-mail—during the winter of 2016. FB and e-mail were chosen, in lieu of other platforms, as they are the modalities used by USAC to communicate with its membership.

### **Method**

In order to understand the influence of web-based platform (e.g., FB v. e-mail) on survey responses, the authors administered an adapted version of a questionnaire developed by Gagnon and Garst (2016) to parents of competition climbers during the winter of 2015-2016. The questionnaire assessed the extent to which parents felt their child's participation in competition climbing resulted in the following six outcomes measured on a 5-point Likert scale: exploration, self-regulation, cooperation, attitude, communication, and decision making. Survey respondents were recruited in the form of two announcements via USA Climbing's FB Page and via two e-mails sent to USA Climbing's past and current members containing the same survey link. The combination of these strategies resulted in 6,710 unique viewings of the e-mail or FB post, determined using Constant Contact software. Of those who viewed the survey, 1,463 respondents started the survey and 1,171 completed the full survey, resulting in a 17.45% response rate. Using skip logic, 340 parents completed the section relating to outcomes resulting from their child's participation in competition climbing. The completed survey data were analyzed for sample descriptive information (e.g., demographics, climbing ability, and climbing tenure) in SPSS 23 software and then the data was transferred to EQS 6.3 software for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)—to ensure the validity and reliability of the scale—and structural equation modeling (SEM)—to explore potential relationships between social media and e-mail response style and outcomes resulting from their child's participation in competition climbing.

### **Results**

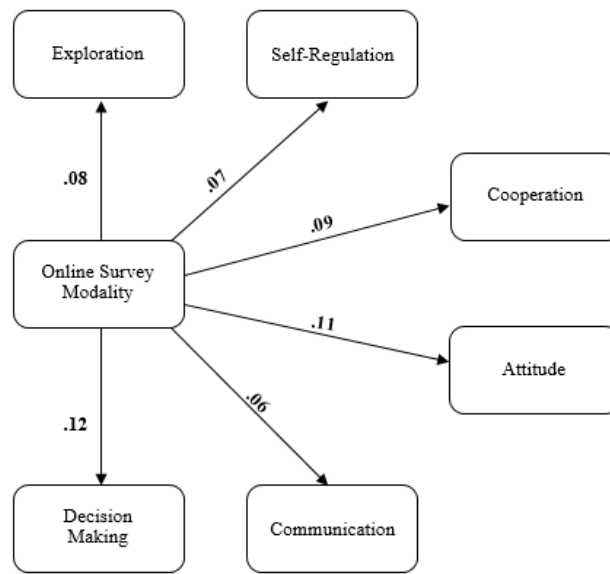
Upon completion of the CFA the final goodness-of-fit indices suggested that the proposed six-factor measurement model fit the data well:  $\chi^2(215) = 754.391$ ,  $p \leq .001$ , SRMR = .045, RMSEA = .096 (90%, CI .084-.098), CFI = .917. Reliability of factors was further indicated by Cronbach's alphas ranging from .824 to .905 and relatively low between factor correlations. Given a

strong measurement model as indicated by the CFA results, we then examined a dummy-coded variable of FB and E-mail and its influence on child outcomes. The results of this analysis also indicated good model fit:  $\chi^2(232) = 739.573$ ,  $p \leq .001$ , SRMR = .043, RMSEA = .086 (90% CI .079-.093), CFI = .920. The SEM analysis (see Figure 1) indicated that there were significantly meaningful differences between e-mail and FB respondents on all six outcomes. Scores were higher for e-mail respondents than FB respondents by .08 units for exploration, .07 units for self-regulation, .09 units for cooperation, .11 units for attitude, .06 units for communication, and .12 units for decision-making.

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

Outcomes varied based on the web-based platform such that individuals who responded via e-mail had statistically significant, higher scores on all of the outcome variables. In other words, e-mail respondents said their children experienced slightly better outcomes than children of FB respondents. Because the questionnaire itself didn't change between platforms, these disparities should have been attributable to differences in respondent characteristics. However, examination of the demographic differences between the two groups suggests that the two groups were near identical across all of the measured categories (e.g., age, gender, or race). This finding begs the question, what about the e-mail platform influenced respondents to reply differently? What unmeasured attributes could have contributed to the differences in perceived outcomes? For example, did the purpose (e.g., leisure vs. business) or device (e.g., mobile phone vs. lap/desktop computer) typically associated with each platform impact the type of response given (see Ha, Zhang, & Jiang, 2016 for more on how devices influence open-ended response quality)? In addition to questions raised by the differences in response type, a number of questions and challenges were identified related to the process of determining FB respondents and response rates when compared to e-mail response rates, necessitating a call for a standardization of these procedures. For example, the public access associated with many organizational FB pages may allow non-users/non-members to access and take the survey, muddying the overall results (see Couper, 2011 and Hesse-Biber & Griffin, 2013 for more challenges associated with FB data collection). While questions remain about what exactly contributes to differences in web-based platform effects, understanding that these differences exist and continuing to explore the source of these differences could help recreation professionals collect more accurate, representative, and meaningful data. These findings, coupled with future research, could also be used to determine the best medium through which to distribute questionnaires to elicit the greatest number of quality (i.e., detailed, complete, or valid) responses. Furthermore, by using multiple distribution channels or web-based platforms, a recreation provider may elicit different user perspectives. In other words, recognizing that users' responses vary based on their preferred web-based platform can assist recreation professionals and scholars in identifying user groups with unique attributes or attitudes and in solicit their diverse opinions.

Garrett A. Stone, Clemson University, (530) 302-7314, [gastone@clemson.edu](mailto:gastone@clemson.edu)



**Figure 1.** Facebook vs. E-mail Structural Equation Model

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## **ASSESSING RECREATION USE VIA CAMERAS AND TIMELAPSE2 ANALYSIS SOFTWARE**

Garrett A. Stone, Clemson University

Jeffrey C. Hallo, Clemson University

Jessica P. Fefer, Clemson University

Geoffrey K. Riungu, Clemson University

The development of sustainable recreation management practices has become a primary concern for parks and recreation managers seeking to balance conservation with consumers' recreational needs (Manning, 2007). A central challenge associated with managing for sustainability is the fact that many outdoor recreation resources are considered common pool resources (CPRs)—resources “for which exploitation by one user reduces the amount available for others, but for which exclusion of additional users is difficult” (Briassoulis, 2002, p. 1066). Mismanagement of CPRs can lead to overcrowding and overuse which can negatively impact the character of recreation resources, the quality of visitor experience, and the profitability of recreation sites. The dual mandate of public land managers—to provide recreational access for society while at the same time trying to preserve natural resources for future generations—is often informed by recreation use and capacity assessment reports. For example, the U.S. Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) requires that public utility districts with recreation amenities assess and report use and capacity estimates every six years (see FERC Form 80). However, the methods employed by individual districts are often unstandardized or underdeveloped. Identification and adoption of emerging use-estimation strategies and technologies may help recreation providers, in various contexts, produce more robust and accurate use estimates, which may subsequently increase access to or conservation of CPRs. Toward that end, the purpose of this presentation is to (1) introduce a standardized, field-camera-based approach to measure use and (2) describe a recently developed photo analytic software that may expedite and improve the quality of use counting and reporting.

### **Method**

In partnership with Grant County Public Utilities District (Grant PUD), headquartered in Ephrata, WA, a Clemson University research team collected images of recreation areas, extracted use counts from the images, and analyzed the image data to generate usage estimates (Greenberg & Godin, 2015). Data collection took place during the 2015 peak use season (i.e., May–September) and included a variety of recreation amenities. Forty-five total cameras were placed across eighteen sites to capture use at each of the site's amenities. Static amenities (e.g., parking lots or picnic areas) were photographed with cameras set to capture images at either 15 or 30 minute intervals, while dynamic amenities (e.g., trails) were fitted with motion sensor cameras. Cameras were placed to fit as much of the amenity into the camera's viewing frame as possible without sacrificing the integrity of the photographed image. Photos were collected between the hours of 11am and 5pm, on weekdays and weekends, over the course of two weeks at two time points (early summer, late summer) during the peak use season. Photo files from each site were uploaded into Timelapse2 Image Analysis Software (Timelapse2), an open source (i.e., free) data management and counting software, in which they were reviewed and users/items (e.g., people, vehicles) were counted by clicking on the items and assigning them a label. Average length of stay was derived from the photographed images and used to convert counts into an estimate of the actual number of users/items; that is, a calculation was made to account for the fact that users/items were counted more than once across time intervals. These data were then exported to SPSS data analysis software and



frequencies/trends were examined for the time of day, day of the week, and time of season (early or late summer). These trends were extrapolated by multiplying average daily use by the total days in the peak season to estimate total peak season use.

## **Results**

Over 75,000 images were collected, counted, and analyzed at Grant PUD and site specific charts and graphs representing daily, weekly, and total peak season use were generated. More compelling than the agency specific frequency data, however, were the standards developed to determine use, and the opportunities and challenges identified in conjunction with camera-based use estimation. For example, the data collection team encountered challenges related to the use and placement of cameras such as: stolen cameras, sensitivity of motion sensor cameras to environmental factors, and identification of locations that could capture as much of the site as possible without losing image quality. Software issues were also identified such as the importation of incorrect metadata or unreadable images. What these challenges, and others, culminated in, was the development of a set of standardized rules and practices that may guide practitioners and researchers as they seek to collect similar data in their respective spheres. Specifically, standards for determining camera placement, calculating average length of stay, converting counts to actual users/items, and converting users/items to actual use estimates were created. As part of the process, Timelapse2 was identified as a useful and efficient tool for counting items in the photo images. For example, the software allows you to interface with the image by clicking on, enhancing, and labeling items within it, as well as recording items for later use and/or auditing. The software also automatically uploads the camera's metadata (e.g. date or time) and stores the metadata and counts in a format that can be exported into other software (e.g., excel or SPSS). Although the software occasionally misinterpreted metadata, requiring tedious manual corrections, its zoom capabilities and other unique features made it a desirable and responsible alternative to traditional, manual data collection methods.

## **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

The findings of the present study reinforce the use of static and motion-sensor field-cameras to determine usage estimates in recreation areas, especially in contrast to traditional approaches (see also Manning & Freimund, 2004; Smallwood, Beckley, Moore, & Kobryn, 2011). The depth and breadth of camera-based approaches can provide more accurate estimates and reliable records of use, which may then inform sustainable use management (e.g., increasing access or decreasing overcrowding and overuse). Additionally, camera data may be utilized beyond use assessment; that is, captured images could be used to enforce rules or laws, or to observe types of use rather than quantities of use. While the initial costs of this approach in terms of time (e.g., stationing cameras) and money (e.g., buying, replacing, or staffing cameras) may inhibit the use of this method, the approach is notably more robust and empirically sound than most current strategies and provides data beyond what a traffic counter or other means might produce. Additionally, by repurposing existing cameras or employing a rotating system, fewer cameras may be needed, thereby reducing overhead costs. While there were limitations and challenges associated with the use of the field-based cameras and the Timelapse2 software, these limitations were ultimately outweighed by the overall functionality of the approach and software. However, future research and ambitious developers in the field could focus on expanding the software's ability to auto count objects or items or improve its metadata reading capabilities.

Garrett A. Stone, Clemson University, (530) 302-7314, [gastone@clemson.edu](mailto:gastone@clemson.edu).

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## CONSTRAINTS AND AFFORDANCES IN INTERGENERATIONAL PLAY

Sarah Taylor Agate, The College at Brockport, State University of New York

Joel R. Agate, The College at Brockport, State University of New York

Lynda Cochran, The College at Brockport, State University of New York

Scholars have written in great depth about the developmental benefits of play for children (e.g., Ginsburg, 2007; Gray, 2008; Kuo & Taylor, 2004), but little has been written about the experience of play into adulthood and later life (McGuire, 2000). It does appear, however, that play continues to be important throughout life (Sutton-Smith, 1997). One context in which older adults may have opportunities to play is with their grandchildren. Intergenerational play may provide an ideal context for the exploration of play in later life.

Leisure constraints are factors that limit people's participation in leisure activities, people's use of leisure services, or people's enjoyment of activities (Scott, 2005). Leisure constraints are not insurmountable barriers to participation; people can still participate in leisure activities amidst constraints. There are several ways that people negotiate constraints in an attempt to participate in desired leisure activities. One of the keys to constraint negotiation is the concept of leisure affordances. Leisure affordances are characteristics in either a person or his/her environment that make participation and enjoyment in activities possible (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997).

Intergenerational play may be a prime context for adults to engage in play. While intergenerational issues have been briefly addressed in tourism and technology, no leisure scholars have explored the sociological phenomenon of intergenerational play. The purpose of the current study, therefore, was to explore intergenerational play in the context of leisure constraints.

Qualitative methods were utilized to explore the phenomenon of intergenerational play. Participants were sent questionnaires comprised of two portions: in the first section, participants were asked to draw themselves playing with their grandparent (or grandchild). Next, participants were given space to write their answers to several open-ended questions exploring their experience of playing with their grandparent/grandchild. The drawing portion of the questionnaire was based on the Draw-A-Science-Teacher-Test Checklist (DASTT-C) (Thomas, Pedersen & Finson, 2001). Recent leisure research has also used participant drawings to explore individuals' experiences on family holiday (Larsen, 2013) as well as children's perspectives on play (Duncan, 2015). This method provided an additional perspective on intergenerational play than could be gained from participants' written answers alone.

Sixteen grandparent and grandchild dyads participated in the study. One dyad included two grandchildren, so the total number of grandchildren was 17 and grandparents was 16. Grandparents ranged in age from 60-71 years (mean = 65.5) and were primarily females ( $n = 13$ ). Grandchildren ranged in age from seven to 10 years (mean = 8.38); 12 grandchildren were female, and five were male. This age range of grandchildren was selected so that children would be old enough to be able to write their own answers to the questions. Themes regarding constraints, constraint negotiation and leisure affordances will be presented below.

*Constraints.* Grandparents and grandchildren are constrained by grandparent physical limitations, geographical distance, and behavior issues. Physical limitations included health issues, lack of energy, and not being able to do certain activities. Both grandparents and grandchildren identified grandparents' energy and physical limitations as constraints. Another constraint described by several participants is the distance they live from their grandparent or grandchild, thus decreasing the amount of time they are able to spend together. Behavior issues were not mentioned by many participants, but included moodiness of grandchildren, competitiveness (by both), and bragging by grandparents.

*Constraint negotiation and leisure affordances.* Grandparents and grandchildren negotiated constraints to participation; in some cases, this included utilizing leisure affordances. Negotiation strategies included watching rather than participating, finding alternative activities, modifying the activity, and recognizing limitations. Several participants described moving from participant to spectator at times, or changing activities. One of the common strategies of negotiating constraints discussed by participants was finding activities that *both* grandparent and grandchild could participate in together. Sometimes participants indicated the need to modify a certain activity. Recognizing limitations was also discussed by several participants.

Participants created leisure affordances (such as maintaining health or increasing physical ability through surgery), utilized affordances (including using chairs to watch grandchild play and using technology to keep in touch), and recognized affordances (personal characteristics that made participation possible such as positive attitude and willingness to try). Good health and maintaining health was an affordance identified by both grandchildren and grandparents. Some participants described affordances they utilized for both participating in play and for keeping in touch. Participants also described positive attitude and willing to make an effort as affordances.

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

This study has several implications for recreation and leisure professionals, scholars, and others working with families and older adults. Recreation professionals and organizations that provide services for older adults may draw from the findings of this study to support efforts to facilitate intergenerational interactions. Recreation programmers may consider developing programs targeting aging adults and their grandchildren—activities including arts and crafts and exercise classes that allow both groups to work together. Some recreation organizations are currently providing such programs, but this is a service area that may deserve further attention.

Additionally, service providers may explore ways to provide intergenerational activities for adults and children who may not live near their grandchild or grandparent. An example of this may be found in the increase in collaborative efforts between senior care facilities and elementary schools. A recent study (Cohen-Mansfield & Jensen, 2015) indicated that such programs are increasing in prevalence. These programs may include intergenerational daycares that allow children and seniors to share play experiences. Cohen-Mansfield and Jensen indicated that children who participate in intergenerational programs experience academic, social, and emotional benefits and that adult participants experience beneficial effects as well.

The current study further supports the previous calls for the development of technologies to facilitate intergenerational play across distances (Tee, Brush, & Inkpen, 2009; Vetere, Davis, Gibbs, & Howard, 2009). Similarly, existing technologies should be utilized to allow for playful interactions between family members across space. Opportunities for face-to-face contact within geographically separated grandparent-grandchild dyads are limited, but such contact is believed to be an important factor in relationship development (Holladay & Seipke, 2007). The current study suggests that it may be important to infuse play into the technology-based interactions between geographically separated grandparents and grandchildren. It may also be important to educate older adults about the resources that may be available to them and how to utilize these resources to engage in play with their grandchildren.

Sarah Agate, The College at Brockport, SUNY, (58) 395-2994, [sagate@brockport.edu](mailto:sagate@brockport.edu)

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## **PARTICIPANT DRAWINGS AS VISUAL DATA**

Sarah Taylor Agate, The College at Brockport, State University of New York

Joel R. Agate, The College at Brockport, State University of New York

Lynda Cochran, The College at Brockport, State University of New York

Both researchers and practitioners are often searching for creative methods to gather data from certain populations that may have difficulty utilizing traditional data collection methods. The current study was seeking to gather data from children and older adults (in a project exploring intergenerational play between children and their grandparents). In an effort to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' play experiences, the researchers utilized both visual and text data. The specific methods they utilized and why they were useful (especially for children) will be described below. The researchers will also present how this type of data collection can be useful for researchers and practitioners attempting to gather data from children, or other difficult-to-assess populations. Whether in a research project or a program evaluation, these methods may help researchers and practitioners gather information through creative methods.

### **Methods**

A qualitative approach was employed to explore the phenomenon of intergenerational play. Duncan recently (2015) described semiotic theory as a tool to help scholars understand people's play experiences. Semiotics is a theory of signification, which describes how signs are made and interpreted to derive meaning. It refers to, 'the process of interpreting signs, symbols, and sign systems' (Denzin, 1987, p. 2). Social-semiotics is a subfield of semiotics, which places particular emphasis on making meaning of signs and symbols. Kress (2010) described social semiotics as 'a theory that deals with meaning in all its appearances, in all social occasions and in all cultural sites' (p. 3). Drawing on the work of Kress (1997; 2010), Duncan indicated that people, and children in particular, use a multimodal approach to communicate through text, speech, lines, and other signs and symbols. In social semiotics, these signs help people to understand and interpret meaning from the communication while considering the social experience of the communicator. The researchers designed the current study to incorporate communication that included text and visual aspects, two types of signs described in semiotic theory.

Harper (2005) stated that visual documentation is a part of research triangulation by "confirming theories using different forms of data" (p. 748). Visual data includes photographs, observation, and participant drawings. Although using visual information can provide different insights and perspective than verbal or written qualitative data, Harper noted that it is underutilized in social science research. In addition to the written qualitative data generated by participants, this study used the projective method (Bailey, 1994; Riddick & Russell, 2015) of having participants draw a picture of themselves playing with their grandparent or grandchild. This method provided a different perspective on intergenerational play than could be gathered from participants' written or verbal answers alone.

A sample of grandparent/grandchild dyads was recruited to participate in the study. Twenty grandparents and 21 grandchildren were invited to participate in the study. Questionnaires were returned by 16 grandparents (resulting in an 80% response rate) and 17 grandchildren (for a response rate of 81%). Sixteen grandparents participated in the study, ranging in age from 60-71 years, with an average age of 65.5. The grandparent sample consisted primarily of females ( $n=13$ ). Seventeen grandchildren participated in the study (one grandparent had two grandchildren who participated). Twelve of the grandchildren participants were female and five were male. The sample ranged in age from seven to 10 years, averaging 8.38.



Two questionnaires were developed for this study: one for the grandparent participants and another for the grandchildren. Each of the questionnaires used for data collection was comprised of two sections. The first section asked participants to draw a picture of themselves playing with their grandparent/grandchild and to briefly describe what each person was doing in the picture (i.e., “What are you doing in the picture?” “What is your grandparent doing in the picture?”). This portion of the instrument was based on the Draw-A-Science-Teacher-Test Checklist (DASTT-C) (Thomas, Pedersen, & Finson, 2001), which used drawings to explore mental models and beliefs. Recent leisure research has similarly used participant drawings to understand people’s experiences on family holiday (Larsen, 2013) and to understand children’s perspectives on play (Duncan, 2015). The second section of the instruments consisted of questions designed to prompt further exploration of the intergenerational play experience. Participants were asked seven open-ended questions that prompted discussion of motivations and constraints experienced when playing with their grandparent/grandchild and the perceived benefits of such play.

### **Analysis and Results**

A qualitative analysis was undertaken to analyze both the visual and written data. Data were analyzed in two stages. First, the participant drawings were analyzed. Researchers analyzed the drawings using open and axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2007; Merriam, 2009) and made an initial list of topics. Second, participants’ open-ended answers were analyzed also using open and then axial coding. More topics were generated that were added to the initial list. Topics were then grouped into categories. Themes were subsequently written that synthesized the topics within a given category. Quotes were selected from participants’ answers that illustrated each theme. An overall theme was produced that synthesized the themes, and a concept map was created that combined the categories and themes and graphically depicted the overall theme. (These results regarding intergenerational play will be presented in another abstract based on leisure constraints and affordances.)

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

The use of innovative methods in the current study has important implications for researchers and practitioners attempting to gather information from children or other populations that are difficult to assess. Visual data may be particularly useful when attempting to gain children’s perspectives due to their limited ability to express themselves verbally and in writing. Some of the participants (both grandparents and grandchildren) also indicated that they appreciated being able to think about the questions for some time before writing their answers or drawing their picture. The methods utilized gave participants time to think about the questions being asked and reflect on their experience, thus being able to be more thoughtful in their responses. Incorporating visual data and giving participants time to reflect on their experiences before writing/drawing their responses resulted in rich data that gave the researchers valuable insight into participants’ experiences. Visual components can be utilized in a variety of ways, including something as simple as smiley face/frowny face options when exploring children’s experience with a program. Being creative with data collection methods can help researchers and practitioners better explore questions and evaluate programs from a variety of perspectives.

Sarah Taylor Agate, The College at Brockport, State University of New York, (585) 395-2994, [sagate@brockport.edu](mailto:sagate@brockport.edu)

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## **DESIGN-BUILD CONSTRUCTION AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD SPRAY PARK**

Paula Upright, Western Kentucky University

Tricia Jordan, Western Kentucky University

Used in a variety of projects the design-build construction method employs a single entity to design and construct the finished project (Jerger & Fahmy, 2006). This provides several benefits to the contracting entity including cost savings, quicker project completion, and unification of recommendations by designers and contractors (DBIA, 2014). Recently, this project delivery method has gained ground as the construction choice for those in the sport and recreation industry. Sport and recreation facilities constructed using this methodology include Denver's Invesco Field at Mile High, Portland State University's Academic and Student Recreation Center (ASRC) and the Hofstra University Arena (Cohen, 2001; Koller, 2013). While a good fit for some situations, it does not work in all projects as the design-build construction method has several challenges. These challenges include loss of control and quality, a decreased system of checks and balances that accompanies the employment of independent contractors, and difficulty finding construction professionals competent in the design-build approach (Selby & Bottomley, 2009). Those successfully utilizing design-build construction have a clear understanding of project scope (Lam, Chan, & Chan 2008; Songer & Molenaar, 1997). It is equally important to select the correct project for the approach, thoroughly prepare your request for proposals (RFP), utilize an RFP assessment method based on value versus solely on lowest price, minimize changes, involve the owner in design and construction, and trust the system (Jerger & Fahmy, 2006). This case study provides an in-depth understanding of the processes and lessons learned from one rural community's use of design-build construction to complete their neighborhood spray park. The park is a water feature area that does not include a swimming pool. Information gained from the study provides other professionals seeking to use design-build construction with an understanding of the process and potential suggestions to consider before implementation within their project.

### **Methods**

For this project researchers used a qualitative research methodology. The use of a single case allowed the researchers the opportunity to discover an understanding of the process and context of the subject under investigation (Merriam, 1998). The use of case study research designs further serve to allow for an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning those involved in the experience assign (Schramm, 1971). Data collection occurred through the use of semi-structured interviews of key informants, document mining, and project construction observations. The city engineer and the community development director, both of whom were involved in all phases of the project from start to completion were interviewed, these lasted approximately two hours. Both interviews were taped and transcribed. The detailed description of the case provides the foundation of qualitative analysis (Patton, 2002). This description further allows those exposed to the material the basis of determining how transferrable the lessons learned may be (Merriam, 1998).

### **Results and Discussion**

The Western Kentucky community utilizing design-build construction for their spray park construction employs a city administrator, full time mayor and thirteen departments. Key departments involved in the project included engineering, city administration/community development and park, recreation and cemeteries. The municipality's approved general budget is approximately 7.3 million of which 1.1 million is set aside for park, recreation and cemeteries with a total of approximately \$700,000 allocated to parks and recreation. The spray park serves a neighborhood community adding to the neighborhood's current park. Originally promised a swimming pool sev-

eral years earlier several community meetings occurred to gain support for the spray park. Four sources provided funding for the spray park including city funding, coal severance funding, private donations, and community business & civic club donations. Key informants shared several lessons learned. These include challenges and learning curve associated with spray park features and lack of contractors with turnkey knowledge of these facilities, the benefits of multiple revenue streams for the project, and the need for updating state safety regulations to account for the unique features of a standalone spray park. Regarding the importance of a schedule of values providing payment delivery benchmarks, a key informant stated, "I think it is very important to have worked with other projects on a schedule of values. Had that not been in there, I don't know that we'd be sitting here today with a completed project."

### **Implications for Practice**

Findings provided a unique look at the use of design-build construction for park and recreation aquatic facilities. Overall, the community met many of the benchmarks that lead to successful design-build projects including working closely with the contractor hired to complete the project, utilization of a RFP, and keeping changes to a minimum (Jergeas & Fahmy, 2006). Lessons learned that should be considered with future design-build construction projects in any recreational setting include knowledge and funding. A final lesson learned related to state safety regulations. While the city engineer had utilized design-build construction in other projects and had experience with swimming pool construction he did not, nor did the firm contracted to complete the design-build project, have knowledge of this construction delivery method for spray parks. This knowledge gap resulted in challenges (i.e., poor pump room planning and poor spray park feature layout) that lead to project changes. These changes added to the project's overall budget and decreased the speed in which the project was completed. As a result, the informants suggest paying close attention to the knowledge/experience level related to design-build construction and project type (i.e. aquatic facilities). Key informants also suggested these challenges mitigated potentially two benefits of design-build construction (i.e. reduced cost and quicker project delivery). Additionally, using different revenue streams to fund the project was a great asset. This allowed the municipality some degree of flexibility in relationship to project payment schedules and the ability to absorb additional project expenses. Key informants felt the ability to develop and use a schedule of values to establish a project payment schedule was extremely beneficial. They noted flexibility with this payment schedule and the ability to absorb additional costs may not be possible if project funding is not diverse or if the municipality is operating on a very tight project budget. Finally, the unique nature of the spray park and its features suggests the need to revisit state safety regulations for swimming pools to help communities utilize resources effectively while providing a safe environment for spray park participants. Specific to this case the requirement of a rescue hook to meet safety codes for a swimming pool may not be the most effective use of safety equipment or equipment funding for a standalone spray park.

Paula Upright, Western Kentucky University, (270) 745-3004, paula.upright@wku.edu

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## **FARMERS' MARKET AS A COMMUNITY SPACE: PERCEPTION OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES**

Melissa S. Weddell, Appalachian State University

Iryna Sharaievska, Appalachian State University

Stephanie T. West, Appalachian State University

### **Introduction**

According to NRPA's mission, "...all people – no matter the color of their skin, age, income level, or ability" should have "access to programs, facilities, places, and spaces that make their lives and communities great... Because of this, people connect with one another and build bonds that last a lifetime" (National Recreation and Park Association, 2016). While local parks can certainly create such sense of community and long lasting friendships, other spaces in the community may also promote these benefits. Particularly in rural or inner-city areas where access to recreation facilities and programs might be limited, farmers' markets might serve the role of the community hub (Johnson, 2013; Szmigin, Maddock, & Carrigan, 2003). With the fast growth of farmers' markets in the U.S. (from 1,755 in 1994 to 8,144 in 2013), those spaces exist in multiple communities (USDA, 2013). They are also often located in public places, such as parking lots and streets, public parks and churches, and community spaces (Ostrom & Donovan, 2013), and as a result, central to the community and easily accessible. Unfortunately, not all groups of population have equitable access to farmers' market. For example, the results of a study by Farmer, Chancellor, Robinson, West, and Weddell (2014) showed that the use of farmers' markets depends on a mixture of variables, including gender, education, income, and social connectedness. The authors also suggested that "various segments of population may not be driven by the same value motivations (and levels)" (p. 322) to use farmers' markets.

As a result, this study attempts to explore ways to ensure more equitable access to such hubs of the community as farmers' markets. More specifically, the objectives of this study were to understand a) farmers' market visitation pattern among low income families, b) perceptions of low income families about farmers' market, c) perception of constraints to and benefits of farmers' market visitation among low-income families, and d) recommendations for improvement of farmers' market.

Using the findings from this study, administrators of farmers' markets can create enjoyable and utilitarian environments that could serve as locations for buying healthy food and serve as local community centers that bring residents of different backgrounds together (Johnson, 2013). Similar to how community gardens can be used in cities to integrate people of different racial backgrounds (Shinew, Glover, & Parry, 2004), community farmers' markets can serve as spaces for sharing meaningful experiences by members of different social class.

### **Methods**

To collect data for this study, 15 in-depth interviews were conducted with low-income families in rural Appalachia during the spring of 2014. Participants were recruited using a convenience sampling technique with the assistance of the local District Health Department. The semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with residents of the community who were using SNAP (former WIC–Women, Infants, and Children) benefits and volunteered to participate in the study. Participants consisted of 15 low-income women of different ages who had families with diverse structures, including single-parent, cohabiting partners and married couples with one to three children. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim with the participants' agreement. Data analysis continued along with data collection, until the point of data saturation was



reached (Charmaz, 2006). The data were analyzed using the open, axial, selective coding technique (Strauss, 1987).

## Results

Three major themes emerged from the data: a) farmers' market visitation pattern among low-income families, b) perceptions of low-income families about farmers' market, c) perception of constraints to and benefits of farmers' market visitation among low-income families, and d) recommendations for improvement of farmers' markets.

Results from this study indicated that although participants had overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards local farmers' markets, they did not *attend* it on a regular basis. Out of 15 participants, only five people visited farmers' market at least once and only one of them visited farmers' market on a regular basis (six to eight times per season). Those who never visited farmers' market either did not know about it (five individuals) or were constrained by some factors (five individuals).

To explore the participants' *perception of farmers' market* they were asked to discuss atmosphere and people who visit farmers' market. The interviewees described atmosphere as leisurely, "not rushed, fun, life music, and they have face painting for the kids, and people are really jovial," "open and kind of laid back," "friendly," "It's just a really great atmosphere."

They also described it as a family place, "There are a lot of kids with their parents so when you bring your kids to the FM too, you get to shop for a good food while your kids get to play outside a little bit and hang out with other people." The participants described people who are most likely to visit farmers' market as local, older people of higher SES, people with kids, "granola," and tourists.

Among main *constraints* the participants named high prices, inconvenient location and operational hours (Saturday morning), and crowds. The participants also named several *benefits* of farmers' market, including feeling good about supporting local economy and farmers by buying "fresh, local, good, home-grown, healthy" food. They also appreciated "more personal, inspiring atmosphere", and community created by "better mix of people than there is at Walmart." Lastly, participants enjoyed being outside and element of surprise, or "not knowing what's going to be there."

The interviewees provided several *recommendations* to administrators of farmers' markets that would facilitate increase in visitation. Those suggestions included multiple and more central locations that are "children friendly," more convenient and more regular schedule, better promotion to local residents (through local businesses and newspapers), better prices and promotion deals, variety of payment types, tent or roof to protect from weather.

## Discussion and Implication for Practice

Community spaces that provide people with sense of community and facilitate development of friendships lasting the lifetime might have various facades. The participants of this study provided valuable recommendations for ensuring higher visitation of farmers' markets, particularly among members of the community who might experience more significant constraints. While such functional factors like location, schedule, prices, and tent would be among most important to consider, other factors that create atmosphere should be also accounted. Having a welcoming space that is family friendly (far from the road, safe for children), has music and activities for kids, provides surprise factor, and fun, jovial environment, would allow opportunities for building sense of community among people of different backgrounds. Opportunities for collaboration between parks and recreation departments and farmers markets might open new way to create equitable society.

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## **PROMOTING TEAM SPORT PARTICIPATION AMONG OLDER WOMEN: WHY AND HOW**

Stephanie T. West, Appalachian State University

Toni Liechty, University of Illinois

Julie Son, University of Idaho

Jill Naar, Virginia Tech University

Although research into older women's experiences playing team sports is limited, current literature exists related to leisure, aging and sport. The proportion of the population over the age of 65 is rapidly growing and in the U.S. is expected to be more than a quarter of the population by 2050. In order to better meet the needs of this segment of the population, increasing research has begun to address the experiences of leisure and aging (e.g., Gibson & Singleton, 2012; Theriault, Shores, West, & Naar, 2010). Previous research suggests leisure can play an important role in adapting to age-related changes (e.g., retirement, widowhood, disability) and in overall health and well-being in later life (Heo, Stebbins, Kim, & Lee, 2013; Stevens-Ratchford, 2014). Public health professionals have increasingly focused on physical activity among older adults because of the numerous health benefits of physical activity and because the majority of this age group is physically inactive (Azagba & Sharaf, 2014). Despite the emphasis on increasing physical activity among older adults, social norms often do not support older adults' participation in competitive sport as a means of promoting physical activity (Dionigi, 2006; Dionigi & O'Flynn, 2007). Yet the number of older adults participating in competitive sports is growing (Dionigi, 2005, 2006). One explanation for this may be that sport participation provides a number of benefits that encourage healthy aging. Specifically for older women, sport provides an opportunity through which they can experience empowerment as they resist stereotypes about age and gender (Dionigi, 2002, 2005). Despite our understanding of the value of physically active leisure for older women, little research has addressed older women's experiences of playing team sports. This paper will therefore explore the experiences of older women who play competitive softball in later life and the meanings they attribute to participation.

### **Methods**

This study took a qualitative approach in order to allow the participants to express their experiences of playing a team sport and the meanings they associated with playing (Merriam, 2009). A qualitative approach is valuable for understanding sport and aging because it provides "alternative ways of making sense of older adults and the relationship with competitive sport to what is typically found in the sport and aging literature" (Dionigi, 2006). The sample consisted of 64 women ages 55 to 79 (mean age of 69.3) who played on six teams in the North Carolina Senior Games program. Two-thirds of the sample were retired and an additional five reported only working part-time. Almost half indicated they had started playing softball as youth or teens, whereas twelve women indicated they were over age fifty when they started playing. The women participated in focus groups composed of players from the same team. The focus groups were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim using the notes as a guide. Furthermore, transcripts were returned to the teams to check for accuracy. The transcripts were analyzed using open, axial, and selective coding (Charmaz, 2014).

### **Results**

Findings provided insight into the motivations, benefits and challenges participants experienced related to playing softball. For all participants, their experiences were heavily related to their perceptions of aging. Five of the overarching themes of aging that emerged including: a) the impor-

tance of playing softball to stay active in later life, b) the importance of playing softball in later life to their sense of self-worth, c) the value of playing softball to developing and maintaining close friendships in later life, d) the need for specialized programs to support team sports participation in later life, and e) methods recreation professionals can use to improve the team sport experience of older women. Participants expressed a high priority in staying active both physically and mentally in later life. The women viewed the joy and fun of the game as a key motivator in their participation. "I'm not ready to sit around in that rocking chair. I'm ready to be active, and hike, and play ball, and have a good time." Similarly, participants said playing softball increased their energy levels. Participants felt the experience of movement helped them delay or cope with health limitations and the negative aspects of aging. Participants also expressed a sense of pride in resisting the stereotype of being old: "I'm proud to be as old as I am and still play ball...I remember my Grandma, when I was young...all she did was sit in the chair." The value of competitive softball in helping them to develop and maintain friendships was also cited frequently, as was their need for programs designed to accommodate their needs and physical limitations. For example, most leagues allow teams to have designated runners and extra outfielders to accommodate the reduced ability of many players to run quickly. Cindy described playing on a team with younger players as "a whole lot of stress because they're always pointing out how old I am." In contrast, she described playing with women over 50 as being "a whole different world...I feel like I can still compete and everyone accepts me better." In addition to identifying reasons they participated, participants offered several suggestions for promoting competitive sports among older women. According to one participant, "terminology is important, it should be called masters sports." Other recommendations included treating teams for older adults as important as those for younger adults by providing quality fields and budget for competing or traveling, scheduling appropriate practice times, and making extra efforts to promote available opportunities.

### **Discussion and Implications for Practice**

Findings emphasizing pride support literature which suggests leisure empowers participants and helps them resist ageist stereotypes in later life (Dionigi, 2002; Moe, 2014). The findings also extend existing literature by identifying team sport as an optimal activity for facilitating resistance as older women continue to play through an adapted, but still competitive, environment. Similarly related to softball's ability to help respondents stay active contribute to the literature by highlighting older women's varied and holistic perspectives of active aging (Boudiny, 2013). Adapted rules and policies were found to promote women's competitive participation and, as such, the study provides support for selective optimization with compensation for older adult sport, extending previous research on physical activity in later life (Son, Kerstetter, Mowen, & Payne, 2009; Zeigelmann, Jochen, & Lippke, 2007). Interestingly, participants rarely critiqued or explicitly discussed constraints to playing softball. Despite describing factors that might be considered constraints (e.g., lack of organized leagues, discouragement from family members), women responded "none" when asked what constraints they faced. More specific questions, however, led to suggestions of how recreation professionals might improve the team sport experience of older women. Findings from this study highlight the benefits experienced by older women who play softball. This study extends existing literature by exploring older women's experiences with team sport and highlighting the need for competitive team sport opportunities in addition to activities that may be stereotypically associated with later life.

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## **ASSOCIATION BETWEEN ORGANIZED SPORTS AND POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Jen Wilenta, Montclair State University

Children may struggle with many aspects of life such as responsibility, self-esteem, social acceptance, and self-confidence. Adolescents deal with a variety of biological, social, emotional, and psychological changes in order to effectively enter the adult world (Holt, 2008). Research has found heightened depression levels are common in girls during early and middle adolescence (Zarrett et al., 2008). Adolescents today face obstacles on the way to adulthood, from time-crunched parents, dangerous substances and behaviors, overburdened schools, and a more demanding job market. This supported the idea that adolescents should no longer be on their own during the out-of-school hours (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

However, instead of being seen as problems to manage, youth can be seen as resources to be developed (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Organized activities give youth a healthy way to spend their leisure time. The “organized” aspect of activities teaches participants the importance of characteristics such as teamwork, trust, and reliability (e.g., Mueller, Lewin-Bizan, & Urban, 2011; Theokas, 2009). Positive behavioral outcomes are measured as the absence of negative behaviors, but efforts are ongoing to develop and test measures of healthy adolescent development (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). “All young people have problems in need of fixing, as well as the capability to contribute and solve problems. Research suggests that the best way to help young people solve problems is to involve them as problem solvers; high-risk youth are typically those most in need of opportunities to participate and take action” (Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem, & Ferber, 2003, p. 25). Lack of problems is not the same as positive development. Removing a negative does not imply it is replaced with a positive. All children are in need of healthy positive development.

Research has found that children who participate in organized activities show signs of positive youth development (PYD) more often than children who do not participate (Lerner, 2005; Mahoney, Vandell, Simpkins, & Zarrett, 2009). Sport and other organized activity participation provides an environment for adolescents to develop their identities and explore their emotions (Holt & Sehn, 2008). After-school organized sport activities have the potential to provide children with an arena to work through conflict resolution in nonthreatening ways. Athletes may learn to regulate emotions through sport because it is a setting in which they must learn to deal with stress in order to be successful performers (Holt & Jones, 2008). Well-structured child centered sport activities benefit mental and physical health of participants. The foundation for a successful or healthy adulthood begins during childhood and adolescence (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

### **Methods**

The current study aims to understand the parental perspective regarding the role of organized sports in youth development. Specifically, it addresses whether grammar school-aged children who participate in organized sports have higher levels of PYD compared to those who do not participate or who minimally participate.

This study uses a cross-sectional nonequivalent group design. Primary data was collected using surveys that were sent to all students in grades one through six in the only two public grammar schools in Secaucus, NJ in the 2012-13 academic year. Quantitative surveys (PYDI-S) were sent home in each student’s backpack in Spring 2013 (Arnold, Nott, & Meinhold, 2012). One parent/guardian was asked to complete a series of questions about their family background, child’s sport participation, and a measure of PYD characteristics that was adapted so that parents could report on their perception of their children’s positive development.



Participants were self-identified as sport participants or non-sport participants. A convenience sampling approach was used to choose the schools. The sample of children was 50.3% male ( $n = 98$ ) with a mean age of 9 (with a range from 6-12 years-old). Most of the participants were White/European American 41% ( $n = 80$ ) and approximately two-thirds of participants (66%,  $n = 128$ ) participate in sports.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

This quantitative study explored the views of 195 parents/guardians pertaining to their children's youth development and participation in out of school activities. Spanning over grades 1-6 (ages 6-12), youth athletes' and non-athletes' positive development was assessed. Higher rates of PYD were anticipated in athletes, but instead, participation in sports did not generate any difference when compared to non-athletes. The PYD results of this current study suggest that only one activity alone may not increase the PYD levels. Also referred to as the pile-up hypothesis, this suggests that the strength of activities lies in the collective pile-up of effects across multiple contexts (Schilling & Diehl, 2014).

Children are expected to meet many requirements during after school hours: homework, studying, practice, games/competitions, chores, family obligations, etc. Although not all researchers agree, the overscheduling hypothesis supports the idea that intense participation during the adolescent ages can lead to internal stress, anxiety, and unhappiness throughout young adulthood (Mahoney & Vest, 2012). There is no set number of hours that researchers recommend to spend in organized sports, but there is literature stating the possibility of too many hours spent in sports being detrimental to youth (Fredricks, 2012). Time commitment and external pressures from adults are believed to contribute to poor psychosocial adjustment for youth (Mahoney, Harris, & Eccles, 2006).

### **Implications for Practice**

Adolescents are active individuals and their life experiences imply they learn best by doing rather than by talking (Theokas, Danish, Hodge, Heke, & Forneris, 2008). Participation in organized activities promotes PYD in multiple aspects. Both internal and external assets are heightened with participation. Human development can only be understood if examined over a prolonged period of time. Thus, in youth sport programs, the time element should focus on how playing and training activities change throughout development (Cote, Strachan, & Fraser-Thomas, 2008). Long-term evaluation is imperative for understanding how participation in sport-based PYD programs influences transitions from childhood into adolescence, and adolescence into adulthood (Holt & Jones, 2008). Sports are a healthy alternative to risky behaviors such as substance abuse and violence, and are easily accessible activities throughout communities.

Jen Wilenta, Montclair State University, (973) 655-4077, wilentaj@mail.montclair.edu

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## **AFTER CAMP MATTERS: ENGAGE YOUTH IN THE DIGITAL LANDSCAPE**

Yi-Ju Wu, Texas A&M University

Corliss Outley, Texas A&M University

A camp program is not only a socialization unit to build on identified skills but also a particular context where youths naturally feel being cared for, attached, belonging, and connected (Bernat & Resnick, 2009; Marsh, 1999; Sweatman & Heintzman, 2004). A lot of intra- and interpersonal social activities designed to engage in team building and psychological support while attending camp leads many youth to find a sense of connectedness among the relationships with other camp community members (Goodwin & Lieberman, 2011; Sibthorp et al., 2013). A growing body of research indicates that increased levels of sense of connectedness among adolescents are closely related to their maturation process and positive feelings of well-being in adulthood (Barber & Schluterman, 2008; Stoddard et al., 2011; Uchino et al., 1996). Though campers feel deeply connected and generate individual outcomes during their stay at camp, research illustrates that those will gradually dissipate with the loss of face-to-face contact (Bialeschki et al., 2007; Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007). Given the importance of adolescents' sense of connectedness and maintenance of other camp outcomes for their maturation process, the development of a reliable mechanism to assist young people in staying connected may significantly support adolescents' development (Duerden, Witt, & Taniguchi, 2012). With the increasing number of Internet technology use among youths, the digital landscape has become an alternative space that will allow campers to stay connected at the conclusion of camp (Goodwin & Lieberman, 2011; Musman & Slay, 2010; Salzman, 2000; Schoenberg, 2008). Camp programs have developed a variety of the activities (e.g., camp program marketing, online camp counselors training, and a variety of online youth camp programs) to engage campers in the digital landscape during the off-season (Branstetter, 2008; Gillard et al., 2011; Musman & Slay, 2010; Salzman, 2000; Schlag, 2008; Schoenberg, 2008) and has resulted in many youth maintaining a sense of connectedness (Wu, Outley, Matarrita-Cascante, Murphrey, 2015). While the development of a digital landscape to support youth's sense of connection after camp participation seems to be a necessary next step, evidence based on a theoretical framework is still limited. This study explores youth and staff perceptions of an eCommunity camp extension activity designed to maintain a sense of connectedness among campers during the off-season in the digital landscape.

### **Methods**

A five-day residential camp in Southern California served as the study setting. The objectives of the residential camp were to empower young people's sense of connectedness to increase campers self-identity and thereby strengthen their positive connections to the social environment. The authors utilized the Positive Technology Development (PTD) (Bers, 2012; Karcher, 2005) theoretical framework to design an eCommunity to serve as a camp extension activity in order to maintain the sense of connectedness in the digital landscape. Campers were expected to sustain the feelings of connections via interpersonal interactions (i.e., communication, collaboration, community-building) and intrapersonal involvement (i.e., content creation, creativity, choice of conduct) in eCommunity activities as presented in the PTD framework. Two focus group interviews were conducted with nine campers and nine camp staff at a camp reunion in Southern California two months after camp had ended. A total of nine campers aged 13 to 17 years, six males and three females participated in focus groups regarding youth's perspectives of connectedness in the digital landscape. All of the participants had utilized the eCommunity for at least two months before the focus group was conducted. A total of nine camp staff aged 20 to 26 years, four males and five females with

technology fluency and a college-level educational background participated. The qualitative data collection of this study aimed to bring a tentative explanation of a phenomenon and the meaning of the use of digital landscape after camp. A framework analysis of the qualitative data was adopted for the purpose of the study and the thematic framework identification was used to generate the themes to interpret the findings of the study.

## **Results**

Our analysis describes the essential elements that the youth felt were warranted to stay connected and strategies a camp program might consider in order to engage campers during the off-season in the digital landscape. Three major themes were collected through focus group interview with campers to stay connected in the digital landscape. The first themes related to *convenience of social media*. Social media served as a common destination for many of the youth to update others on special life events, share personal stories and announce gaming results during their daily routines. In addition, Internet technology provided an accessible path to encourage the youth to *maintain positive social interactions*. Campers felt they could safely develop their social skills, engage in status negotiation, and socialize positively with peers. Finally, the development of a *distinct social group* became essential in their sense of connectedness and was based on mutual trust, acceptance, and common interests. Three major themes were also identified through focus groups with camp staff on how to engage campers in the digital landscape during the off-season. The first theme was to *expand the digital playground* to make it easy to access by linking to various platforms (i.e., Facebook and Snapchat) that were utilized by youth on a daily basis. The second theme focused on *support of multimedia use in the platform*. Camp staff believe that visual information such as pictures and video was a mediator to recall camper's memories for their camp experiences and encourage intentional interactions with the use of Internet technology after camp. The final theme was the *application of attractive incentives* to facilitate campers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to participate in online extension activities.

## **Implications for Practice**

Findings suggest the easy accessibility of social media makes it a common destination for campers to stay connected with camp friends and maintain social interaction that they obtained from being a vital member of a social group. In a digital landscape, youths are allowed to maintain *and* continually develop their sense of connectedness within the camp community by being involving in each other's social life and shared activities. Though the digital landscape involves a certain level of risk, it's hard to ignore the role of the digital playground in today's youth's social life. Researchers need to re-define the advantage of digital landscape to promote the development of youth's sense of connectedness. Youth practitioners should further investigate the strategies needed to extend camp program outcomes into youth's daily life. Findings also suggest that adults should take the consideration of youth's daily routine, preferences of social activities in the digital playground and personal needs for current and future skills in the design of an eCommunity. To effectively deliver online camp extension activity during the off-season, the camp program may want to first investigate campers' participation in the digital landscape by developing initial online extension activities with physical camp materials, and then further deliver online extension activity to engage campers for the coming season.

Yi-Ju Wu, Texas A&M University, (979)-847-5894, [yiju\\_wu@tamu.edu](mailto:yiju_wu@tamu.edu)

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## **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS LINKED TO IMPROVED SCHOOL BEHAVIOR**

Heng-Chieh Jamie Wu, Michigan State University.

Laurie A. Van Egeren, Michigan State University.

### **Background**

Compared to a typical school day, after-school programs offered by parks and recreation agencies or school districts have greater flexibility in the curriculum design and activity delivery. Currently, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) for youth is one of the most commonly discussed themes among after-school professionals because it is believed to be critical to the 21<sup>st</sup> century success (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2008). SEL is defined as the process through which individuals learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make responsible decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships and avoid negative behaviors (Elias et al., 1997; Payton et al., 2008). SEL interventions often focus on youth's emotional management, empathy, teamwork, responsibility, initiative and problem-solving skills (Smith, McGovern, Larson, Hillaker, & Peck, 2016). Because learning occurs in the context of human relationships and positive relationships increase students' desire to learn, many studies have shown that SEL contributes to better school behaviors and academic outcomes (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; Durlak & Weissberg, 2007; Schonfeld et al., 2015). Although the findings are promising, the existing conclusions were only drawn from programs that implemented formal SEL curricula, which requires designated materials and professional development that are unavailable in many schools and communities (Schonfeld et al., 2015). In fact, national surveys have shown that about half of the youth today do not have sufficient social-emotional competency to meet the needs of their daily lives (Education Week Research Center, 2015; Lazarus & Sulkowski, 2011). Presumably, SEL, just like any other type of learning, can occur in many different ways and in less formal settings than the traditional school day. The purpose of this study was to examine whether youth's social-emotional learning experiences that naturally occurred through their after-school program participation is associated with improved school behavior. Unlike the previous studies, the majority of these after-school programs do not have a formal SEL curriculum in place. Rather, programs vary widely in the extent to which they prioritize SEL and adopt different levels of high-quality standards to put forth practices that support youth's SEL experiences (Smith, Garner, McGovern, Taylor, & Hennessey, 2010).

### **Samples**

Using data from the Michigan 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) state evaluation, the sample for the analyses consisted of 3,474 student participants in 4<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades from 247 after-school programs in 2014-15. The sample included complete data from four different sources: youth survey, teacher survey, school records, and after-school program attendance, representing 60% of the total surveyed students. Student gender was about equally split between males (52%) and females. The majority were low-income (84%), academically low-performing (78%) and racial minority (64%).

### **Measures**

*Change in school behavior* was reported by school-day teachers at the end of the school year for each student on a 7-point scale (1 significant decline ~ 7 significant improvement), with 10 questions capturing the student's school-day behaviors such as turning in homework on time, participating in class and being motivated to learn (Cronbach's alpha=.97). *Social emotional learning* was assessed by students completing an end-of-year survey regarding how much they had experienced SEL in the after-school programs. The 4-item Likert rating scale ranged from "not at all"



to “a lot”, with 16 items covering emotional regulation (i.e., “learned about controlling my temper,”), prosocial skills (i.e., “discussed morals and values,”), teamwork (i.e., “learned that it is not necessary to like people in order to work with them”) and leadership (i.e., “others in this program counted on me”). Because exploratory factor analysis showed all items formed one factor, a mean SEL score was computed (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.95).

### **Methods**

Because students were nested within programs, HLM 6.02 was employed. The intraclass correlation suggested that 20% variation among teacher ratings was due to program-level characteristics and warranted the use of multi-level modeling. Control variables included at the individual student level were demographics, number of days of program attendance, program satisfaction, and at the program-level were percent qualified for free or reduced price lunch and whether the program was an elementary, middle or high-school site.

### **Results**

Among the control variables, female students, students with limited English proficiency and students who were not low performing received better teacher ratings of their school improvement. Students’ grade level and whether the program was an elementary, middle or high school site were not significant factors; neither were students’ low-income status or the percent of low-income students served at the program. Youth’s program satisfaction was not related to their school behavioral changes as perceived by teachers, although more days of program attendance was, suggesting sustained participation in after-school programs in general is associated with improved student behaviors at school. After controlling for these variables, *students’ SEL experience in after-school programs was positively related to improved teacher ratings*. This suggests students who reported receiving greater SEL supports in after-school programs showed greater improvement at school as perceived by their teachers (See Table 1).

### **Conclusion and Implications for Practice**

In this study we examined whether students’ social and emotional learning (SEL) experiences that naturally occurred through participation in after-school programs were associated with improved school behavior rated by teachers. The study sample included 3,474 4<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> grades student participants from 247 after-school programs, with the majority of the programs located in low-income, low-performing schools. SEL instruction among these programs varied in degree and scope, and most did not follow any specific curriculum. Students who tended to have better teacher-rated school behaviors were more likely to be female, not academically at-risk, non-native English speakers, attending the program more and having more SEL experiences. This suggests that for students who are males, academically low-performing, native English-speakers, or participate in fewer days in after-school programs and may have particular academic benefits from participation in after-school programs through the pathway of SEL experiences. The positive association between SEL and enhanced school behavior is consistent with previous studies that only included programs with specific SEL interventions (Durlak et al., 2011; Durlak & Weissberg, 2007; Schonfeld et al., 2015). With results from this study that derived from a relatively large sample with a varying degree of SEL focus and youth receiving varying levels of SEL experiences, the study aims to provide the following implications for Parks and Recreation professionals: (1) to further understand the concepts of SEL and its benefits on healthy youth development, and (2) to identify the different components or forms of SEL that can be adopted in their own programs. For more information on SEL and how to utilize high-quality standards and practices in youth settings to promote SEL, go to <https://www.selpractices.org/> or <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/>

**Table 1***Effect Sizes of SEL and Other Significant Factors to Improved Teacher Rating*

<b>Measures</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Improved School Behaviors Rated by Teacher</b>
<b>Level 1 (individual level)</b>		
Female	Youth's gender	0.08***
Total program attended days	Number of program participation days	0.06**
Academically not at-risk	Year-end average or fall grade not below 3.0	0.09***
Students with limited English proficiency	Receive English as Second Language (ESL)/Limited English Proficiency (LEP) services	0.06**
Program Social Emotional Learning (SEL) experiences	Youth's reports on 16 questions regarding their after-school program SEL experiences, including emotional regulation, prosocial skills, teamwork, and leadership.	0.04*
Racial Minority	Youth identified as non-White, including: Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian or Others	0.00
Grade level	Youth's grade level	0.02
Poverty level	Youth receive free or reduced price meal	0.01
Program satisfaction	Youth program satisfaction rating	0.00
<b>Level 2 (program level)</b>		
Grade level served: Elementary school	Whether the site is serving primarily elementary school students	0.01
Grade level served: Middle school	Whether the site is serving primarily middle school students	0.01
% of academically low-performing students served	Percent of students who had year-end average or fall grade below 3.0	0.03
% of low income students	Percent of students who receive free or reduced price meal	0.01
<p><i>NOTE.</i> Effect size <math>r</math> interpretation: 0.1 = small, 0.30 = median, 0.50 = large.  *<math>p &lt; .05</math>; **<math>p &lt; .01</math>; ***<math>p &lt; .000</math>.</p>		

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## EXPERIENTIAL CROSS-CULTURAL LEARNING THROUGH LEISURE AMONG INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Hongping Zhang, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Yilun Zhou, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Monika Stodolska, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

In the 2014/15 academic year, almost a million international students were enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities (Institute of International Education, 2015). While transitioning to college can be difficult for most students, international students have to deal with additional stresses related to sociocultural differences (Mori, 2000; Tsenc & Newton, 2001) which was often interpreted from a cross-cultural learning perspective (Masgoret & Ward, 2006; Yamazaki & Kayes, 2004). The specific learning process was explained by Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory which considers learning to be a "holistic process of adaptation to the world" (p. 31). It consists of four steps: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Figure 1). The role of leisure experiences in exposing newcomers to the host culture and in helping them gain cultural understanding was explored by Kim, Park, Malonebeach, and Heo (2015), Kim (2012), and others. However, the relationship between leisure and sociocultural adjustment, especially among international students, received limited attention. Thus, the current study adopted the experiential learning framework (Kolb, 1984) to examine the role of leisure in cross-cultural learning among international students from China.

### Methods

Two rounds of semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with 15 first-year Chinese graduate students enrolled in a large Midwestern university. Their ages ranged from 21 to 25; 9 of them were women and 6 were men. The first round of interviews was conducted at the beginning of the students' first semester abroad and the second at the end of the semester. During the first round of interviews, participants' were asked about experiences of everyday leisure, cross-cultural learning, and sociocultural adjustment. During the second round, socialization with Americans and leisure engagements were explored. All interviews were carried out in Chinese and back translated to English for further analysis. The data were analyzed using constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

### Findings

*Concrete experience.* The findings revealed that concrete experience serves as the basis for observing and reflecting on cross-cultural differences. Three major types of leisure engagements that allowed for meaningful interactions with the host culture were reported. First, students participated in culture-orientated activities organized by university-affiliated organizations. For the most part, students joined such groups to improve language skills and to gain culture-specific knowledge. Second, students reported engaging in church activities, which confirms Yan and Berliner's (2011) finding that increasing number of Chinese students receive emotional or instrumental support from faith-based organizations. Interestingly, none of the participants reported themselves as Christian or willing to convert in the near future. Third, participants recalled attending parties, chatting in bars/coffee shops, and joining happy hours with American colleagues. They also mentioned confusion and uneasy feelings brought about by participation in these informal leisure activities.

*Reflective observation and abstract conceptualization.* In order to reduce the confusion and to increase understanding of the host nationals' behaviors, the reflective observation was employed. Based on the observation, new concepts were subsequently formed to guide future actions (Kolb, 1984). Besides the improvement of English skills, interviewees reported changes in the perception

of discrimination and stereotypes. During the second round of interviews, only one participant reported a continuous perception of discrimination, while the rest of them interpreted Americans' behavior in a more positive way. Moreover, their initial stereotypical perceptions of Americans were slowly replaced with a more nuanced understanding of American culture. For instance, after learning the rules of American football and watching several games, one of the students said, "Now I know Americans like football not just because they enjoy violence."

*Active experimentation.* Two active experimentation strategies were repeatedly mentioned by the interviewees: taking the initiative to increase contact and imitating host nationals' behavior. Even though cross-cultural interactions may lead to confusion, participants reported pushing themselves to interact with Americans, which provided opportunities for learning and increased their confidence in managing cross-cultural interactions. As one described her strategies to initiate conversations with strangers—a custom typical of American culture but alien to most Chinese.

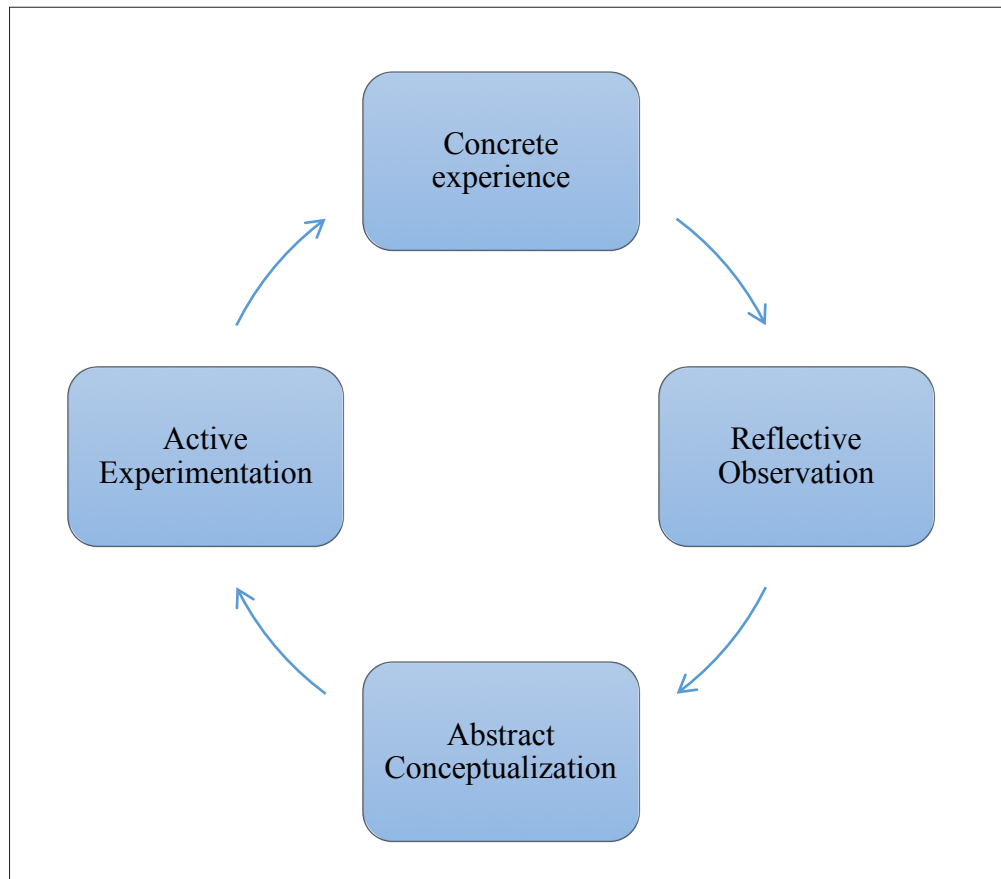
### **Discussion**

This study examined how international students applied experiential learning process in leisure contexts to further their sociocultural adjustment. Its findings supported results of previous research that leisure can be an effective facilitator of cross-cultural learning (Allen, Drane, Byon, & Mohn, 2010; Gómez, Alfredo, & Glass, 2014; Walker, Halpenny, & Deng, 2011). While the existing leisure research has been dominated by the emphasis on psychological adjustment and stress reduction strategies, and mainly employed coping frameworks (Ward, 1997), the findings of this study focused on the sociocultural aspects of adjustment and employed the cross-cultural learning approach. Since, as Ward (1997) argued, both psychological and sociocultural adjustments are integral parts of the acculturation process, this innovative approach helped us to add important insights into the leisure literature.

### **Implications for Practice**

With the increasing numbers of international students, universities and other organizations provide various services to fulfill international students' needs. The findings of this research shed light on how leisure-related events and training programs could help international students adjust to their life abroad. First, short orientations for first-year international students could teach strategies of how the experiential learning process can be employed by the students themselves to help them adjust quicker and more efficiently. Second, the design of cross-cultural training programs could be improved by guiding international students through the experiential learning process. Mak and her colleagues adopted observational learning for enhancing sociocultural adjustment among international students (e.g. Mak, Westwood, Barker, & Ishiyama, 1998; Mak & Buckingham, 2007). Their training was shown to reduce social avoidance and increase self-efficacy (Mak & Buckingham, 2007), and should further integrate the entire experiential learning process. Third, organizations such as campus recreation centers and athletic departments could promote sports and recreation to international students by increasing their awareness of the benefits of leisure engagements for facilitating sociocultural adjustment rather than by emphasizing sport participation solely as a stress reduction tool.

Hongping Zhang, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, (217)898-2289, hzhang76@illinois.edu.



**Figure 1.** Experiential Learning Process



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## **A PILOT STUDY OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION PREFERENCES: DIFFERENCES AMONG STUDENTS**

Jo An M. Zimmermann, Texas State University

Robert F. Reardon, Texas State University

Every year millions of people participate in recreation, leisure, and sport. Community-based recreation agencies are increasingly challenged to provide a broad range of programs and services for all segments of the population. Because of this pressure, providers of recreation services face ever more difficult decisions regarding how scarce resources should be allocated to meet the variety of demands expressed by their constituents. The attitude that recreation professionals have toward providing public recreation services impacts their decision-making. Fishbein (1963) suggests that a person's attitude toward something is a function of his or her beliefs and that there is an evaluative aspect to that attitude. The attitude and beliefs that recreation administrators have regarding the delivery of services become significant because they guide decision-making regarding how to allocate resources as well as being responsible for implementing policy. According to C.M. Fisher, "public officials acquire or develop values, beliefs or schemata about the things which should be taken into account when making allocation decisions" (Fisher, 1998, p. 6). Evidence suggests that people required to make value-based decisions may possess belief and value systems of more than one type. Fisher (1998) defines two types of values as espoused values which are "broad expressions of a belief, without context or constraint" (Fisher, 1998, p. 126) and value preferences in hard cases, those adopted when one's general beliefs or values are being challenged by specific circumstances. He acknowledges there is a gap between espoused values and value preferences in hard cases, which varies in size depending on where the person is in his or her career. Early in a career of public service, people tend to be idealistic. They have not yet had to make very many 'hard decisions' so the gap between the two types of values is fairly narrow. As one gains more experience it is likely that in addition to personal beliefs, they develop a broader perspective, which enables them to make the 'hard' choices required of upper management professionals.

The primary purpose of this research is to begin the validation process for an instrument designed to measure the values held by administrators of community-based recreation services. As such data were collected 1. to gain an understanding of the attitudes held by university students toward the allocation of resources for the provision of public recreation services, 2. to confirm the existence of a gap between espoused values or beliefs and what Fisher calls preferred values in hard cases, and 3. to compare attitudes freshman and seniors as well as between disciplines.

### **Methods**

For this pilot study, data were collected from a convenience sample of students attending a large public university in the southwest United States. Students in multiple sections of a freshman seminar course from across the campus, introductory level courses in several disciplines (including recreation) as well as students in capstone classes in several disciplines were asked to complete an on-line modified version of the Resource Allocation Preferences Survey (Fisher, 1998). The instrument used was developed for use in Great Britain. As such, the researchers modified few of the statements into 'American English' so that respondents were fully aware of what the question is asking. In addition, based on previous research, several items were added to broaden the scope of inquiry to include administrative roles identified by Selden, Brewer, and Brudney (1999). All questions were on a 5-point likert scale where 1 = *This statement expresses my preferences very well*, and 5 = *This statement does not express my preferences at all*. The intent was to measure values at two levels, espoused values (what one would do in a perfect world) and preferred values

(what one would do when a hard choice must be made). Analysis was conducted to validate the modified survey instrument. Within and between group analyses were conducted on espoused values, preferred values and the gap between the two levels.

## **Results**

The instrument was designed to measure the values of individual need, fairness, utility, ecology, and deservingness. In addition, items were added to identify how strongly respondents valued proactiveness, social equity, managerial efficiency, political responsiveness and neutrality in decision-making. There was a total of 284 respondents to the survey with a mean age of 22.4 years. The majority of respondents were juniors in school ( $n = 117$ , 41.2%), followed by sophomores ( $n = 81$ , 28.5%), seniors ( $n = 65$ , 22.9%) then freshman ( $n = 11$ , 3.9%). In terms of gender, 177 (62.3%) identified as female and 98 (34.5%) as males, 9 (3.2%) did not respond. The biggest group of respondents were white/Caucasian (138, 48.6%), followed by Hispanic/Latino at 26.8% (76) and Black/African American with 22 (7.7%) respondents. The differences in the means of scores for any of the individual variables between based on year in school, gender and ethnicity were almost nonexistent. There was a statistically significant gap between espoused and preferred values ( $t = 18.8$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Interestingly, the difference between espoused values and preferred values **decreased** significantly as students moved through their college experience ( $\beta = -0.091$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The largest gap was found in freshman and the smallest was found in seniors.

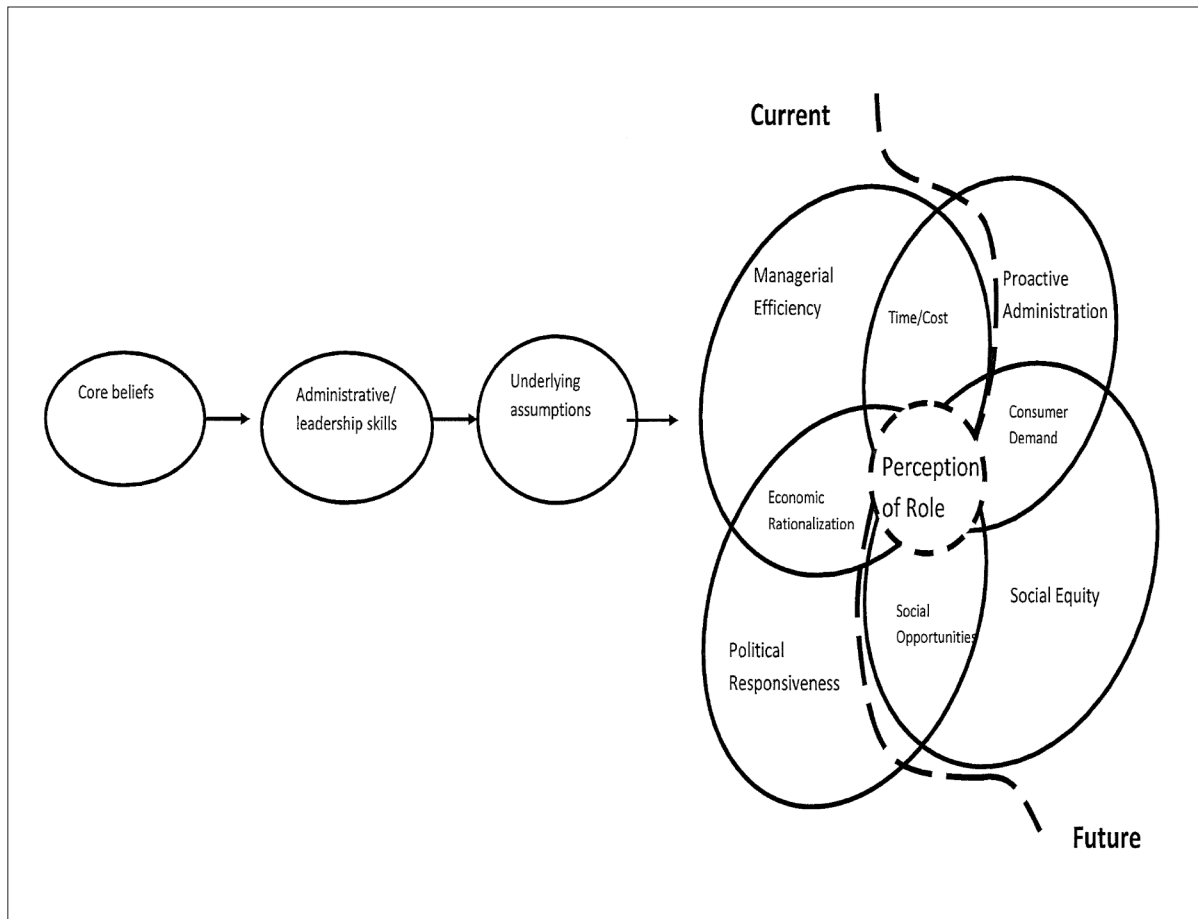
## **Implications for Practice**

This research is extending the work of Zimmermann & Allen (2009) and Zimmermann & Payne (2012) who have been researching roles of administrators. Although a framework for understanding roles has been proposed by Zimmermann & Payne (2012, p. 174) (see Figure 1), as yet the model is untested. This is the first step in measuring one component of the model. The ideas upon which this research is based are relevant to administrators of community-based recreation services because of the increasing complexity of the jobs they must perform. This model and the values investigated in this research offer a common ground for discussing the changing role of management regarding the provision of recreation programs and services.

If recreation is to stay relevant in a changing world, managers must develop a language which can communicate to elected officials and constituents that the programs and services provided by their agencies or departments are not 'luxury items', they are in fact essential to the health and well-being of the community. Focusing on the values used in decision-making helps managers better understand themselves and thus assists with communication.

Finally, if research can determine the values which are most relevant to the successful management of recreation agencies, it can have some level of influence on not only how administrators are selected but also upon how students are trained in the classroom. The idea of values-based selection and training could be considered an extension of competencies.

Jo An M. Zimmermann, Texas State University, (512) 245-1973, jz15@txstate.edu



**Figure 1.** Complete proposed model of administrative roles in recreation. (Zimmermann & Payne, 2009, p. 174)

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