

Perceptions of Work Environment and Job Satisfaction Dimensions by Professional Staff of Volunteer Directed Provincial Sport Governing Bodies

Ralph A. Nilson, Faculty of Physical Activity Studies, University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 4C7

Carl Yoshioka, Department of Leisure Studies, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona 85287-2302

Teresa Rose-Hearn, Sport Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2H4

INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly changing corporate environment constant evaluation of organizational structure, efficiency, and market place viability has become a necessity. As a result, new ways of evaluating all aspects of corporate functioning have been generated. Of particular interest to the broad spectrum of the leisure service delivery system are the humanistic management strategies. These concerns have opened a specific inventory of employee centred issues. Predominant among these is the recognized need to assess and be aware of factors related to employee burnout.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the key work environment dimensions that are correlates of burnout among professional staff of Provincial Sport Governing Bodies (PSGBs). Specifically, by using burnout as an independent variable, the study contrasted the differences between high and low burnout professionals as to how they perceive their work environment and its subsequent impact on job satisfaction. Further, role ambiguity and role conflict were assessed in a series of questions in the interview and compared to MBI, WES, and MSQ general satisfaction scores to see the extent to which they were able to predict them.

METHODS

The study population included all paid staff members of each PSGB in the Province of Saskatchewan. A mail survey as well as a personal interview were conducted. Each respondent was mailed and asked to complete three standardized tests including the Human Services Survey (formally called the Maslach Burnout Inventory), the Work Environment Scale (WES), and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) long-form.

First, a letter introducing the project to the respondents and the WES were mailed out. After three weeks, the Human Services Survey and the MSQ were mailed. Non-respondents from the first mailing were asked to return the WES if it had not been returned. Three weeks after this second mailing, interviews were initiated. Each member of the population was contacted over the next two months and an interview time scheduled. During the interview sessions all non-respondents to any of the standardized questionnaires were provided with copies of the tests they had not returned and were asked to complete and return them. In the interview, each respondent was asked to participate by answering questions related to their functioning as a staff member of a volunteer driven PSGB. One hour was scheduled for each interview. The average length of time it took to complete each interview session was fifty minutes. Those who completed only portions of the material requested by the researchers or who did not participated in an interview were contacted and encouraged to complete the portion they had not completed. All total non-respondents (i.e. all those who did not complete any portion of the requested material) were contacted regarding their reasons for not participating in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 76% of the study population completed all four portions of the data gathering procedure, the three standardized tests, and the interview. The

return rate and the quality of the material returned provided a solid basis for analysis.

The results of the WES provided a description of the work environment as perceived by the study population along the ten subscales of the test which are divided into three dimensions, the relationship dimension, the personal growth dimension, and the system maintenance and system change dimension. The results of the Human Services Survey (MBI) provided results for the study population for the three subscales of the test which included emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Scoring of the MSQ long form allowed an assessment along 20 scales. Also an assessment will be made relative to the three scales of the short-form.

The collection of the data through the interview process proved very successful and provided information of a subjective nature from open ended questions and more objective information from the closed questions used in the interview.

The results and findings of the study will be discussed in terms of recommendations for staff members of volunteer driven sport governing organizations. Also, suggestions regarding future directions for further research related to the volunteer/staff interface will be discussed.

PROCEEDINGS
Sixth Canadian Congress on Leisure Research
May 9-12, 1990

COMPTE RENDU DU
Sixième Congrès Canadien de Recherches en Loisir
Le 9-12 mai, 1990

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Editor/Le rédacteur: Bryan J. A. Smale

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