American Camp Association

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Family Camp Impacts on Family Functioning

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Families are a foundational structure of society that play a critical role in the health and well-being of communities. Every aspect of the American family is experiencing change including the number of adults who marry, the number of households that are formed by married people, the number of children that are conceived, the number of non-family households, and the importance of marriage in accounting for total births (Nock, 2007; Stein, 2004). Considering these trends, the development and implementation of programming to strengthen family relationships is particularly relevant and urgent. Research suggests that family camps can play a role in enhancing family functioning (Agate & Covey, 2007) and family camp participation has grown steadily with approximately 53% of ACA-accredited and affiliated camps offering family camp in 2010 (American Camp Association, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

This study was informed by Freeman and Zabriski's (2003) Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning, which suggests that families use two patterns of family leisure (core activities and balance activities) to meet their needs for stability and change. Core activities include common, everyday home based actions such as family dinners, watching a movie together, or conversations around the kitchen table. Balance activities, which are novel, less frequent, and require a greater commitment of time and effort, include vacations, special events, and other such multi-day trips away from home. Family camp experiences were viewed as balance activities which contributed to family functioning. Previous research indicates that families benefit from family camp experiences in four ways: improving family interaction, nurturing relationships, providing social benefits, and addressing specific family issues (Agate & Covey, 2007).

Methods

Sixty-seven ACA Virginias camps offering family camp programs were identified and contacted about participation in this study and a convenience sample of 18 camps agreed to participate. Time constraints necessitated the use of convenience sample. A SurveyMonkey survey with forced response and open-ended questions was used to explore families' motivations to participate in camp, benefits of the family camp experiences, and the extent to which families changed because of the camp experience. Directors were asked to send the SurveyMonkey link with an emailed letter to families approximately one week after the families attended family camp. Non-respondents received a second email two weeks later reminding them to complete the survey. The response rate was 24% with 60 out of 250 families responding.

The potential motivating factors in the survey were adapted from Covey's (2010) list of "Importance-Performance" factors (such as "knowing someone at camp," "located close to home," and "spend greater quality time with family"). Benefits of the camp experience were measured using open-ended questions such as "How was the family camp experience enjoyable for you or your family?" and "Describe how the camp staff impacted your family's experience at family camp."

Three subscales from the Family Environment Scale (FES) (Moos, 2009) were used to explore the extent to which families changed as a result of attending family camp in the areas of family cohesion, family expressiveness, and family conflict. These scales were modified into a retrospective design. Retrospective post tests are a common method used to assess intervention impacts in part because "response shift bias" is avoided (Howard & Dailey, 1979). Response shift bias is a "change in the participant's metric for answering questions from the pretest to the post test due to a new understanding of a concept being taught" (Klatt & Taylor-Powell, 2005).

Analysis Procedures

Quantitative survey data were analyzed using descriptive and exploratory statistics and qualitative survey data were analyzed using content analysis (Patton, 2002). A mixed method analysis was used by first analyzing quantitative data and then analyzing qualitative data for emergent themes related to the family camp experience including benefits of and motivations for attending. The data were integrated to present a more complete picture of family experiences at family camp (Creswell & Plano, 2007). Paired sample t-tests compared scores on the FES responses to examine how families changed as a result of their family camp experience.

Results and Conclusions

This study examined families' motivations for participating in family camp, explored perceived benefits of attending family camp and measured changes in family functioning as a result of involvement in family camp. The top four motivators of family camp participation were: a fun and relaxing experience, the peaceful outdoor atmosphere, greater quality time with family, and the cost of family camp. Families described many benefits of attending family camp including positive impacts of the camp staff, the opportunity to enjoy activities alone and with other family members, reinforcement of good parenting, and reinforcement of good family relationships. A majority of respondents (86%) indicated that the family camp experience reinforced family relationships and (60%) indicated that family camp experiences benefit families because of parenting reinforcement. The FES dimensions of family cohesion, family expressiveness, and family conflict showed significant improvement after attending family camp.

Camp Applications

The results of studies such as this can guide programming efforts for families. Because families reported enjoying active experiences they could complete together as well as the opportunity for separate activities, family camp providers need to consider flexible programming with a combination of activities for whole families as well as activities for individual age groups.

Over half of participating families reported that positive parenting was reinforced during their family camp experience. Program providers should create intentional links between specific camp activities and desired family outcomes (Tucker & Rheingold, 2010). Intentionally planning family times free of tight schedules and electronic distractions in an outdoor setting—which parents in this study indicated were important—might further reinforce parents' positive parenting practices. These family functioning outcomes indicate an important way that family camp providers may promote healthier families.

Camp staff play an important role in the quality of family camp experiences received by camp participants. Of particular importance is the demonstration of genuine interest in children and sense of fun. Training staff for family camp should emphasize the importance of creating a fun environment for the entire family with an emphasis on understanding and valuing each child as an individual.

Residential family camps, such as those examined in this study, can offer an effective and popular programming approach to promote positive family outcomes. The impact of family camps on positive family parenting is particularly promising and suggests that family camp experiences can play a powerful role in family enhancement programs.

The Effect of Intentionally Designed Experiences on Youths' Friendship Skills

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With resident and day camps exploring partnerships with schools (Roark & Mikami, 2011), the provision of developmentally-intentional camp programming to after-school programs (ASPs) could benefit both. The American Camp Association (ACA) has a vision for the 2020 year to increase the number of participants involved with camp while after-school programming strives to meet student academic and developmental needs. The exposure of outcome-based camp programming to participants in the ASP setting could serve as a potential recruitment tool for camps. Similar to camp programming, after-school curricula typically include a focus on the social development needs of youth (Granger & William T. Grant Foundation, 2008). For example, friendship skills is one type of social development outcome that is a goal of both camp and after-school programs. Exposing youth to new activities and ideas about their ability to share common connections with one another can inspire stronger friendships and a greater interest in supporting one another at school and developing prosocial behaviors to use later in life. Appropriately, positively interacting with others is an identified social outcome in many ASPs (After School Alliance, 2011; Durlak & Weissberg, 2007).

Through the development of friendship skills, youth learn how to get along with others, how to negotiate and navigate through conflict, and how to gain empathy and compassion for others. Gaining such friendship skills as a youth assists with easier transitions in school and life (Aikins, Bierman, & Parker, 2005). In adulthood, friendship skills can be a large part of the foundation for successful relationships, finding and keeping jobs, working with others to achieve goals, and engaging as active citizens (Bowler & Brass, 2006). However, in an era of increased focus on academic achievement and testing coupled with the economic tightening of after-school resources (After School Alliance, 2011), opportunities to build friendship skills are shrinking within school curricula. For this study, friendship skills was the social outcome of interest and was defined as "perceived skills in initiating, developing, and sustaining enjoyable and socially intimate relationships with other people" (Ellis & Sibthorp, 2006). While discussing effective practices to improve prosocial behaviors of youth is important, there remains the need for empirical evidence to inform curriculum that meets the needs for social development in after-school settings (Granger, Durlak, Yohalem, & Reisner, 2007).

It has been established that program experiences are more effective when they include Sequential, Active, Focused and Explicit (SAFE) approaches that support opportunities for social development (Durlack & Weisenberg, 2007; Lipsey 1992). One example of program experiences designed to elicit specific social outcomes (i.e., friendship skills) is the Roark and Evans (2010) *Play It Measure It (PIMI)* experiences that were originally designed for youth camp settings and have strong potential to serve as effective after-school curricula. Each experience has a sequence of interactive activities with facilitation language scripted toward the targeted outcome.

The *PIMI* experiences also apply Symbolic Interaction Theory. This theory addresses the phenomenon of human interactions and interpretations of such interactions in a social setting, and suggests that people find meaning through interactions with others within contexts (Denzin, 2009; Kuhn, 1964). The specific application of Symbolic Interaction Theory in program settings encompasses six major program elements (Rossman & Schlatter, 2011). The first five are interacting people, physical setting, leisure objects, structure, and relationships. The sixth

element is animation: the setting in motion that sustains the other five elements. These and the SAFE approach elements are intentionally integrated into each *PIMI* experience.

While it has been established that programs using the SAFE approach have had positive effects on developmental outcomes, the extent to which after-school programs possess and use such curriculum experiences to achieve developmentally social outcomes is limited and has not been tested. Therefore the purpose of this study was to implement and test three friendship skill experiences in an after-school setting to answer the following research question, "What effect do intentionally designed recreation experiences have on youth's friendship skills?"

Methods, Analyses, and Results

Three friendship skill experiences were implemented and tested with a group of approximately 20 sixth grade students in an after-school setting. Each experience lasted 90 minutes and had the following themes: Masquerade, Around the World, and The 80s. Reliability of experience implementation was collected using observation checklists. The questionnaire administration specifically included written language and oral instruction for participants to complete questionnaires based on the 90-minute experiences in which they just participated.

The ACA friendship skills outcome measure was used to detect increases in participant outcomes. The 14-item measure used a 5-point Likert-type scale. The alpha reliability of the friendship skills measure (.94) is very strong and corrected item-total correlations are also quite strong ranging from .57 to .78 (Ellis & Sibthorp, 2006). The scale is retrospective in design, allowing questionnaire administration to occur once at the end of the experience and measures decreases, no change, or level of increases. Descriptive statistics and effect sizes were computed for each experience (Cohen, 1988).

Results from the study provided evidence that each experience increased friendship skills ($M > 2$) and that the experiences yielded strong effect sizes (d >1.0) in increasing the outcome of friendship skills among participants (see Table 1).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Themed Experiences on Friendship Skills

Experience	*N*	*M*	*SD*
Around the World	19	3.56	.89
Masquerade	18	3.13	.91
The 80s	25	3.29	1.01

Conclusion and Camp Applications

This study contributes to the ever-growing body of empirical evidence about relevant and useful youth program processes and practices that influence social development outcomes for youth. Of particular interest to the camp industry, the ACA outcome measures were used for one of the first times with participants outside of camp. The study also has specific applications for practice with camps working with or considering working with after-school programs. The demonstration of acquisition of friendship skills implies that camp or school programmers could apply the following.

1) Use the theoretical and evidence-based experiences in their programs.
2) Collect data on each experience using the questionnaire.
3) Share evidence of effective programming results with stakeholders.

In the spirit of the ACA 2020 vision, camp administrators could use this study as a catalyst to open discourse with school administrators about offering camp programming to after-school programs to increase the number of youth exposed to experiences similar to what may occur at their camps.

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Communicating the Positive Impacts of Camps: Marketing Implications

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To create more awareness and interest of the role of organized camping and its contribution to society, the North Carolina Youth Camp Association (NCYCA) conducted a study to better understand their market and to identify their positive impacts. This presentation will provide a discussion of the overall study findings and will illustrate how all camps can use similar findings to effectively communicate and promote the positive impacts of their camps to policy makers, community leaders, media outlets, and current/returning campers.

Methods and Analysis

Data for this presentation were collected as part of a larger study which examined the economic impact of summer residential camps in WNC, specifically within four counties (Buncombe, Henderson, Jackson, and Transylvania) during the summer of 2010. Emails asking for participation in the study were sent to camps/camp directors (via the NCYCA), camp staff (via camp directors), and camp families (via camp directors). Data were collected using an online survey instrument, with 40 usable camp/camp directors' surveys (55% were independent/for profit camps), 540 usable camp staff surveys, and 4,600 usable families' surveys. Data examining impact of travel and tourism, sustainability, and sources of information were collected and synthesized into descriptive and graph formats using Microsoft Excel.

Findings

Travel and Tourism Connection

The study illustrated a strong connection between summer residential camps and the travel and tourism industry. For example, with respect to families:

- Large majority (93%) lived outside the four county region
- Majority (82%) traveled to camp by car an average of 500 miles
- Visited the camps an average of 2.80 times staying an average of 4 nights (for all trips) primarily in hotels
- Spent an average of $2,096 during their multiple stays in the four county region
- 76% said they would <u>NOT</u> have visited NC if it were not for camps
- Top four activities: Shopping, visiting a scenic area, hiking, and visiting historical site/museum
- Top four sources of information used for trip planning: Internet/website, previous experience, friends, and information from camp
- Majority (69%) sometimes or always considered themselves tourists

The study also illustrated a strong connection between camp staff and tourism.
- Majority (68%) visited the area because of camps
- Top four activities during travel: shopping, visiting a scenic area, hiking, and camping on own
- Almost half (48%) indicated that working at camp influenced them to visit the NC area
- Spent 5.5 days and approximately $300 in the WNC region *before* working at camp
- Spent 4.5 days and approximately $220 in the WNC region *after* working at camp

Sustainability of Residential Camps

Findings from the study illustrated that WNC camps are incorporating sustainable practices to make their camps more 'green'.

- Majority of camps (93%) recycled with the top four materials: cans, paper, plastic, glass
- The 40 camps indicated being in control (own/lease) of 19,376 acres
- 14% of camps have conservation easements with approximately 500 acres
- Half of camps (50%) have some form of habitat protection
- Majority of camps (64%) promote energy conservation
- Majority of camps (74%) use local food products
  - Approximately 40% from NC and 30% from the four county region

Sources of Information

To better communicate and market to families, the study examined what sources of information families use most.

- Top five ways families learned about camps: Friends, Internet/Website, Relatives, Previous experience, and Information from camps
- Top two social media resources used by families and campers: Facebook and YouTube
- Top three social media resources used by camps: Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter

Implications and Applications

Findings revealed that WNC residential camps have considerable positive impacts on the surrounding economy and communities, and camps should communicate their proven benefits. Based on the findings above, a variety of stories can be told about the camps and their positive impacts. For example, a clear connection exists between the camps and the larger tourism industry. A large majority of families traveled great distances to attend camps, spent large amounts of money in the surrounding areas, and actively participated in a variety of tourist activities. Camps can use these findings to show that they are a catalyst for tourism and to help develop partnerships with local businesses (i.e., hotels) and tourism agencies (i.e., convention and visitor bureaus) to increase collaboration and marketing efforts.

Camps should connect with current trends by promoting the fact that they are "green," sustainable, and support local industry. For example, thanks to the existence of these camps, a sizeable amount of land in WNC is protected. In turn, these protected lands provide a wealth of environmental benefits including increased oxygen in the atmosphere, erosion control, and habitats for local species. Moreover, camps are further supporting the local communities and economy by purchasing and supplying local produce and using local labor and businesses.

The active use of social media by campers, families, and camps, coupled with the importance of the Internet/website for retrieving information about camps, speaks to the potential for camps to utilize social media and the Internet as tools to market to current and future campers and their families. Moreover, friends and relatives were first and third most noted sources used by families suggesting the impact of word-of-mouth communications. Camps should seek to promote testimonials from campers, families, and staff. Additionally, camps should incorporate the use of YouTube videos in their communication strategies. These videos could be presented from the perspective of the camp/camp director, campers, families, camp dog, camp mascot, etc.

NCYCA and WNC camps were successful in effectively communicating the above information and stories to policy makers, community leaders, media outlets, and campers/families by hosting a media day, developing press release materials for camps, hosting a

Q&A between the researchers of the study and the camp directors, and effectively using their newsletters and websites to promote their positive impacts.

What's in a Name? Learning about Personal Growth at Camp through Participatory

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Many camps encourage or require campers and staff to use "camp names," like "Shooting Star" for Sam or "Athena" for Aicha, during their session. Language teachers often do the same: Japanese learners might become Minami or Kenji. Though there is very little published research explaining or supporting why language teachers do this (and none regarding why camps often do the same!), what there is suggests that using a new name can give learners license to try new things, because any mistakes would be made by the new-name self, not the "real" self. Other research suggests that using new names makes it possible for learners to interact with each other in a new cultural context, where the outside world's expectations can be challenged or left behind.

Recent research in language learning has shown the power of "imagined communities"— the social group learners hope to join through acquiring a new language, whether or not these communities are accessible in their current world (Kanno & Norton, 2003). Related research in motivation has shown that many highly motivated people are driven by "future self-guides," detailed visions of who they could be in the future. The more elaborated these images are, the stronger an impact they have (e.g. Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). Imagining or re-imagining one's own future and the kind of community or world one wants to join bears a striking resemblance to the kind of reflection and growth we encourage at camp, grounded in the possibility-rich environment we strive to create. Though this study looked specifically at "camp names" as used in a language immersion camp, the results show that the power of new names extends far beyond language learning. They can serve as the foundation for campers' future self-guides and as a license for campers to build bridges to communities both inside and outside camp.

It is imperative that campers' experiences not be disrupted by research. Staff-led research may threaten staff members' relationships with campers, or overlook campers' own perspectives and limit the potential scope of an investigation. Participatory action research, designed and carried out in collaboration with campers, is one way to respond to these concerns while simultaneously giving campers opportunities for agency and ownership at camp, opportunities we know they need (e.g. American Camp Association, 2006).

Procedures and goals were planned out by the primary investigator (a staff member) and then explained to a large group of high-school-aged campers who were learning Japanese and who were required to conduct "community-oriented projects". 14 chose to work on this project, and developed 8 mini-projects focused on different aspects of choosing and using Japanese names at camp, including how campers choose their names, whether campers like having camp names, and whether campers develop separate personas connected to their camp names. Informed consent was obtained from families and staff participants before the project began, and camper participants signed assent forms on site. Interviews and surveys were conducted largely in Japanese; campers' interview recordings were kept by the primary investigator for further analysis. The campers leading the mini-projects analyzed their results and presented them to the entire camp in Japanese. Afterward, the primary investigator conducted reflective interviews in English with these 14 campers, asking about their research designs, findings, and what they learned from their projects, as well as exploring their thoughts on the purpose and benefits of using new names at camp.

Data analyses were performed twice, first by the 14 camper-researchers and later by the primary investigator. The campers' own analyses were recorded during their presentations and revisited during the reflective interviews. After camp ended, the primary investigator listened to all of the recordings, transcribing portions and making notes. A modified grounded theory procedure (Charmaz, 2001) was used to find common themes across the 109 interviews (many participants were interviewed for multiple mini-projects), replaying the recordings and transcribing additional portions as needed. Interview excerpts representing each theme were tabulated for side-by-side analysis.

Results show that campers strongly support the use of new names at camp, and that many believe using a Japanese name does help them learn the language. Moreover, nearly all campers who were interviewed stated that they have developed "camp personas" connected to their new names, and that these personas are more confident, more outgoing, more able to speak Japanese, and in some cases more studious, more caring, or more patient. Several stated that these personas were "better people," or that their camp names represented their "true selves," people they did not get to be at home. This is in line with research on future self-guides, suggesting that campers' new names can be a powerful catalyst for personal growth. Many also stated that having a camp name helps them feel more connected to other campers and to their camp program. At the group level, names can facilitate access to campers' imagined communities, as well as encouraging the envisioning of such communities. Virtually all felt that camp names were essential for creating an environment where this kind of language learning and personal growth can take place, and that the tradition should be maintained at all costs.

In addition to providing reliable data for our camp's own use, this project created valuable learning opportunities for campers. Campers stated that in addition to improving their Japanese, the project prompted conversations they might not have had otherwise. Some had felt they might be alone in their attachment to their camp names or their beliefs about their importance, and the project showed them that they were not. Others were excited about the opportunity to "contribute to something" by conducting research. This analysis of how campers perceive their own growth at camp shows that campers have a lot to say on this topic, when prompted, but that the prompting is necessary; even long-term campers reported that they had not realized the importance of their camp names in their lives before participating in the project. Taking on new names at camp is far more than an amusing tradition; it can be a key to unlocking the magic of camp.

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Economic Impact of Camps: Case Study of Western North Carolina

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Within these economic times, many camp directors understand the need to justify their value to local policy makers and community leaders. Previous research has shown that organized camps provide an economic impact to Western North Carolina (WNC) as evident in a 1999 Economic Impact (EI) Study conducted by The Appalachian Regional Development Institute of Appalachian State University. This EI study showed that camps in WNC generated $77 - $115 million in EI. Moreover, EI studies should be conducted as economies continue to change over time. Thus, the purpose of our study was to conduct an updated EI study for summer residential camps in WNC, specifically within four counties (Buncombe, Henderson, Jackson, and Transylvania) during the summer of 2010.

Economic impact is based on the theory that a dollar flowing into an economy from outside of the region's economy is a benefit to that economy (Turco & Kelsey, 1992). The most important underlying principle in evaluating EI is to measure new economic benefits that accrue to the area (e.g., county, state) that would not have otherwise occurred (Crompton, 1995). Initial rounds of spending are generated by campers' families on, before, and after traveling to the camps at local hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues, retail shops, and other establishments. For summer camps, spending is also generated by the operation of the camp facilities, which contributes through its direct expenditures within the community as well as through the taxes paid to local government. For purposes of this study, only those sources of initial direct spending that were generated from sources outside the four-county region ("visitors") were considered "net new" to the community.

Methods

Camps/Camp Directors

Within the four-county region, 55 camps (55% independent/for profit camps) were asked to participate in the study and complete an online survey. Of those 55 camps, a total of 45 camps completed the survey with 40 usable camp directors' surveys. Of the 55 camps initially invited, 50 camps were identified as summer residential camps within the four counties.

Campers' Families

To obtain the highest possible number of responses, camps were asked to email their campers' families an online survey link at the conclusion of each session. For the family visitor data, approximately 5,200 surveys were completed with a usable sample of approximately 4,600 representing an extrapolation of 53,238 campers' families.

Camp Staff

Camps were asked to email an online survey link to their camp staff at the conclusion of each session. From staff data, approximately 840 surveys were completed with a usable sample of approximately 540 representing 2,643 seasonal camp staff.

Analysis

For the EI analysis, the IMPLAN software was used to estimate the EI of camps in WNC. IMPLAN is a computer modeling system that builds its results with secondary data collected from multiple federal government agencies to precisely calculate an EI for a particular region.

Direct impact/spending, indirect impact/spending, tax impacts, and total economic impacts were calculated.

Findings

A total of 49,665 families who lived outside the four counties (evaluated through camp data and zip code data) were included in the EI statistics as "incremental visitors," because they traveled specifically to WNC for camps. Each of these families spent an average of $2,096 during their multiple stays in the four counties. A large majority of campers' families (93%) lived outside of the four counties, and 82% of families traveled to camp by car to bring and to pick-up their children from camp. Those families who stayed overnight during these multiple travels, stayed primarily in hotels and stayed an average of 4 nights and visited an average of 2.8 times.

An estimated 2,643 seasonal camp staff members travelled specifically to the four counties because of employment at the camps. They were considered "incremental visitors", lived outside the region, and would not have visited WNC if it were not for camps. Therefore, they were used in the EI statistics. Each seasonal worker spent an average of $2,402 during his/her entire stay (before, during, and after camps) in the area. The majority of seasonal staff (68%) visited the area because of camps, spent 5.5 days and $300 in the WNC region before working at camp, spent an average 9.5 weeks at camps, and spent an average of 4.5 days and $220 after camp. The total EI on the four counties in WNC from residential summer camps and their operations was approximately $365 million and $33 million in new tax revenues. The following table 1 includes the break down for each county.

Table 1: Economic Impact for WNC Region – Including Buncombe, Jackson, Henderson, & Transylvania Counties (in Millions)

	WNC	Buncombe	Henderson	Jackson	Transylvania
Direct Impact	$218	$61	$77	$7	$84.5
Tax Impacts	$33	$9.7	$10	$0.8	$11
Total Economic Impact	$365	$103	$103	$11.5	$126

Camp Applications

Overall, the study illustrated that WNC residential camps have considerable economic impacts on the surrounding economy and communities; however, this information is only helpful if communicated and shared properly.

These four counties in WNC are primarily rural areas, have seen decreases in tax revenues, and depend on tourism as a source of local revenue. As decisions affecting camps are done at the county level, each county needed to have specifics of the economic impact to communicate to local government.

The camps in WNC and the North Carolina Youth Camp Association used the results to showcase their value to policy makers and community leaders. They hosted a legislative event to help state legislators understand camps' economic impact on NC and to hopefully provide feedback on state laws affecting camps (e.g., school year calendars). Additionally, they hosted a media day, developed press release materials, gave interviews (i.e., National Public Radio in Asheville), and provided the results of the study on their website. These media initiatives lead to increased media coverage and increased awareness of summer residential camps in WNC.

Camps and camp associations should consider conducting EI studies to provide data and findings to be used as lobbying tools at city, county, and state levels.

A Utilization-Focused Evaluation of a Pilot Reading Program at Sherwood Forest Camp

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In 2011, a pilot reading program was implemented with two cabins of campers (one cabin of boys and one cabin of girls) for a 26-day session. A reading teacher was hired to implement the reading program curriculum. The curriculum included reading aloud in a group, silent reading, and being read to, as well as small group activities centered on skill-building.

Related Literature

Research suggests that the phenomenon of summer learning loss has a greater impact on those students who are already struggling in school. While the top 25% of students make slower but continued growth over the summer, average students maintain or even fall in their growth, and the bottom 25% of students lose a significant portion of their learning gains over the summer (Mikulecky, 1990).

A meta-analysis conducted by Cooper et al. (1996) found that the effect of summer learning loss varied by skill area. For example, summer loss for math facts was more pronounced than in other areas. However, while summer learning loss in math was the same for all students when controlling for ethnicity and family economics, reading loss was found to be directly related to family socio-economic status. On some measures, middle-class children made actual gains in reading over the summer, while disadvantaged children showed losses. This literature is particularly related to the population of children at this camp, where over 80% of campers qualified for the school lunch program.

Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation was guided by Michael Patton's model of utilization-focused evaluation. Therefore, the evaluation process was focused not only on how the reading program impacted campers, but also focused on how the evaluation findings could be utilized by the reading program leadership to sustain and improve upon the components of the program. In order to conduct an evaluation within this model, the evaluator formed working relationships with key personnel to collaborate on evaluation design and implementation.

Within Patton's framework of evaluation, evaluation design and measure selection (what and how components are measured) should be a dialogue between the evaluator and the program stakeholders (1997). Patton argues that the validity and reliability of an evaluation depend on the intended use of the evaluation.

For this evaluation, meetings with program leadership helped determine what should be measured in order to evaluate how the reading program was meeting its goals. A combination of "hard" and "soft" data sources were used to evaluate the program. However, as Patton suggests, it is not the type of data sources, but the relevance of the data sources that contributes to the evaluation's validity and reliability (1997). All data sources were chosen because they contributed to answering the important questions about program effectiveness developed collaboratively with camp leadership.

This evaluation was guided by three overarching questions:

- What is the impact of the Camp Reading Program on camper interest in voluntary reading and writing?
- How does the Camp Reading Program affect camper scores on the vocabulary tests?

- Are program components (including curriculum and teaching staff) functioning effectively to support the Camp Reading Program's goals?
  To answer the above evaluation questions the following data sources were analyzed:
- Pre- and post- Vocabulary Tests
- Pre- and post- Elementary Reading Attitude Surveys
- Library usage data
- Camper work
- Parent Interviews
- Observations/Informal interviews with program staff

Findings

Pre- and post-tests on the ERAS found significant increases in camper attitudes toward attending reading class. Additionally, girl campers reported being significantly happier about reading out loud in front of their peers. There were slight declines in reading attitudes on some of the ERAS items. Related research suggests that if the campers found the content too difficult, and therefore felt less capable, their attitudes toward some reading measures (e.g. learning from a book) would decline. Library usage data demonstrated that participants in the program checked out significantly more books than non-participants. The impact on library usage was particularly magnified for boy campers. There were significant gains in vocabulary comprehension for all of the campers who participated in the reading program, and for the subgroups disaggregated by gender. The gains in vocabulary were particularly significant for the girl campers.

Data from parent interviews suggested that the impact of the program on their children was still being felt, with more reading happening at home, more frequent requests for trips to the library, and a more sophisticated process for choosing books that included consideration of genre, author, or series.

Implications for Practice

Summer reading programs can have a positive impact on children's reading abilities. Related research suggests that summer reading loss affects students of lower socio-economic backgrounds at a disproportionate rate. Based on the literature, effective summer reading programs offer access to a wide variety of books, that the books match the reader's ability and interests, and that comprehension is monitored by an adult who asks appropriate questions and helps kids connect meanings. The Camp reading program models these best practices.
This reading program boosted campers' vocabulary knowledge, contributed to campers checking out more books, both at camp and when they went home, and allowed campers to meet in a small group environment with a highly-qualified reading teacher. Providing this opportunity to campers did help to change some attitudes towards reading and expose campers to new and different pieces of literature. As one parent noted, camp is "aimed at the whole child" and the reading program fits well with this holistic philosophy.

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Parent Perceptions of the Benefits of Camp

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Camp experiences can provide healthy development for youth's social competencies and positive identity (Dworken, 2001). Henderson, Whitaker, Bialeschki, Scanlin, and Thurber (2007) found that parents believed their children positively changed over the course of a camp experience. Children improved on ten youth development constructs: leadership, positive values and decision-making, positive identity, making friends, spirituality, environmental awareness, social comfort, independence, peer relationships, and adventure/exploration (Henderson et al., 2007). Campers can experience positive youth development (PYD) while having fun away from home (Garst, Brown, & Bialeschki, 2011), but what parents believe about their child's camp experience could have implications for camps. The purpose of this study was to investigate parents' perceptions of the benefits of camps in four Western North Carolina (WNC) counties (Buncombe, Henderson, Jackson, and Transylvania) and to provide camps with tangible applications from parents' perceptions.
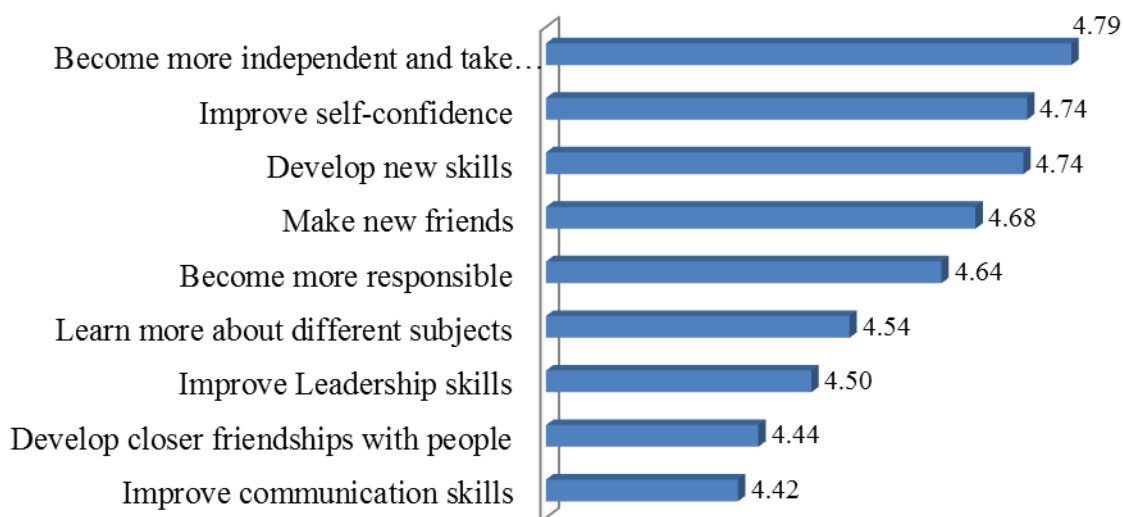
Methods

Family demographic data and impacts of organized camp responses were collected using an online survey instrument. Forty participating camp directors in the four-county region were asked to email an online survey link to their campers' families at the conclusion of each camp session. Approximately 5,200 families responded with a usable sample of roughly 4,600 camp families who sent their child to a participating camp during the summer of 2010.
Adopted from Garst and Bruce (2003), family respondents were asked to indicate on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) if he/she felt that attending camp helps his/her child with developmental traits (e.g., improving self-confidence, becoming more responsible, and making friends). Respondents could elaborate on how camps made a difference in their child's life by replying to optional open-ended questions.

Analysis and Findings

An average score of responses for each item on youth development was calculated using Excel. Using qualitative analysis, open-ended responses were coded into various themes (e.g., confidence, independence, maturity, and friendship) and categorized to determine which developmental traits parents perceived as benefits of the camp experience.
A majority of respondents (93%) indicated that camps made a difference in their child's life. Figure 1shows the average scores of family respondents' perceptions of specific benefits from the camp experience. While no average response was below a mean of 4.42, the top five benefits were that parents perceived their child to become more independent and take care of him-/her-self ($M = 4.79$), improve self-confidence ($M = 4.74$), develop new skills ($M = 4.74$), make new friends ($M = 4.68$), and become more responsible ($M = 4.64$). Interestingly, mothers rated their child's camp experiences significantly higher than did fathers on responsibility, learning, leadership, and communication ($p < .001$).
Figure 1: Average Scores of Camp Family Responses to Perceptions of the Camp Experience

Category	Value
Become more independent and take...	4.79
Improve self-confidence	4.74
Develop new skills	4.74
Make new friends	4.68
Become more responsible	4.64
Learn more about different subjects	4.54
Improve Leadership skills	4.50
Develop closer friendships with people	4.44
Improve communication skills	4.42

Qualitative analysis confirmed quantitative findings. A majority of parents (n = 4,451) responded to open-ended questions. The top five themes to "How has attending camps made a difference in your child's life?" revolved around

1. Confidence (n = 976)
2. Independence (n = 960)
3. Meeting new friends/friendship (n = 676)
4. New experience/activities/skills (n = 517)
5. Maturity (n = 212)

Similarly, the top five responses to "What did your child gain/learn from their camp experience?" were

1. Making (new) friends/social skills/getting along with others (n = 921)
2. Independence (n = 729)
3. Self-confidence (n = 708)
4. (Learning) New skills/activities/experience (n = 700)
5. All of the above (n = 479)

Camp Applications

Camp staff is responsible for planning activities and camp programs as well as fostering PYD. Camp directors should take this into account when hiring seasonal or full-time staff. Parents' perceptions of their child's camp experience depend on what a child exhibits after camp through verbal cues or behavioral changes. Having qualified and trained staff members who understand that they are hired to execute camp programs and to instill PYD traits in campers is imperative. This is evident in one parent's remark when asked about their decision to send a child back to camp: "*Quality of the staff...is most important.*" Therefore, camp directors should continue to take the time to review applicants and conduct interviews to make sure the candidate is experienced and well trained in PYD.

Camps should use parents' perceptions of their child's camp experience to build and maintain their reputation and increase camp awareness. This study found that 95% of parents would send their child back to a camp and 95% would recommend camp to a friend. When asked what influences a parent's decision to send his/her child back to a WNC camp, one respondent

asserted that "*Accreditation, safety record and reputation of the camp – very important!*" Another parent referenced PYD as a reason for sending his/her child to camp: "*I believe the camp experience is very important in the development of children providing a healthier outdoor environment where they can develop independence, self-confidence, friendships, artistic, and athletic skills.*"

Camps could use information about PYD for their respective marketing and strategic efforts to retain campers and attract new campers. The Internet/Website, the second highest source of camp information in our study, is a highly visible place to put quotes, audio, or visual testimonials from parents about the benefits of the camp experience for their child. Camps could utilize their social media outlets (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) to showcase videos, images, and text from parents. Brochures or hard copy marketing materials could also include parent testimonials about the camp experience.

Most families sent their child to a WNC camp because of a recommendation by others. By effectively showcasing parents' perceptions regarding the PYD resulting from the camp experience through the Internet, social media, and other marketing materials, camps (specifically WNC camps) can increase virtual word-of-mouth recommendations and referrals from parents in hopes of reaching new campers. In general, camp evaluations should incorporate following up with parents to collect relevant data (e.g., benefits) about their child's camp experience to assist in strategic planning efforts and marketing strategies.

Evaluation of a Summer Learning Initiative

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"Summer learning loss" has lately received national attention. Unequal access to summer learning opportunities explains more than half of the achievement gap between lower-and higher-income youth (Alexander, et al, 2007). Over the summer, lower-income youth experience a three-month drop in reading skills, which can accumulate to a two-year achievement gap by middle school (Cooper et al., 1996). However, summer learning programs have demonstrated increases in youth participants' levels of literacy (Borman, Goetz, & Dowling, 2009), reading comprehension (Schacter & Jo, 2005), and language learning (Feuer, 2009).

One summer learning program is the Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative (HSLI), operating in western Massachusetts since 2006. HSLI is designed to ensure positive academic and development outcomes, especially for low-income youth, through quality programming aiming to stem summer reading loss and increase supports and opportunities for children's learning motivation and engagement. HSLI utilizes recreation-based experiential programming found in day camp models to promote learning skills in its participants.

Preliminary results from this study focus on 23 program sites that served 672 youth entering grades 1-6 in summer 2011. Each site received thematic curricula training (e.g., nature, hip hop drumming, outdoor adventure), 20 hours of technical assistance from coaches to promote effective thematic and literacy curriculum implementation, grants for enhancements such as field trips, materials, and staff planning time, and other literacy supports. The goal of this study was to explore the relationships between reading scores, and program-level factors and participant demographic information.

Methods

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS®) Oral Reading Fluency test was used for children entering grades 2-7. DIBELS was administered as a pre-test in June at the beginning of the summer programs, and as a post-test in August at the conclusion of the summer programs. Two external consultants assessed program quality using the Assessment of Afterschool Program Practices Observation Tool (APT-O). Program sites provided data on their participants' number of days in attendance at the program, gender, race/ethnicity, English Language Learner (ELL) status, and income levels.

Descriptive data analysis methods included t-tests for the difference between means and analysis of variance for all study measures. We correlated scores on each predictor measure (i.e., program-level factors and demographic information) with the DIBELS pre- and post-test and change scores (defined as the difference between pre- and post-tests), using bivariate correlational statistics to understand the magnitude of the relationships between variables, and to understand how well each predictor measure correlated with other measures. Multi-level modeling was used to determine the variance for the groups of program sites and people.

Findings

Fifty-five percent of participants in HSLI were at some or high risk for reading problems based on the standardized expectations for their grade level. Program sites reported that 77% (n=346) were low-income, 34% (n=181) were ELL, 54% (n=351) were girls, 46% (n=299) were boys, 43% (n=271) were Hispanic, 22% (n=135) were Black, 17% (n=106) were White, 10% (n=62) were multiracial, 5% (n=30) were Asian, and 3% (n=21) were other race/ethnicity.

Seventy-six percent (n=476) attended 15 days or more, and 55% (n=371) attended programs that were rated by APT-O as 3.00 or more.

The average change in reading scores from pre- to post-test was +3.27; 68% of children maintained or advanced their reading skill. HSLI not only reduced, but improved summer reading, in comparison to the estimated loss for many low-income children of two or three months of learning during summer.

Using multi-level modeling, we found that most of the variance (or spread of the data set) in DIBELS change scores was between people (97.5%) rather than program site (2.5%). This means that the *sites* were almost homogenous in their effects on children's DIBELS change scores, but the *children* were very heterogeneous. This is good news for HSLI because it shows a high amount of consistency between sites. It also demonstrates the need to look at individual groups of children when thinking about what the results mean.

There were no statistically significant correlations between DIBELS change scores and the variables of race, ELL, gender, or days in program. There was no relationship between program quality (as measured by the APT-O) and DIBELS change scores. Even when the six categories that comprised the APT-O score were examined separately, there was no relationship. This is likely because APT-O measures program-level factors that are unconnected to reading skill, which is a very specific and individual-level outcome. It is possible that if children's "motivation to learn" or "engagement in learning" were measured, there would be relationships between motivation/engagement and APT-O scores, indicating potential future research directions.

When the data were separated by group, significant correlations (all $p<.05$) were found between pre-test scores and DIBELS change scores for the following demographic variables: low-income ($r = -.127$), ELL ($r = -.196$), Hispanic ($r = -.171$), Asian, ($r = -.443$), and girls ($r = -.132$). Significant correlations (all $p<.05$) were found for the following program-level variables: participating for 15+ days ($r = -.101$), and participating at programs with APT-O scores higher than 3.00+ ($r = -.161$). The correlations for these groups of youth indicate that for these groups, if they started out scoring higher on DIBELS, they changed less, presumably because there was less room for improvement. While the correlations were small (except for Asian children, which was moderate), the results suggest that HSLI look more closely at how the program affects different groups of children in different ways. For example, training, ongoing support, and professional development could include specific literacy strategies for children who are English language learners (which tended to be most of the Hispanic and Asian participants in 2011).

Applications

As more camps aim to respond to requests by parents and formal educators for opportunities to enhance and advance learning during summer months, the HSLI model suggests ways for camps to accomplish this, and evidence that it is possible to improve reading skills during summer. This study converges the benefits of a summer learning program with academic success while integrating needs related to demographic factors into the innovative program model aiming to support lifelong learners.

Fostering Camp Connectedness through Structured Curricula at Day Camp

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Campers feel connected to camp when they form positive relationships with peers, camp staff, and with camp norms in general. In academic settings, students who feel connected to their school show evidence of scholastic (Catalano et al., 2004) and health (Resnick et al., 1997) benefits. More broadly, schools that promote student connectedness report fewer problem behaviors (McNeely & Falci, 2004; Loukas et al., 2009) and a high level of student engagement (Libbey, 2004). The camp setting may be uniquely positioned to promote connectedness. Camps are known to promote close camper-counselor relationships (Gillard et al., 2009) and positive camp norms (Garst et al., 2009). In the effort to support camps interested in examining camp connectedness, the American Camp Association (ACA) recently added the Camp Connectedness Scale (Sibthorp et al., 2010) to the Youth Outcomes Battery (YOB). Despite increased interest in camp connectedness, little is known about the specific mechanisms that foster this outcome. Structured curricula offer one way camps might target specific outcomes such as connectedness. A curriculum targeting environmental stewardship, for example, promoted this outcome when implemented at camp (Browne et al., 2011; Garst & Chavez, 2010). Integrating curricula at camp also allows camps to align with traditional educational processes, which is a growing objective among camp administrators (O'Donnell, 2002; Ozier, 2010). A curriculum designed to promote connectedness, then, is a promising way for camps to target camp connectedness.

Theoretical Framework

Connectedness is a two-pronged concept with both individual and context-level elements. At the individual level, positive peer and adult connections are among the 5 C's of positive youth development (PYD; Lerner et al., 2005), which means that connectedness is critical to youth's optimal growth processes. Feelings of interpersonal connectedness satisfy an individual's the basic need for relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2002) or belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), which are interrelated concepts that are at the core of the PYD framework. Much of the school-based literature also identifies the bonds one forms to organizational norms as a second feature of connectedness (e.g., Catalano et al., 2004; You et al., 2008). Hirschi's social control theory (1969) suggests that a young person in an organized setting will adopt the positive norms of the setting itself. Young people, according to Hirschi, rely on social structures to guide their development and form interpersonal attachments that bond them to the normative values of the setting. Although Hirschi's (1969) theory focuses primarily on deviant behavior among youth, several studies support the theoretical connection between a participant and organizational norms in PYD settings (e.g., Hawkins & Weis, 1985; Hawkins et al., 2008; Duerden et al., 2009). With this in mind, the camp norms also play an important role in fostering connectedness. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Caring School Communities (CSC) curriculum, which was adapted for use at day camp, on camp connectedness.

Methods

A quasi-experimental, mixed repeated-measures design was used to assess the impact of the CSC on campers' sense of connectedness. Camp connectedness was defined based on Libbey's (2004) notion of school connectedness, from which 6 distinct domains emerged: (a)

belonging, (b) liking camp, (c) sense of voice, (d) positive peer relations, (e) safety, and (f) staff support. Each of these domains was captured through the 12-item Camp Connectedness Scale (CCS), the YOB scale used to examine the connectedness in this study. The independent variable was the CSC curriculum. Three structured CSC lesson plans were adapted to the day camp setting and staff were trained how to implement each lesson at camp. Campers participated in each of the CSC lessons three times, resulting in 9 CSC lessons over a 2-week period. In one activity, camp staff facilitated a cross-age buddy lesson, which involved pairing younger campers with older campers for a short activity (e.g., reading). Staff members were trained how to select older buddies, prepare older buddies to serve as mentors, and conduct reflection sessions that engaged older buddies in learning about the importance of positive camper connections. Three day camps from a single municipal agency participated in this study, two of which received the staff training intervention and one served as a comparison condition. Campers from all three sites completed the study instrumentation at three different times during the summer; Time 1 assessed baseline levels of connectedness and Times 2 and 3 assessed the impact of the staff training session and CSC activities at the intervention sites. Times 1, 2, and 3 were approximately 2 weeks apart. Profile analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) was used to examine the between-group and within-group differences in connectedness between the three sites over time. Follow-up interviews were conducted with camp staff in order to examine the extent to which the CSC was implemented as intended in this study and the nature of connectedness in general.

Results and Discussion

A total of 55 male (n = 32) and female (n = 23) campers (M_{age} = 10.8 years old) completed the CCS at Times 1, 2, and 3. Profile analysis then compared profile level, parallelism, and flatness of the treatment and non-treatment sites, which revealed a significant ($p < .05$), but negative trend over time at both treatment and non-treatment conditions. Follow-up interviews with camp staff revealed several themes that might explain these findings. With respect to the CSC curriculum, camp staff reported implementing the lesson plans as frequently as planned; however, staff members identified several ways they adapted the curriculum for different situations. For example, one camp paired older buddies with several younger buddies due to an unequal number of older and younger campers. Camp staff burnout and negative camper peer groups may have also affected implementation of the CSC and, consequently, campers' feelings of connectedness over the course of the summer. These findings, as well as their implications for camp connectedness are discussed, followed by a discussion specific to study limitations and implications for future research and practice.

References available upon request.

Lessons Learned from Implementing a Work-Based Learning Approach to 4-H Camp Counseling

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Introduction

Camping is one of the tried-and-true delivery methods in the 4-H program. Previous research has documented that camp counseling provides a positive developmental context (e.g., Garst, Browne, & Bialeschki, 2011; Johnson, Goldman, Garvey, Britner, & Weaver, 2010) and that 4-H camp counselors learn workforce skills (Digby & Ferrari, 2007; Ferrari & McNeely, 2007). These workforce skills, such as communication and teamwork, are those that employers consistently say are necessary but are lacking among new entrants to the workforce (Business & Higher Education Forum, 1997; Casner-Lotto, 2006; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2002).

Because 4-H camp counselors in our state are teens who volunteer their time for their five-day county camp, we believed a more intentional approach that viewed camp counseling as a job would allow teen camp counselors to connect skills they were learning with those needed for workforce success. To that end, we created a pilot project to explore implementation of a work-based learning approach to camp counseling. 4-H professionals included workforce skills lessons in their counselor training, assessed counselors' workforce skills, had counselors complete a self-assessment on the same set of skills, and met with counselors after camp to discuss their skills assessments. Although the outcomes of educational programs are certainly important, it is just as important to understand *how* these outcomes come to be, that is, the theory behind the program (Garst, 2010). Thus, our purpose was to examine the process of program implementation.

Theoretical Foundations

Adolescence is a time of major developmental changes when young people are expected to acquire a range of skills that will help them to make a successful transition to college, work, and adulthood (Lippman, Atienza, Rivers, & Keith, 2008; Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). Youth programs are thought to be a setting that is ideally suited to addressing adolescents' real-world skill development (Larson & Angus, in press; Schwarz & Stolow, 2006). However, learning is a missing ingredient in typical adolescent employment (Greenberger, Steinberg, & Ruggerio, 1982; Levine & Hoffner, 2006), and thus a work-based learning approach embedded within a youth development program would provide a safe setting for practicing and refining skills under the guidance and support of adult mentors. The theoretical foundations of this approach are rooted in developmental intentionality (Walker, 2006; Walker, Marczak, Blyth, & Borden, 2006), youth engagement (Dawes & Larson, 2011), anticipatory socialization (Levine & Hoffner, 2006), and transfer of learning (Mayer & Wittrock, 1996).

Methods

In each of the three years of the project, we conducted focus groups with 4-H professionals after the camp season. We followed focus group procedures outlined by Krueger (1998). A total of 27 4-H professionals participated. The sessions were audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. Open coding was used to identify themes related to benefits and challenges of implementing this approach.

Results

Consistent across the three years of the project, 4-H professionals noted several benefits of using the work-based learning approach for camp counselors and for the camp program. Through this process, camp counselors *"really saw how they were developing skills."* The 4-H professionals thought that this approach helped camp counselors to *"see what they are good at, what they need to work at, and ways of getting to the point they would like to be."* The teamwork, leadership, and responsibility aspects appeared to be particularly salient.

4-H professionals found that it was relatively easy to embed workforce topics in their counselor training, and thus it did not require drastic changes to implement. Many noted that they were already including many aspects of workforce skills, but this approach emphasized them and made it much more intentional. By using workforce skills development as a frame of reference, the counselors appeared to take their responsibility more seriously. The performance appraisals provided documentation of counselors' performance, increased interaction with counselors, and provided helpful feedback on the camp program. Because of this, the participants said the performance appraisals were a *"must do"* aspect of the approach.

4-H professionals who had used this approach for more than one year remarked that they noticed the difference between counselors who were new and those who had been through training using this approach in previous years. These counselors were not nervous about the performance appraisal because they knew what to expect, they were able to offer thoughtful and meaningful suggestions for improvement, and they handled themselves in a professional manner. As one of the 4-H professionals remarked, during the performance appraisals she felt as though she *"was having a conversation with co-workers."*

Participants noted several challenges with implementation. Performance appraisals were time consuming and time constraints on the part of both counselors and 4-H professionals made scheduling them difficult, especially if a county had a large number of counselors. There was sometimes resistance from counselors because it involved a change from the status quo. They thought that for some counselors it may take more than one year to make the transition from being a camper to counselor and really get the concept of camp counseling as a job. These challenges were more about the process itself rather than with the concept of work-based learning.

Conclusions

The work-based learning approach to camp counseling involves relatively little additional effort during training and there are benefits for both the county camping program and the counselors. Even though performance appraisals are time consuming, 4-H professionals believe the benefits outweigh the challenges, and they recommend that others adopt a work-based learning approach. A successful camp was viewed not only as one that was positive for campers, but was one that achieved youth development outcomes for counselors as well. Ultimately, better performance by counselors leads to a higher quality camp experience for all involved.

As programs are pushed to document impact, demonstrating that workforce skills are the outcomes of youth programs is particularly timely. Many programs aim to prepare youth as contributing members of society now as well as for a successful transition to adulthood and

could benefit from considering the intentional approach and work-based learning concepts presented here.
References available on request

"It's not Like a Regular Job":
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Staff Members at Residential Camp

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LGBT staff members are present within many camp contexts, from camps that explicitly seek to hire LGBT staff to camps that ban such staff. Most of the research about LGBT individuals who work with youth focuses on K-12 teachers. Research on LGB teachers indicates that they express high levels of fear of discrimination by administrators, parents, and other teachers (Jackson, 2007; Mayo, 2008). Mayo found that such worrying had the potential to adversely affect teachers' job performance. However, since teachers do not generally live with their coworkers or their students, existing research may not apply LGBT summer camp staff.

Methods

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the experience of LGBT residential camp staff members. Participants in the study were between the ages of 18 and 25 years, had worked at residential summer camp within the prior three years (i.e., during the summers of 2007-2009), and identified as LGBT or non-heterosexual. Participants were contacted through LGBT organizations on college campuses. Additional participants were recruited through snowball sampling.

Study participants included 24 females, 3 males, and one individual who identified as gender queer, identifying as neither male nor female. Using theoretical sampling, data collection continued until additional interviews seemed to be adding little to theory building processes (Draucker, Martsolf, Ross, & Rusk, 2007). Data were collected through face-to-face, semi-structured interviews that lasted about an hour. Each interview was taped and then later transcribed verbatim for analysis. Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used as the basis for analysis. The researcher analyzed the data through coding, comparison, creating memos and diagrams, and theorizing (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Findings

Several themes emerged from the data regarding the methods staff used to manage their LGBT identity at camp. This paper focuses on the two themes of most interest to camp administrators, the *residential camp context* and the *atmosphere* at each camp for LGBT staff members. Staff used identity management strategies to anticipate and reduce the effects of homophobia.

Some features of the residential camp context particularly affected LGBT staff. For instance, several staff stated that living at camp affected how or whether they came out to other staff members. Referring to this, Ashley said, "It's not a regular job, because you're in this place 24 hours," so she was more cautious about coming out to coworkers. If someone reacted badly to the disclosure of her sexual orientation, Ashley couldn't go home at the end of the day as she would in a "regular job."

LGBT camp staff were also affected by their role as caretakers of minor children. The extant (although incorrect) stereotype of LGBT individuals as sexual predators prompted some staff never to be alone with children. Others worried about the perception that they might have unduly influenced LGBT youth.

Each camp provided a different atmosphere for LGBT staff members. Formal policy, informal practices, and supervisor attitudes affected the atmosphere at camp for LGBT staff.

Based on the atmosphere of each organization, as well as camp policies and practices, camps fell into three groups: homophobic, tolerant, or supportive. These categories emerged from the data because staff members' experiences seemed to cluster based on two policies: whether the camp hired LGBT staff and whether LGBT staff members were allowed to disclose the presence of LGBT individuals at camp.

The camps labeled as homophobic had stated policies that they would not hire LGBT staff. Those labeled as tolerant hired LGBT staff members with conditions. Camps labeled as supportive hired LGBT staff members and also allowed them to disclose their presence to campers or parents.

Discussion

Features that are inherent in the residential camp context affected staff members. For example, living where they worked increased the necessity to actively manage one's identity without the breaks that one might get in a day job.

Other features were specific to the camp that they worked at. The atmosphere for LGBT staff members differed at different camps. Staff expended the most energy at homophobic camps, where discovery of one's LGBT status could result in dismissal. In contrast, staff at supportive camps used the least amount of energy and effort to manage their LGBT identity. While supportive camps were not free of homophobic attitudes among staff, campers, or parents, only at supportive camps was the disclosure of one's LGBT identity free of adverse consequences such as being fired or reprimanded.

The data from this study suggested that the experience of LGBT residential summer camp staff members was affected by their LGBT status. In response, staff used identity management strategies to reduce the impact of homophobia on their camp experience. In the absence of any concerns about homophobia, LGBT staff members might not have engaged in many of the behaviors associated with identity management.

Measures taken at supportive camps in this sample demonstrated that camps can work to counter homophobic and heteronormative attitudes and practices. For instance, all of the supportive camps provided diversity training that included LGBT topics. Such training can help staff members be more effective with campers and also signals to staff members that LGBT individuals are valued at camp. Camp administrators who employ such policies can benefit the LGBT individuals in their midst.

Program Fidelity, Adaptation, and Participant Responsiveness: Key Processes Tied to Evaluating Program Efficacy

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In an era of evidence-based practices and evaluation, youth programs are increasingly required to demonstrate outcome efficacy to stakeholders. The emphasis on such processes has led researchers to investigate the mechanisms affecting outcome achievement. This is particularly relevant in summer camp programs, which are dependent upon the interaction of activities, staff, and participant factors to reach program objectives. In addition, interest in how camp programs are designed and implemented has increased as attempts have been made to integrate formal curricula into camp settings and challenges with this approach have become evident (Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011).

Despite the challenges in using formal curricula in camps, another common issue directly tied to curricular efficacy is program fidelity, or the degree to which a program is delivered as it was intended (Hill, Maucione, & Hood, 2007). While fidelity alone has been linked to a program's success, some researchers have suggested that emphasizing program fidelity in isolation fails to recognize other important implementation processes that are occurring (e.g., Shen, Yang, Cao, & Warfield, 2008). Facilitator adaptation and participant responsiveness are two other implementation factors known to affect program implementation and may play a central role in adapting extant curricula to summer camps (Berkel, Mauricio, Schoenfelder, & Sandler, 2011).

In the case of this study, a youth-mentoring program was adapted from a school based self-regulation program (Wyman et al. 2010). From the onset, it was evident that fidelity alone could not capture the effectiveness of the individualized mentoring sessions. Simply identifying how much a mentor followed a scripted curriculum did not address the adaptations that were key to successful adult-youth interactions and that were bound to change between different mentor-mentee relationships. In addition, participant factors, such as responsiveness, are known to influence effective adult-youth relationships in mentoring programs (Nakkula & Harris, 2005). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine Berkel and colleagues integrated model involving fidelity, participant responsiveness, and programmatic adaptations in our efforts to design, adapt, and implement a youth mentoring program targeting self-regulation to a summer camp setting.

Methods

During the summer of 2011, camp staff and campers in a summer day camp located in Salt Lake City, UT were invited to participate in this study. The mentoring program was part of an eight-session curriculum where mentors met individually with program participants, for a weekly check-in. The data were collected from structured journals completed by the mentors at the end of each mentoring session, and through interviews with campers. The journals asked mentors to identify how much of the curriculum content was covered. A total score was then generated and transformed into a percentage that provided a measure of fidelity, as defined by how closely mentors adhered to delivering the curriculum (Durlak & Dupre, 2008). As no standard method of measurement for adaptation exists, mentors were also asked to include in their structured journal any modifications made to the mentoring sessions and to describe why those adaptations were

made (Berkel et al., 2011). Participant responsiveness was assessed on two factors, engagement, and satisfaction (Blake, Simkin, Ledsky, Perkins et al., 2001). Engagement was assessed on a likert-scale with items associated with camper's level of engagement during the mentoring sessions (e.g., Baydar, Reid, &Webster-Stratton, 2003). Satisfaction was assessed through camper interviews. Using qualitative means, we systematically examined program implementation processes (fidelity, adaptation, and participant responsiveness), for repeated themes, structure, and process in the narrative data (e.g., Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Using a constant comparative approach (e.g., Glaser & Strauss, 1999), the themes were enumerated using each mentor and camper's entire response for a question as the unit of analysis.

Results

Program fidelity, curriculum adaptations, and participant responsiveness scores from 271 mentoring sessions were collected. Campers who attended at least 60% of the sessions were retained (N= 37), resulting in 245 mentor journals for analysis. Analysis of the amount of curriculum content covered indicated a substantially high measure of fidelity at 94%. Mentors reported 61 adaptations were made to the sessions. Sixty-four percent of these adaptations were related to a lack of time. Mentors commented that at times there was too much content to cover in a 15-minute mentoring session, necessitating many of the adaptations (i.e., combining sessions, discussing versus writing things down). Participant responsiveness, as measured by the camper's level of engagement, showed that mentors agreed or strongly agreed that campers were actively participating in mentoring sessions 74 % of the time. This is consistent with themes related to satisfaction from the camper interviews where campers responded to the question "How did you like the mentoring program?" One camper quote captures a typical response, "It was good because we set goals and we tried to accomplish things." However, campers also commented that what they liked least was attending mentoring sessions during activity periods.

Discussion

The results of this study provide important evidence that there are multiple factors that influence a program's effectiveness. In the case of this study, we sought to implement a formal mentoring program into a camp setting. While the mentoring program was effective (i.e. improved self-regulation), there were a number of implementation factors that mentors and campers suggested impacted the program's overall effectiveness. Although there was a relatively high degree of program fidelity, a number of adaptations were made to the curriculum due to various time-related constraints. Integrating some of these adaptations into future program development may improve its effectiveness. Despite the fact that there was a relatively high level of engagement, camper's engagement towards achieving personal goals fluctuated. This fluctuation often related to the timing of the mentoring, campers' awareness of their goals, and whether they perceived achieving personal goals as relevant. Identifying ways to improve participant responsiveness (i.e. offering mentoring sessions at times that don't conflict with activity periods) may result in greater outcome achievement. Taken together, assessing program fidelity, adaptations, and participant responsiveness can be an important step when evaluating the effectiveness of implementing formal curricula at camp.

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A National Poll of Teens' Attitudes toward the Outdoors: What's It Got to do with Camp?
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Many camp professionals are aware of the disconnect between many youth and nature, especially as articulated by Louv (2005) when he talked about "nature deficit disorder". However, past research shows that the camp experience can contribute to outcomes such adventure, exploration, and environmental awareness (ACA, 2005) as well as environmental leadership and stewardship (ACA 2010) Camps also find it challenging to get teens to attend camp because of competing extracurricular interests, employment demands, and sometimes just because camp may lack a "cool" factor. The purpose of this paper is to focus on data from a national poll of teens about their connections with nature conducted by the Nature Conservancy. The questions that guided the secondary data analysis were: 1) What are the general attitudes of teens toward nature and outdoor activities? 2) Are there any differences in attitudes and participation based on having a prior meaningful experience in the outdoors? 3) What encouragements/constraints to participating in outdoor experiences were identified by the teens? and 4) Are there any differences in attitudes or participation based on demographics? From these answers we will discuss implications for the camp community.

Methods

The original study used a mixed methods approach with four focus groups in large urban areas (San Antonio, Berkeley, New York City, Denver) that served as the initial data source that informed the development of the online survey. Instrument development occurred as a bi-partisan effort with two national polling firms. Additional refinement of questions for the online survey administered to a national representative sample of 13-18 year old youth (N=603) in early August was done by a research advisory committee comprised of a variety of researchers from youth organizations, the academy, and Nature Conservancy staff. For this paper data from the original study were re-analyzed in light of the new research questions. The data were entered into SPSS and initially analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics.

Findings

Analysis of the survey data resulted in the following key findings related to the research questions:

Attitudes Toward Nature and Outdoor Activities:

- *American youth were unhappy with the condition of the environment, and lacked faith in adults to address it.* For example, 73% of youth agreed that previous generations have damaged the environment and have left it to them to fix it; 76% of youth were confident climate change can be solved if we act immediately to address it; 88% of youth said that it is "cool" to do things to protect the environment, and 72% said they "always" take actions to protect the environment.

- *Youth expressed pro-environmental attitudes as strong – or stronger – than older generations.* For example, 62% of youth said a lack of local parks and places to spend time outdoors was a serious problem (33% of adults)*;* 66% said protecting the environment should be given priority, even at the expense of slowing economic growth (34% of adults)*;* 56% of

youth saw the best rationale for conserving nature as protecting it for its own sake (42% of adults)

- *The most common feelings associated with being in nature were peaceful (71%), free (70%), calm (65%), happy (65%), adventurous (65%).* Even non-outdoor oriented teens were interested in seeing something beautiful in nature, getting peace and quiet away from their homes/cities, spending time in the outdoors with their family, and doing something new in the outdoors to challenge themselves.

Meaningful Experiences in Nature

- *The majority of the teens (66%) had a personal experience in nature that was meaningful to them.*
- *These positive experiences seemed to shape these youth into more "outdoorsy" teens who differed significantly from their counterparts.* For example, these teens were almost twice as likely to say they prefer spending time outdoors; were more likely to express concern about water pollution, air pollution, global warming, and the condition of the environment; more than twice as likely to consider themselves a "strong environmentalist,"; and more likely to express interest in studying the environment in college, working in a job related to nature, or joining an environmental club at their school. These "outdoorsy" teens also were likely to participate in a variety of outdoor activities on at least a weekly basis.

Encouragement/Constraints to Outdoor Participation

- *As mentioned previously, if youth are given more opportunities to have a meaningful experience outdoors, they will be more likely to value nature, engage with it, and feel empowered to do something about it.*
- *The influence of family members and friends remains critical.* Youth report that parents, grandparents, or other persons raising them and their friends have the most influence over their propensity to spending time outdoors. Youth group leaders and leaders in environmental organizations are less influential. Youth were significantly more interested in spending time outdoors with their friends than other choices.
- *The key obstacles to overcome in getting youth to spend more time in nature were a lack of access, a lack of interest, and feelings of discomfort.* Four in five youth said that the discomfort of nature (bugs, heat or cold, etc.) was a reason they did not spend time in nature, followed by lack of access (62% said there was no natural area nearby, or they do not have a way to get there), and almost half who said they simply are not interested.

Demographic Differences

- *Barriers for subsets of youth exist.* Concern about gangs and crime was more acute for youth from big cities, youth of color, girls, and the less well-off; concern about not feeling welcome among other people in natural areas was seen as an obstacle by Asian American youth, those in big cities, and youth in less well-off households. Obesity also seemed a consideration. Teens whose body mass index (BMI) classified them as obese had lower rates of participation in outdoor activities and were less interest in pursuing them in the future.

Discussion.

The data from this national poll of teens who may or may not have attended camp may be of interest to camp directors and staff on two levels: 1) the potential impact of a positive camp experience when viewed from the lasting influence of these types of nature-based experiences on youth and 2) potential marketing aids. In terms of lasting impact, these data suggest that American youth do <u>not</u> lack for concern about the environment or desire that it be protected.

What they lack are opportunities, like camp, to engage more meaningfully with nature. The more youth are given the chance to get involved with nature, the more their instinctive concern about the environment can be solidified and cemented into long-term commitment to protecting it. From the camp standpoint, exploring ways to provide connect points for their campers to community opportunities, facilities, and spaces as a way to continue some of their camp interests would be useful. A second possibility is to address some of the constraints around perceived discomforts in the natural world while they are at camp. From a marketing standpoint, many of these young people were interested in novel, fun, exciting outdoor activities, so might be responsive to that sort of marketing. A portion of the teens (the "outdoorsy" youth) also expressed a higher interest in working in the outdoors, so they may respond well to outdoor leadership trainings, CIT/LIT trainings, especially if they might lead to a summer job.

(References on request)

Transformational Leadership Style of Camp Directors:
Gender-based Differences in Leadership Style

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Camp Directors' leadership style is a topic of interest in residential camping. Studies outlining leadership styles among camp directors and the resulting effects on camp staff are limited. Effective leadership by camp directors in residential settings is essential to successful camp operations and providing a positive camp experience for the campers.

Transformational Leadership is considered a highly effective leadership style in most business settings because it requires the leader to articulate a vision while engaging all levels of employees in contributing their best ideas and teamwork in working toward the shared goals (Asgari, Silong, Ahmad, & Samah, 2008). Transformational leadership, as defined by Bass (1990), includes the characteristics of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Specific aspects of idealized influence are instilling pride and sense of mission. Inspirational motivation includes communicating high expectations and expressing the important purposes of the work. Encouraging intelligence and creative problem solving are features of intellectual stimulation, whereas paying attention to each employee and understanding individual needs and talents are elements of individualized consideration (Bass, 1990). Research states that transformational leaders have a positive effect on employee behaviors (Piccolo & Coquitt, 2006).

Research on transformational leadership within recreation literature has not been forthcoming. However, Priest and Grass (2005), in a study of outdoor leadership professionals, differentiates leadership into hard skills (technical, safety, and environmental), soft skills (facilitational, instructional, and organizational) and conceptual skills (judgment, decision-making, communication, and ethics). Raiola (2003), while focusing primarily on communication and problem-solving for leaders in adventure programming, considered concepts consistent with components of transformational leadership, particularly inspirational motivation and individual consideration. Related to inspirational motivation, outdoor leaders have been found to increase followers' awareness of shared goals (Hayashi & Ewert, 2006). Analogous to individual consideration, outdoor leaders have also been found to recognize and address individual needs (Hayashi & Ewert, 2006). Although most outdoor leadership research is based in the adventure experiential model, concepts have applicability to the residential camp setting.

Early research gave some indication that female leadership styles were more democratic and participatory, but the findings did not provide extensive examples based on multiple environments and organizational circumstances (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). More recent research found that women act in a more communal way than their male counterparts (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Further, female leaders have been found to demonstrate more transformational leadership characteristics than male leaders (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly, 2005; and Eagly &Johnson, 1990).

Transformational leadership styles are viewed as having an effect on positive work behaviors of employees (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Research suggests women exhibit a higher degree of transformational leadership attributes than do males (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2003). However, this has not been assessed within camp settings. The

purpose of this study is to explore transformational leadership among camp directors and assess if differences in leadership behavior exist across genders.

Methods

Data for this study were collected from a random sample of resident camps across the United States. Camp directors from 350 camps were contacted and invited to participate. Twenty three camps volunteered to participate in the study. Camp directors were asked to invite their camp staff to participate in the study, providing staff access to the internet to complete the on-line survey. Camps with less than 5 respondents and those with unusable data were not included in the analysis, leaving thirteen camps with 111 staff member respondents. Staff members were assured their responses would be confidential and not known by the camp director. The online instrument included several sections. Transformational leadership was measured through the use of the Multifactor Leadership Questions (MLQ Form 5X; Bass, 1990). Twenty items measured the four dimensions of transformational leadership. Respondents were instructed to rate the degree to which their camp director engaged in each behavior. Four items were used to measure intellectual stimulation (e.g., "seeks differing perspectives when solving problems"), inspirational motivation (e.g., "articulates a compelling vision of the future"), and individualized consideration (e.g., "treats me as an individual rather than just a member of a group"). Eight items were used to measure idealized influence (e.g., "talks about the most important values and beliefs"). Each item is measured on a five point scale (wherein 0 = Never, 1 = Once in a while, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Fairly often, and 4 = Frequently, if not always).

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using quantitative methods in SPSS 19.0. Data were cleaned and checked. A composite variable for transformational leadership was calculated with the 20 items from the MLQ. At the individual level, transformational leadership revealed acceptable reliability. (= .95). Transformational leadership average scores for each camp were calculated (n=13). Group level analysis revealed camp directors on average exhibited transformational leadership behaviors fairly often. (M= 3.08). Group level (camp-level) scores were used to test the hypothesis. Therefore, the analysis sought to assess transformational leadership exhibited at the group-level. Independent samples t-test was performed to test the hypothesis. Due to the small sample size, a boot strapping method was also employed. The results of the independent t-test indicated no difference in transformational leadership among camp directors based upon their gender (t=1.47). Transformational leadership exhibited among male directors averaged 3.34 (n=5) and female directors averaged 2.91 (n=8).

Limitations

This study is not without limitations. One potential limitation could be bias related to directors who agreed to have camp staff participate in the survey. It is possible that only directors who perceive themselves with strong leadership would agree to participate in the study. This could not be controlled as it was necessary to obtain access to camp staff through the agreement of the directors. Further, due to the nonindependent nature of the individual level data, individual level analysis was not possible. Additionally, although 23 camps agreed to participate, only 13 camps were included in this analysis. Due to the group level analysis of the data, a bootstrapping procedure was necessary to address the small number of camps included in the study.

Benefits and Camp Implications

The knowledge from this study provides camp professionals and the camp industry with empirical understanding of transformational leadership skills of camp directors, which has not

been studied before. The study reveals no significance difference in the transformational leadership skills exhibited to staff based on the director's gender. Findings from the MLQ were compared with previous scores from Hayashi and Ewert (2006) and the current study results indicated similar mean score range of 2.78 – 3.16 in outdoor leaders (n=48) as compared to the mean score range of 2.76 – 2.91 in the normative sample (n=1545). An interesting fact is the degree to which transformational leadership is employed by camp directors compared to other professions. Results indicate transformational leadership is frequently employed in camp settings and both male and female leaders exhibit transformational leadership behaviors to their camp staff. This is important because when directors execute transformational leadership, camp staff will be more aware and engaged in working toward the overall camp goals. These goals relate to creating a positive camp experience for the participants. Utilizing this research to better inform and encourage directors to engage in transformational leadership will have an impact on the camp staff role in creating a positive camp experience.

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Disability Specific Camps: Examining Social Acceptance and Quality of Life

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One of the biggest barriers youth with disabilities experience is the lack of opportunities to connect with others who have similar life experiences. Social acceptance (SA), defined as the presence of equal status, social position, and reciprocity among others, occurs within environments where relationships can be created with others who value one another (Devine & Parr, 2008). Research has demonstrated disability specific camps as a context where participants experience less social isolation, create social connectedness, and experience a sense of community (Meltzer & Rourke, 2005). Disability specific camps that provide the environment for SA to occur may also increase quality of life (QOL) among youth with disabilities. Quality of life, defined as a person's perception of what they value in physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment (World Health Organization, 2011) is often most dependent on social support systems. Grounded in social capital theory (Coleman, 1990), this study is based on the notion that social capital is created when social ties are formed between individuals who have equal status and share common interests (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the impact camp has on QOL and SA as well as the relationship between QOL and SA among youth with disabilities who attend specialty camps.

Methods

Data were collected at three specialized residential camps each providing services for a specific disability group. Research participants included: youth with cancer (camp 1), physical disabilities (camp 2), and hearing impairments (camp 3). Campers filled out two scales and demographic questions the first and last day of camp with follow-up data currently in progress. The Social Acceptance Scale (Devine, 1997) uses 12 items that focuses on perceptions of social acceptance by the individual on a scale between one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). It has an Alpha reliability of .88, test-retest reliability of .85 and Face Validity. The PedsQL General Well-Being Scale (Hallstrand, Curtis, Aitken, & Sullivan, 2003; Varni, Seid, & Kurtin, 1999) uses 7 items to examine perceptions youth have of his/her general well-being from zero (never) to four (almost always).

Results

Data were analyzed on each camp with comparisons within rather than across camps due to the nature of this study. The data were analyzed to determine whether engagement in camp increased QOL and SA immediately following camp. Paired t-tests and correlations were conducted using SPSS and significance was established at $p < .05$. See table 1 for demographic information.

Camp one. The PedsQL General Well-Being Scale mean scores were pre-test 3.46 and post-test 3.45 with no statistical significance across subjects. The Social Acceptance scale was similar with the means pre-test 4.0 and post-test 4.1 with change insignificant across subjects. Findings showed a high correlation between the post QL and SA (r = .721; p = .26).

Camp two. The majority of campers were diagnosed with spina bifida (n = 11). Analysis showed no change in the mean for the PedsQL General Well-Being Scale between pre and post-test (pre-test = 3.40; post-test = 3.49) and only a slight change for the Social Acceptance scale

(pre-test = 4.43; post-test = 4.54). Paired t-tests showed no significance, but there was a correlation (r = .523; p = .050) between the post QL and SA.

 Camp Three. All campers within this study had a cochlear implant. A paired t-test showed a significant difference in the perceptions of QOL ($t(36) = 2.02$; $p = .049$) at the end of camp. Significant differences were also found for social acceptance at the end of camp ($t(38) = 4.69$; $p = .03$). In addition, there was a significant correlation between post QL and SA (r = .717; $p < .05$).

Discussion

 Statistical significance was found for QL and SA for camp three. Although statistical significance was not detected from pre-test to post-test with camp one and two, a correlation between SA and QOL is evident in camps designed specifically for individuals with similar disabling conditions. Future studies should examine this correlation further to vet out potential positive gains in QOL based on perceptions of SA for youth with specific disabilities. Treatment has already started as campers begin to prepare a few days prior to camp and have high emotions on the opening day of camp. Elevated pre-test data (baseline) in this study resulting in data without statistical significance could be related to this phenomenon.

 Understanding the framework of specialized camps and how the design of such camps can lead to positive outcomes is important for camp administrators to consider. One such consideration is the ways in which camp promotes and fosters social acceptance. Since it is closely tied to quality of life, camp administrators should be purposeful in ways social acceptance is addressed. For instance, administrators might want to examine the ways is equal status promoted at camp. Another example would be to use these findings for staff training, such as conducting training with camp staff so they are aware of the link between social acceptance and quality of life. Although inclusive camps have also been shown to have positive outcomes, it appears that specialized camps can also have an impact on youth with disabilities. This could also be a part of a training process where staff learn about the aspects specific to specialty camps that promote social acceptance. Future studies could examine the constructs and contexts of specialized vs. inclusive camps to compare similarities and differences.

Table 1.

Demographics of Campers

Camp	Diagnosis	N	Males	Females	Age	Years Attended
Camp One	Cancer	38	18	20	$M = 11$	$M = 2$
Camp Two	Physical Disabilities	51	20	31	$M = 15$	$M = 5$
Camp Three	Hearing Impairment	38	20	18	$M = 12$	$M = 2$

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Job Satisfaction and Motivation of Resident Summer Camp Staff

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It is important for camp directors to understand how the camp experience has an impact on staff for many reasons. Staff have expectations and goals of their own for the employment experience, and awareness of staff interests and needs will enhance the prospect that administrators will be better able to orchestrate a successful camp experience (Henderson, 1982). Camps employ over 1.2 million adults to work as professional leaders in the camping industry and as support staff each year. About half a million individuals who want to make a difference in the lives of campers, seek out summer camp positions (American Camping Association, 2004). These camp staff members are, in turn, often influenced by their summer camp job experience, since it offers them numerous opportunities for personal and professional growth, learning, and enrichment. Much of the rationale for the resident camp experience is centered on the notion that the camp experience helps individuals to prepare and reach their potential, and contributes to the quality of personal life experience (Smith, 1985). Smith further elaborated that the organized camping experience contributed to human satisfaction and fulfillment. Relatively few studies have focused on this aspect, however; therefore there is a need for more research pertaining to this. This study explored the impressions and impacts that working at a summer residential camp had on the perceived experiences of staff; more specifically, what were the motivations and satisfactions claimed by camp staff. The selection and training of staff is often one of the director's most difficult tasks. To be able to recognize camp job applicants who will successfully fulfill many responsibilities requires keen insight and perception on the part of camp directors.

A review of the literature indicated a need for more information about the motivations of camp staff and how to maximize the job satisfaction of seasonal camp staff. Magnuson (1992) reported that understanding why camp staff chose to work at summer camp assisted camp directors in focusing their efforts on providing appropriate opportunities and experiences to meet the specific needs of staff. A related concern among camp directors was a trend noted by camp directors that recruiting quality camp staff was becoming more difficult (Roark, 2000). Having key information about motivating factors prior to hiring camp staff would be help camp directors select job applicants who are best qualified and suited for the respective camp job positions, and have the potential to maximize the benefits from the camp experience.

An early study (Chenery, 1994) attempted to identify the personal benefits that staff report from their camp experiences to camp administration decision-makers. A subsequent study used a focus group interview approach with former summer camp staff members (Bialeschki, Henderson, & Dahowski, 1998) and reported numerous professional and personal benefits as a result of the summer camp experience. DeGraaf and Glover (2003) indicated that these studies were good initial inquiries into understanding camp staff, however, additional studies were needed to substantiate the benefits identified thus far. Moreover, DeGraaf and Glover stated two compelling reasons for the need to better understand staff: a better understanding of the benefits of camp to staff would help camp administrators interpret the camp experience for potential staff, and by understanding the staff experience they may be able to create a better working environment that should enhance job satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore the research questions

and purposes of this study focused on exploring the following: (a) What motivates camp staff personal decisions to select summer residential camp employment?; and (b) What information will help camp directors enhance the job satisfaction of camp staff? The more a camp director knows about counselors, their characteristics, and motivations, the more effectively the camp director can recruit, train, and supervise staff (Henderson, 1992).

Mean difference scores between job motivation and satisfaction (study dependent variables) were examined with respect to age, country of origin, education, ethnicity, gender, years worked at camp (study independent variables) and the corresponding variable relationships were posed as research and null hypotheses for testing purposes. Herzberg's Motivation—Hygiene Theory (1959) provided the conceptual framework for this study. This two-factor theory explains job satisfaction via the factors of motivation and hygiene. Motivating factors are achievement, recognition, advancement, and growth; hygiene factors include supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, job security, benefits, physical working conditions, and company policies.

Methods

Study participants were employees of summer resident camps accredited by the American Camping Association from across seven states in the Midwest. The sample was selected from a sampling frame of 376 resident camps listed in the *Guide to ACA Accredited Camps*. A stratified sampling technique was used to obtain a proportional number of camps from each state in the Midwest region. A random sampling technique was used to select the sample of directors from sixty-six (66) camps. Of these, forty-four (44) agreed to participate in the study. Camp directors selected for the study agreed to distribute pre-camp and post-camp survey packets to their staff and collect them back when completed.

The instrument used was a survey research design (Dillman, 2000) that included thirty (30) questions developed and used in previous studies (Becker, 1983; Magnuson, 1992; and Roark, 2000). The survey questions were designed to determine the perceptions of job satisfaction and motivation of summer camp staff during pre-camp and post-camp. Camp staff were asked to rate their job satisfaction and motivation using five-point Likert scales. The survey also included open-ended questions to permit staff to provide examples that reflected their viewpoints on several of the Herzberg's (1959) motivation and hygiene items. The reliability coefficients for job satisfaction was $\alpha = .87$ and for motivation was $\alpha = .90$. The data were analyzed and hypotheses tested using SPSS™ descriptive statistics to summarize the demographic characteristics, and a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) technique was used for comparison of means hypotheses testing between two or more group treatments. The use of the ANOVA statistical technique was conducted to determine if there were significant mean differences between the levels of each of the independent variables and each job satisfaction or motivation item (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). When statistical significance was determined, a *post hoc* analysis ($\alpha = .05$) was performed using Tukey's honestly significant difference (HSD) to identify the significance between the attributes of the independent variables.

Study Findings and Implications

Job Satisfaction

The five most important rank ordered considerations from the thirty survey items during pre-camp for camp directors to enhance job satisfaction were as follows: (1) opportunity to work with youth ($M = 4.75$); (2) opportunity for friendship ($M = 4.77$); (3) opportunity for personal growth ($M = 4.73$); (4) opportunity to work outdoors ($M = 4.69$); and (5) sense of

accomplishment (M = 4.69). During post-camp, the five most important rank ordered factors were the following: (1) opportunity for friendship (M = 4.74); (2) opportunity to work with youth (M = 4.72); (3) opportunity to work outdoors (M = 4.71); (4) sense of accomplishment (M = 4.67); and (5) opportunity to exercise leadership (M = 4.63). Study implications for job satisfaction factors were that direct service camp staff had the desire to develop leadership skills, personal growth, and a sense of accomplishment as the most important for them, whereas support camp staff seeks appreciation for their work, and the opportunity to learn new skills. Camp staff who have worked two years or more want more time to develop a sense of community. The most significant difference between international and United States camp staff is the opportunity international staff members have to travel away from home. Female camp staff members seek ego and self-esteem boosters, whereas male camp staff members desire job satisfaction through self-actualization. Also, the opportunity for personal growth was more important to twenty to twenty-one year olds than for staff who were twenty-four years or older.

Motivation

This study revealed that pre-camp, the five most important motivating decisions staff members make when choosing to work at summer camp were rank ordered as follows: (1) personal satisfaction and enjoyment (M = 4.63); (2) opportunity to work with youth (M = 4.62); (3) opportunity for friendship (M = 4.57); (4) opportunity for personal growth (M = 4.54); and (5) sense of accomplishment (M = 4.51). The top five rank-ordered post-camp motivation items were determined to be the following in comparison: (1) personal satisfaction and enjoyment (M = 4.62); (2) sense of accomplishment (M = 4.55); (3) opportunity to work with youth (M = 4.54); (4) opportunity for friendship (M = 4.54); and (5) opportunity for personal growth (M = 4.41). Study implications for motivation factors revealed that international camp staff wanted opportunities for advancement and a chance to learn new skills. Camp staff from the United States indicated that being role models for youth and having a sense of accomplishment were important for them. Therefore, it is vital for camp administration to create an atmosphere that provides camp staff the opportunities to work toward individual goals and needs.

Additionally, it was found that men and women have different reasons for wanting to work at camp. The ANOVA pre-camp effect of gender and motivation was statistically significant (M_{female} = 3.77, SD = .59; M_{male} = 3.63, SD = .64; F (1, 457) = 6.51, p = .01). For example, pre-camp female camp staff wanted "opportunity to work with youth" (M = 4.75, p = .00) as well as "personal satisfaction and enjoyment" (M = 4.72, p = .00). Males wanted "opportunities for friendship" (M = 4.72, p = .00) and "reimbursement for travel" (M = 2.62, p = .01). The post-camp ANOVA effect of gender on motivation was also statistically significant (M_{female} = 3.83, SD = .63; M_{male} = 3.67, SD = .79; F (1, 315) = 4.00, p = .05). Post-camp female staff members were motivated by "personal satisfaction and enjoyment" (M = 4.71, p = .00) and "opportunities to work with youth" (M = 4.69, p = .02), while male staff desired the "opportunity to travel away from home" (M = 3.93, p = .04).

Direct service staff chose summer camp employment due to altruistic opportunities available at camp in contract to support staff that chooses camp employment "to learn new skills and to gain job-related experience. Opportunity for personal satisfaction and enjoyment was more important among staff that worked at camp between two and five years compared to first year camp staff.

Recommendations

It is important for staff twenty to twenty-one years old to have opportunities for advancement and personal growth. Female camp staff members are more concerned about gaining job-related experiences, while male camp staff members look for personal growth. Staff members who have worked at camp two or more years want opportunities for more responsibility and leadership. Camp staff members want to be role models for youth in a positive work environment that provides challenges, personal growth, and camaraderie among co-workers. It is important for staff to have a sense of community and place, as well as opportunities to renew old friendships, and share experiences with other staff. No two camp staff members are alike and this is true for an individual's motivations to work at camp and how satisfied they feel about their camp work experience.

Further Research

Future research is needed that compares job type and college majors to job satisfaction and motivation. Studies are needed that explore staff retention rates, especially with regard to why staff members choose to not work at summer camp the following summer. Research that investigates the job satisfaction of year-round camp and outdoor education staff is needed. A study that uses job satisfaction and motivation data to create a profile of a satisfied/motivated employee or an unsatisfied employee is suggested and would be helpful to camp administration. Also suggested would be studies that explore the motivations of camp staff whose applications were rejected, staff who resigned, and staff whose employment was terminated.

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