Motivations for Camp Staff to Work at Camp

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ABSRACT

MOTIVATIONS FOR CAMP STAFF TO WORK AT CAMP

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Camp staff are the heart of summer camps and can affect how the summer runs. The purpose of this study was to identify the motivations for staff to work at residential summer camps with special regard to any differences in motivations between staff who attended camp as a camper and staff who never attended camp as well as between international and national staff. This study used cluster sampling measuring 21 possible motivations. A link to an online survey was sent to eight camps as identified on the American Camp Association website. The top six motivations for staff to work at camp are helping others and giving back, having fun, interesting work, respect and like the camp director and other staff, and the opportunity for personal growth, and the opportunity to work with youth. There are statistically significant differences for four of the 21 motivations among staff who attended camp as a camper versus staff who never attended camp. There are also statistically significant differences for four of the 21 motivations among international and national staff. Camp directors and administrators can use these conclusions to better market jobs to potential camp staff.

Keywords: American Camp Association, camp staff, motivation, international camp staff, past camp experience

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background of the Study

The American summer camp tradition started in 1861 (American Camping Association, 2009). Since then, camps have needed to recruit staff members to run them. According to Shivers (1971), finding competent staff is hard. Staff set the tone for the summer and can "determine whether the camping season succeeds or fails" (p. 97). Camp administrators struggle to find capable staff every summer. According to Powell (2004), directors who know and understand the benefits that a staff member gets from working at camp will have an easier time recruiting them. Although a variety of studies have been done on the motivations of camp staff, little has been researched on the difference in motivations between national staff and international staff, and the difference in motivations between staff who were once campers and staff who have never been campers. This study examines the top motivations for camp staff to work at camp as well as any possible differences between international staff versus national staff and staff who were once campers versus staff who have never been campers.

Review of Literature

The review of literature for this study was conducted at the Robert E. Kennedy Library at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. PolyCat was used as well as a variety of databases, including SPORTDiscuss, Google Scholar, Dissertations & Theses: The Humanities and Social Science Collection, and Hospitality and Tourism

Complete. This review of literature is divided into the following sections: Camp Staff Motivation and International Camp Staff.

Camp staff motivation. Many camp administrators struggle every summer to find enough staff to work at their camps. According to Hoff, Ellis, and Crossley (1988) and Roark (2000), numerous studies conducted on camp staff have concluded that more research is needed specifically on motivations to work and recruit. In 2000, Roark conducted a survey of what motivates camp staff to work at camp. His top five results were: personal satisfaction and enjoyment, opportunity to be a role model for youth, opportunity to work with youth, opportunity to meet people and make new friends, and opportunity for personal growth.

According to DeGraaf (1992), numerous studies have been done on camp staff motivations using the Herzberg motivator/hygiene theory. According to Miner (2005) this model states that job satisfaction can be broken into two categories: hygiene factors and motivators. Hygiene factors are described as extrinsic or environmental factors such as salary and living arrangements, where as motivators are internal factors such as helping others (DeGraaf, 1992 and Miner, 2005). One of the instruments used in DeGraaf's 1992 study was constructed using the possible motivators and hygiene factors of the different studies done by Servedio (1981), Becker (1982), and Hoff, Ellis, and Crossley (1988).

According to DeGraaf (1992) and Servidio (1981), possible motivators for camp staff are interesting work and opportunity to exercise personal skills and talents, and hygiene factors are camp's location and opportunity to travel. According to DeGraaf (1992) and Becker (1984), possible motivators are a sense of personal achievement,

appreciation and effort (by supervisors and peers), responsibility of the job, opportunity for advancement in subsequent summers, opportunity for personal growth, and learning new skills. DeGraaf and Becker found possible hygiene factors to be an increase in salary from last summer, good working conditions, opportunities for new status and privileges, administration and personnel policies, respect and like the camp directors and other staff, and the opportunity to work with youth. According to DeGraaf (1992) and Hoff, Ellis, and Crossley (1988), possible motivators are being able to attain skills needed for future employment and helping others, whereas possible hygiene factors are having fun and making new friends. After completing his 1992 study, DeGraaf found "the most important camp motivators to accept and return in future summers are opportunity to work with youth, having fun, and personal growth" (p. 168).

The American Camp Association accredits camps in the United States using over 300 different criteria to ensure the safety and reliability of camps. They accredit over 2,400 camps currently. On their website, they list numerous benefits that staff gain from working at summer camps. These include:

> Hav[ing] a significant and positive influence in the [lives] of a child, live, play and work in the great outdoors, develop a network of friends and colleagues, gain practical experience to further your education, develop hands-on and relevant leadership skills, participate in experience that enhance personal growth, build your resume with varied skills: communication, problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork, management [and] leadership (American Camp Association, Ideas for Staff Recruitment and Retention ¶ 3).

According to DeGraaf and Glover (2003), one of the biggest motivators for a staff member to work at a specific camp is that they attend that camp as a camper (p. 6). They state that it is valuable for camp directors to know the factors that motivate staff in order to recruit better staff as well as to understand the staff experience.

International camp staff. Numerous studies on camp counselor work motivations have searched for differences between gender, age, and intelligence. International staff may have been a part of the sample in these studies, however little was mentioned on the possible differences in motivators between national staff and international staff. International staff are staff that come to America from other countries to work as summer camp counselors.

Camp America is one of the largest organizations that sends staff to America for summer positions at resorts, day camps, and resident camps. Camp America's website boasts to potential staff the benefits of travel, new experiences, and new friends. Camp America also notes that experience working at a summer camp in America adds great value to one's resume (Camp America, 2009).

Camp Counselor USA (CCUSA) is another large organization that places international staff at American summer camps. The benefits listed on their website include making friends from all over the world, great pay with meals and accommodations, and fun work. When discussing the role of a camp counselor, CCUSA states that one will be "a leader, role model, friend, instructor, big brother or sister, cheerleader and hero to campers ages 7-16" (Camp Counselor USA, 2009 "Being a Counselor" ¶ 1).

Summary. This review of literature covered two topics: camp staff motivation and international camp staff. Numerous studies have been done on camp staff motivation. Many of these studies have used Hertzberg's motivation/hygiene theory which separates intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. One noted big motivator for camp staff to return to a specific camp is past experiences as a camper at that camp. Top motivators between different studies have been an opportunity to work with youth, opportunity to have fun, and personal growth.

Studies done on camp staff motivations haven't accounted for a difference in motivators between international and national camp staff. Two major organizations, Camp America and Camp Counselor USA, have proposed numerous benefits to potential international camp staff including the opportunity to make new friends and have new experiences.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the motivations for staff to work at summer camp with special regard to past camp experience and staff home locations.

Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the top motivators for staff to work at summer camp?
2. Do motivations differ between staff who were once campers versus staff who never attended camp as a camper?
3. Are motivations different between international and national staff?

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the following parameters:

1. Information was gathered from residential summer camp staff.
2. Variables measured were home location, motivations, and past camp experience.
3. Conclusions were drawn from subjects from both the United States as well as internationally.
4. Data were collected in the winter of 2010.
5. The information for this study was gathered using an online survey.

Limitations

This study was limited by the following factors:

1. Due to sampling methods, the sample may not represent the entire population.
2. Since the instrument was an online survey, the study is limited to those participants who have access to and knowledge of the Internet.
3. The link to the questionnaires will be emailed out. Some may go to junk mail or SPAM folders and may not reach the respondents. The link also may not work.
4. The instrument groups motivations together and doesn't account for changes in motivation over time—ie one's motivations might be different the first year they work at camp as opposed to the second year they worked at camp.

Assumptions

This study was based on the following assumptions:

1. It was assumed that the population would remember what motivated them to work at camp in the past.
2. It was assumed that the population would have access to the Internet and the knowledge to use it.
3. It was assumed that subjects would answer truthfully.
4. It was assumed that the participants of the study would have at one time been camp staff.
5. It is assumed that international staff were not born in the United States.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in this study:

Hygiene Factor. Extrinsic motivator/environmental factor such as salary and living arrangements (Degraaf, 1992 p. 70 and Miner, 2005 p. 61)

International Camp Staff. A staff member who is not native to the United States who comes over to the United States for the purposes to be a staff member

Motivation. Internal factors to work or take a job such as helping others (Degraaf, 1992 p. 70 and Miner, 2005 p. 61)

Resident Summer Camp. A summer camp where campers and staff spend the night at camp

Chapter 2

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to identify the motivations for staff to work at summer camp with special regard to past camp experience and staff home locations. This chapter describes the population used for this study, the instrument used to measure motivations, a description of the procedures for the study, and the method of data analysis.

Description of Subjects

The population of this study were people who worked at a residential camp in the summer of 2009 in the United States. This includes individuals aged 18 and up, as well as males and females. The population covers a wide variety of ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds. The population is approximately 1,200,000 people, with approximately 696,000 staff working at residential camps (American Camp Association, Trends Sheet). Using 696,000 as the population size, the sample size had 119 participants according to Payne (1967) at a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of +/ – 9%. The sample was selected using probability sampling through the use of clusters. Eight clusters were studied, representing 8 different summer camps in the United States. The following camps participated: Camp Aldersgate, Camp Kidwell, Camp Cherokee, Camp Sangamon, Camp Ton-A-Wandah, Camp Windhover, Camp Falcon, and Camp Onas. Participation in this study was anonymous.

Description of Instrument

The instrument for this study was an online questionnaire using Zoomerang.com, an online questionnaire website. The questionnaire was formatted by the researcher using the possible motivators from DeGraaf (1992). Answers, however, were measured differently using a 1-5 Likert scale, where 1 was not important and 5 was very important. The questionnaire first aimed to identify top motivators to work at summer camp, and then identified any differences between answers written by international versus national camp staff and staff who were once campers versus staff who were never campers. This was done by using demographics questions to separate different participants. The directions on the questionnaire were as follows: "please take a few minutes to fill out this questionnaire. Filling this out is voluntary and responses will remain anonymous. Responses will help indentify top motivators for staff to work at residential summer camp" (see Appendix A).

The main question on the questionnaire was broken down into 21 Likert scale sub questions. Each sub question listed a possible motivation and participants were asked to "rank the following based on how important they [the motivators] were in your decision to work at a residential camp with 1 being not important to 5 being very important" (see Appendix A). The 21 motivations were:

- Administration and personnel policies
- An increase in salary from last summer
- Appreciation and effort (by supervisors and peers)
- Camp's location
- Good working conditions

- Helping others and giving back
- Having fun
- Interesting work
- Learning new skills
- Making new friends
- Opportunity for advancement in subsequent summers
- Opportunity for personal growth
- Opportunity for new status and privilege
- Opportunity to travel to a new area for work
- Opportunity to exercise personal skills and talents
- Respect and like the camp director and other staff
- Responsibility of the job
- Sense of personal achievement
- The opportunity to work with youth
- To attain skills needed for future employment
- Went to the camp as a camper

The second question was “what types of camps have you worked at?” with the possible answers being: day camp and residential camp. The participant may check both. Any questionnaires in which the participant just checks day camp were discarded as the study is done only on residential camps. This question controlled the study to ensure only data were drawn from residential camp staff members.

The third question was “how many summers have you worked at camp?” This question was another control to ensure that the participants had indeed worked at least one summer at a camp. The fourth question, a fill in the blank, was “what was your position at camp in 2009?” to ensure participants were staff members in the summer of 2009. Those who stated they did not work at a camp on 2009 were discarded from the study. The seventh and eighth questions were gender and age, respectively. These two questions were asked to gain knowledge of the makeup of the sample.

The fifth question was “were you an international staff member?” This question helped to separate and identify any differences in motivations between international and national camp staff. This was directly related to the second research question of the study. The sixth question of the questionnaire was “were you ever a camper at a residential camp?” Similar to the fifth question, this helped separate and identify any possible difference in motivations from staff members who were once campers and staff members who were never campers.

The questionnaire was pilot tested with 12 participants who have worked at a Girl Scout camp called Camp Sugar Pine. Results of the pilot test were showed the effectiveness of the test. Participants of the pilot test had no negative comments about the survey. Nothing was changed to the survey after the pilot test. Before the questionnaire was distributed to participants, approval from the Human Subjects Committee at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo was attained. To gain approval, the committee reviewed the instrument, consent letter (see Appendix B) and chapter two of this study. When distributed to participants, the consent letter was provided with the

survey to let the participants know that participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous, and contained information on who to contact about the study if need be.

Description of Procedures

This study was conducted using cluster sampling. Eight camps were randomly selected through the American Camping Association's website and contacted. Camp directors or administrators were asked to email the online questionnaire to their staff members from the previous 2009 summer season. The online questionnaire was created through the website Zoomerang. The camps were selected and contacted in the last week of January 2010. The questionnaires were sent out to the camp directors or administrators to be distributed to their staff within the week. Participants were then given one to two weeks to complete the questionnaire and asked to complete it truthfully and to the best of their ability. Camp directors responded to the researcher with a yes or no as to participation in the study. Over 60 camps were emailed to get a total of 8 camps to participate, thus changing the timelines participants had to answer the survey. No incentive was given for completion of the questionnaire. The researcher then compiled the data in the second week in February from Zoomerang.

Method of Data Analysis

After collecting the results from the questionnaire, the raw data were downloaded from Zoomerang into Microsoft Excel. The first research question was based on the first question containing the 21 sub questions. The results were analyzed using means and standard deviations for each of the 21 sub questions to rank the top sub questions highest

values. The motivators with a mean importance over a score of 4.5 account for the top motivations for staff to work at camp, answering the first research question.

Each of the demographic questions received quantitative values based on the qualitative answers given. The questions on gender and age were analyzed to determine the demographics of the sample using a mean and percentages for age and percentages for gender. To answer the research question on international staff versus national staff, the motivators were calculated for each group using means. To answer the research question on staff who were once campers versus staff who never attended camp, motivators were calculated for each of the two groups using means. Then the motivators were analyzed using their means and then compared to the means of their counter group.

A T-test was also calculated for each of the motivations between each of the two opposing groups respectively. P values of 0.05 or less are considered to have a statistically significant difference in motivation importance between the two groups. P values above an alpha level of 0.05 are considered to have no statistically significant difference in motivation importance between the two groups. Each of the 21 motivations will be examined for any statistically significant differences between the two groups.

Chapter 3

PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

This study was conducted across the United States from the end of January to beginning of February 2010. This chapter will describe the 119 participants to the survey, as well as the data results from the study in regards to the top motivations for camp staff as a whole and then broken down into four respective groups.

Subject Demographics

One hundred and thirty people responded to the online survey. Eleven of the respondents didn't fit into the criteria of the study—some had only worked at day camps and some answered only one question on the survey. The 119 participants who answered the survey filled out the majority of questions, although some answers were left blank.

Gender. Out of the 119 participants, 61 were male or 51% of the sample, and 58 or 49% were female.

Age. The average age of participants was 21, but ages ranged from 16-56.

Type of Camp. All off the 119 participants have worked at residential camps, with 22 or 18.5% having worked at both residential and day camps.

Camp Experience. The average number of summers worked at camp by a participant was 3.56, with a range from 1-15 summers.

Camp Position. Approximately 52% of the participants were camp counselors in 2009, 21% were program staff, 13% were camp administrators, and 7% held other positions.

Nationality. Twelve of the participants or 10% were international staff, leaving 106 participants or 89% as national staff members. One participant did not answer this question.

Camper Experience. Eighty-nine of the participants or 75% have attended camp as a camper in the past and 30 participants or 25% have never attended camp as a camper.

Top Five Motivations

The means and standard deviations were calculated for the 21 motivations for all 119 respondents. The results are presented in the following table, Table 1, by mean highest to lowest.

Table 1
Motivations for Camp Staff by Mean and Standard Deviation

Attributes	Mean	SD
Helping Others and giving back	4.71	0.56
Having fun	4.71	0.59
Interesting work	4.65	0.62
Opportunity for personal growth	4.56	0.68
Respect and like the camp director and other staff	4.56	0.67
The opportunity to work with youth	4.53	0.65
Making new friends	4.40	0.84
Appreciation& effort (by supervisors& peers)	4.34	0.74
Reasonability of the job	4.34	0.75
Good working conditions	4.29	0.75
Sense or personal achievement	4.29	0.85
Learning new skills	4.18	0.84
Opportunity to utilize personal skills and talents	4.18	0.77
Camp's Location	3.73	1.13
To attain skills needed for future employment	3.73	1.21
Administration and Personnel Policies	3.69	1.06
Opportunity for advancement in subsequent summers	3.66	1.12
Went to the camp as a camper	3.52	1.72
Opportunity for new status and privileges	3.34	1.16
Opportunity for travel to a new area for work	3.05	1.28
An increase in salary from last summer	2.89	1.20

The motivations with high means over 4.5 were: helping others and giving back with a mean of 4.71, having fun with a mean of 4.71, interesting work with a mean of 4.65, respect and like the camp director and other staff with a mean of 4.56, the opportunity for personal growth with a mean of 4.56, and the opportunity to work with youth with a mean of 4.53.

Motivations for Staff who were Once Campers V.S. Staff who were Never Campers

Participants who were once campers at a residential camp were separated from those who had never attended residential camp as campers. Means were calculated for each of the two groups respectively. A T-test was applied to the two groups. The means and p values (results from the T-test) are listed in the following table, Table 2, by P value, lowest to highest.

Table 2
Motivations for Staff who were Once Campers V.S. Staff who were Never Campers

Motivations	Mean (Once Camper)	Mean (Never Camper)	P Value
Went to the camp as a camper	4.71	1.60	0.00*
Opportunity for new status and privilege	3.52	2.93	0.02*
Opportunity to travel to a new area for work	2.89	3.53	0.02*
Opportunity for advancement in subsequent summers	3.79	3.27	0.03*
Appreciation and effort (by supervisors and peers)	4.27	4.57	0.06
To attain skills needed for future employment	3.85	3.37	0.06
Sense of personal achievement	4.21	4.53	0.07
Camp's location	3.81	3.50	0.19
Respect and like the camp director and other staff	4.61	4.43	0.22
Good working conditions	4.25	4.40	0.34
Having fun	4.78	4.66	0.34
Opportunity to exercise personal skills and talents	4.22	4.37	0.36
The opportunity to work with youth	4.55	4.63	0.52
Interesting work	4.63	4.70	0.59
Learning new skills	4.20	4.27	0.73
Helping others and giving back	4.70	4.73	0.76
Making new friends	4.42	4.37	0.78
Responsibility of the job	4.36	4.40	0.82
Administration and personnel policies	3.69	3.70	0.95
An increase in salary from last summer	2.89	2.90	0.96
Opportunity for personal growth	4.56	4.57	0.97

*Significant at an alpha level of 0.05

There were four motivations with ρ values of 0.05 and less: opportunity for advancement in subsequent summers, opportunity for new status and privilege, opportunity to travel to a new area for work, and went to the camp as a camper.

Motivations for International Staff V.S. National Staff

Participants who identified themselves as international staff were separated from those who identified themselves as national staff. Means were calculated for each of the two groups respectively. A T-test was applied to the two groups. The means and p values (results from the T-test) are listed in the following table, Table 3, by P value, lowest to highest.

Table 3
Motivations for International Staff V.S. National Staff

Motivation	Mean (International)	Mean (National)	P Value
Opportunity for new status and privilege	2.42	3.47	0.00*
Went to the camp as a camper	1.50	3.74	0.00*
Camp's location	3.17	3.82	0.04*
To attain skills needed for future employment	3.08	3.79	0.05*
Sense of personal achievement	4.67	4.25	0.09
Opportunity for advancement in subsequent summers	3.17	3.70	0.11
Opportunity to travel to a new area for work	3.58	2.99	0.12
Administration and personnel policies	3.33	3.74	0.20
Interesting work	4.83	4.62	0.25
Good working conditions	4.08	4.30	0.32
Helping others and giving back	4.83	4.70	0.41
Opportunity for personal growth	4.42	4.58	0.43
The opportunity to work with youth	4.67	4.55	0.55
Having fun	4.83	4.73	0.56
Learning new skills	4.08	4.23	0.56
An increase in salary from last summer	2.42	2.95	0.56
Opportunity to exercise personal skills and talents	4.17	4.27	0.65
Respect and like the camp director and other staff	4.50	4.57	0.74
Appreciation and effort (by supervisors and peers)	4.42	4.35	0.75
Making new friends	4.33	4.41	0.77
Responsibility of the job	4.42	4.36	0.80

*Significant at an alpha level of 0.05

There were four motivations with ρ values of 0.05 and less: camp's location, opportunity for new status and privilege, to attain skills needed for future employment, and went to the camp as a camper.

Summary

The top motivations for camp staff to work at residential camps were helping others and giving back, having fun, interesting work, respect and like the camp director and other staff, the opportunity for personal growth, and the opportunity to work with youth. There are four motivations that are considered to have a statistically significant difference between the two groups of staff who attended camp as a camper versus staff who never attended camp as a camper.. There are also four motivations that are considered to have a statistically significant difference between the two groups of international and national staff.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

It's said that staff can really make or ruin a summer for camps. On top of that, finding good staff is hard for many camp directors and administrators. The purpose of this study was to identify the motivations for staff to work at summer camp with special regard to past camp experience and staff home locations. This study would take into account and look for any differences in motivations between international and national camp staff as well as any differences between staff who were once campers and staff who never attended camp as a camper. The past studies done on camp staff motivation haven't accounted for any differences in these 4 population groups.

This study was conducted using an online survey through cluster sampling. Variable measured were home location, motivations and past camp experience. Participants were residential summer camp in the summer of 2009. Data was collected in the winter of 2010. The study was limited to those who had access to the internet as well as had an email address. Eight clusters, or eight camps, were chosen randomly through the American Camp Association Website to participate in this study. The population size was 696,000 making the sample size 119.

The survey listed 21 possible motivations for staff to work at summer camp. These 21 motivations were derived from past studies. Participants were asked to rate the importance each motivation on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being very important. Other questions asked were based on demographics. The data from these questions were

analyzed using means and standard deviations. Number of summers worked at camp, position in 2009, as well of types of camps worked at was used as control questions to ensure respondents met the criteria of the study. Age and gender were asked to better identify the participants in the survey, and were analyzed using percentages. Past camp experience and staff status (national or international) were also asked to break the sample down into categories to compare results. This was analyzed through means and ρ values with T tests.

The top motivations for camp staff to work at camp were helping others and giving back, having fun, interesting work, respect and like the camp director and other staff, the opportunity for personal growth, and the opportunity to work with youth. There are statistically significant differences for four of the 21 motivations among staff who attended camp as a camper versus staff who never attended camp. Those four motivations are went to the camp as a camper, opportunity for new status and privilege, opportunity to travel to a new area for work, and the opportunity for advancement in subsequent summers. There are also statistically significant differences for four of the 21 motivations among international and national staff. Camp directors and administrators can use these conclusions to better market jobs to potential camp staff. Those four motivations are opportunity for new status and privilege, went to the camp as a camper, camp's location, and to attain skills needed for future employment.

Discussion

The findings of this study were quite interesting. Although there were six top motivators amongst the sample, all 21 of the motivations received high mean scores. The range of means went from 2.89 for an increase in salary from last summer to 4.71 for both helping others and giving back, and having fun. On average, the sample found 13 of the motivations to be more than somewhat important and six of the motivations to be between neutral and somewhat important. Only one of the motivations was found to be between not very important and neutral. Although this study lists top six motivations for staff to work at camp, a camp administrators has the option of using at least 13 motivations in their marketing of camp jobs to potential camp staff.

There were four motivations that has statistically significantly differences in motivations. Staff who once attended camp as a camper ranked attending the camp as a camper to be a big motivator to work at camp with a mean of 4.71, whereas staff who never attended camp as a camper ranked it as a very low motivation with 1.60. Directors could market jobs towards past campers who are of age to work at camp. Staff members who attended camp as a camper were also greatly motivated to work at camp for the opportunity for new status and privilege with a mean of 3.52 and the opportunity for advancement in subsequent summers with a mean of 3.79. Status and advancement are more important to staff who were once campers because of the status change and advancement that comes from stepping from camper to staff. Staff who were never campers don’t value these two motivations as high. Staff who have never worked at camp are however greatly motivated for the opportunity to travel to a new area for work with a

mean of 3.53 over staff who were once campers. Travel could be a good thing to market towards first time camp staff.

Although there are significant cultural differences between international and national staff, on a whole, all staff are motivated by similar attributes. There are four motivations that vary greatly between the two groups. National staff are more motivated by the opportunity for new status and privilege with a mean of 3.47, went to the camp as a camper with 3.74, the camp's location with 3.82, and to attain skills needed for future employment. National staff are more motivated by these four attributes than international staff. These attributes shouldn't necessarily be played up when advertising camp jobs to international staff, but should be listed when dealing with national staff.

The results of this study are in line with past studies. Past studies have listed top motivators for staff to work at summer camps as the opportunity to work with youth, the opportunity to have fun, and personal growth. All three were in the top six motivations as identified by this study. Past studies have also stated that a big motivator to work at a specific camp is that the staffer attended that camp as a camper in the past. This wasn't rated as a very important motivator in this study. One reason for this is that the motivation was measured not in terms of what motivates one to work at a specific camp, but residential camp in general.

Limitations did affect this study. Sampling methods (ie using an internet survey as well as emailing out requests to camps) limited the number of responses. The sample may not represent the population because the sample size was calculated using a high confidence interval. Also, after finding the camp's website on the American Camp Association's website, the researcher had to search for a contact email. Frequently the

emails were generic and it was unclear who the emailed response was going to at the camp. Because of this numerous camps were emailed to get eight clusters to respond. Many emails may have been disregarded or have gone to the wrong person at the camp.

The general implications for this study are important to the recruitment of competent camp staff. Knowing what motivates them to work at camp will allow camp directors and administrators to market their camps better. For example, knowing that having fun is a top motivator for camp staff would allow directors and administrators to push the fun aspect of working at their camp. This will ultimately allow directors and administrators to find staff who want to work at camp. Staff who want to work at camp because of the salary wouldn't necessarily be the staff that a director may want because this motivation isn't hugely important to the population as a whole. Ultimately, this study will help camps have amazing, competent staff to help make their summer perfect.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The top six motivators for staff to work at residential summer camps are helping others and giving back, having fun, interesting work, respect and like the camp director and other staff, the opportunity for personal growth, and the opportunity to work with youth.
2. Between staff who were once campers and staff who have never attended camp there are four motivations that have a statistically significant difference: went to camp as a camper, opportunity for new status and privilege, opportunity to travel to a new area for work, and the opportunity for

advancement in subsequent summers. There is no statistically significant difference in the other 17 motivations.

3. Between national staff and international staff there are four motivations that have a statistically significant difference: opportunity for new status and privilege, went to camp as a camper, camp's location, and to attain skills needed for future employment. There is no statistically significant difference in the other 17 motivations.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study the following recommendations are made:

1. Camp directors and administrators should market jobs to camp staff based on the attributes that motivate staff most.
2. For the most part, there was no statistically significant difference in 17 of the 21 motivations between the different populations. This means marketing doesn't need to be that different for the different groups. There are four of the 21 motivations that the different populations greatly differed on in motivation. For more targeted marketing, these four motivations should be used for each set of potential staff.
3. Telephoning the camps in the future could increase the response rate.
4. Possibly working with an organization, like American Camp Association, to send the survey's out instead of just viewing their website.
5. A greater outreach to international staff members could change the results. Although there was little statistical difference between international and national

staff motivations, there may be a bigger difference when the two population groups are closer in size, instead of a difference of 10% being international staff and 89% being national staff.

6. A greater outreach to staff who never attended camp as a camper could change the results. Although there was little statistical difference between staff who were once campers and staff who never attended camp, there may be a bigger difference when the two populations are closer in size, instead of a difference on 25% being staff who never attended camp and 75% being staff who were once campers.
7. Account for possible differences in motivations between first time camp staff and seasoned camp staff. Possibly two surveys could be used or the survey could account for differences between two groups in the population.
8. A larger sample size could allow the study to be more detailed.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Questionnaire

CAMP STAFF MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please take a few minutes to fill out this questionnaire. Filling this out is voluntary and responses will remain anonymous. Responses will help identify top motivators for staff to work at residential summer camp.

Rate the following based on how important they were in your decision to work at a residential summer camp with 1 being not important to 5 being very important:

Administration and personnel policies	1	2	3	4	5
An increase in salary from last summer	1	2	3	4	5
Appreciation and effort (by supervisors &peers)	1	2	3	4	5
Camp's location	1	2	3	4	5
Good working conditions	1	2	3	4	5
Helping others and giving back	1	2	3	4	5
Having fun	1	2	3	4	5
Interesting work	1	2	3	4	5
Learning new skills	1	2	3	4	5
Making new friends	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunity for advancement in subsequent summers	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunity for personal growth	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities for new status and privileges	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunity to travel to a new area for work	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunity to utilize personal skills and talents	1	2	3	4	5
Respect and like the camp director and other staff	1	2	3	4	5
Responsibility of job	1	2	3	4	5
Sense of personal achievement	1	2	3	4	5
The opportunity to work with youth	1	2	3	4	5
To attain skills needed for future employment	1	2	3	4	5
Went to the camp as a camper	1	2	3	4	5

What types of camps have you worked at? (check all that apply)
___Day Camp ___Residential Camp

How many summers have you worked at camps? _____

What was your position at camp 2009? _____

Were you an international staff member? ____Yes ____No

Were you ever a camper at a residential camp? ____Yes ____No

Gender: ___Male ___Female

What is your age? _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

Appendix B

Informed Consent Letter

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A SURVEY ON MOTIVATIONS FOR CAMP STAFF TO WORK AT CAMP

A research project on camp staff motivations is being conducted by Jessica Cresci in the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. The purpose of the study is to identify top motivations for staff to work at residential camps.

You are being asked to take part in this study by completing the attached/enclosed questionnaire. Please read the questions and answer them to the best of your ability. Your participation will take approximately 5-7 minutes. Please be aware that you are not required to participate in this research and you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. You may also omit any items on the questionnaire you prefer not to answer.

There are no risks anticipated with participation in this study. Your responses will be provided anonymously to protect your privacy. Potential benefits associated with the study include allowing camp administrators to be better informed about how to motivate camp staff to take and retain jobs.

If you have questions regarding this study or would like to be informed of the results when the study is completed, please feel free to contact Jessica Cresci at (650)-922-6937. If you have questions or concerns regarding the manner in which the study is conducted, you may contact Dr. Steve Davis, Chair of the Cal Poly Human Subjects Committee, at (805)-756-2754, sdavis@calpoly.edu, or Dr. Susan Opava, Dean of Research and Graduate Programs, at (805)-756-1508, sopava@calpoly.edu.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research project as described, please indicate your agreement by completing and returning the attached questionnaire. Please retain this consent cover form for your reference, and thank you for your participation in this research.