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STUDENT WORKER SATISFACTION AND RETENTION IN  
CAMPUS RECREATION

By

Michael George Grimes

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Faculty of  
Mississippi State University  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Science  
in Sports Administration  
in the Department of Kinesiology

Mississippi State, Mississippi

August 2011

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By

Michael George Grimes

STUDENT WORKER SATISFACTION AND RETENTION IN  
CAMPUS RECREATION

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the job constructs influencing campus recreation undergraduate student workers' satisfaction and retention and how their job satisfaction relates to job retention. The job constructs measured against job satisfaction and retention were job embeddedness, perceived organizational support, perceived organizational prestige, and organizational commitment. An online survey was sent out for 14, four-year, public universities in two southeastern states. A total of 108 undergraduate student employees responded to the survey. Descriptive statistics and a correlation matrix were performed in order to analyze the data and the relationship between the variables. Three regressions were used to measure the significance of the variables relationship. This study's results suggest that those students who are more committed to the organization are more likely to be satisfied with their job. Additionally, those students who are more embedded in their job are more likely to return to their job.

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis research to my parents, Michael and Georgie Ann Grimes and my sisters, Brittney and Jenna.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express the most heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated and selfless people who made this thesis research possible. First and foremost, to Dr. Alan L. Morse, my committee chair, for the time, patience, and knowledge he put fourth in helping me complete my thesis. Further appreciation is also due to the other members of my thesis committee, Dr. Adam Love and Dr. James Vardaman, for the knowledge and direction they provided me throughout this thesis process. Finally, my thanks go out to my former campus recreation supervisors and the institutions they represent: Nick Tasich of Mississippi State University, Rob Becker of Baldwin-Wallace College and Greg Bailey of Kent State University. Without your guidance, leadership, and support I would not be where I am today.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	vii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Purpose of this Study .....	2
Importance of Campus Recreation.....	3
II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	5
Job Satisfaction .....	5
Job Embeddedness .....	6
Organizational Support .....	7
Organization Prestige.....	7
Organizational Commitment.....	8
Intent to Leave .....	8
III. METHODS .....	10
Subjects .....	10
Instrumentation .....	10
Indirect Identifiers.....	11
Job Satisfaction .....	11
Job Embeddedness .....	11
Organizational Support .....	12
Organizational Prestige.....	12
Organizational Commitment.....	12
Intent to Leave .....	13
Survey Implementation.....	13
Data Collection .....	13



	Data Screening .....	14
IV.	RESULTS .....	16
	Demographic Profile .....	16
	Data Analysis .....	16
V.	CONCLUSIONS.....	22
	Discussion .....	22
	Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research.....	24
	REFERENCES .....	26
	APPENDIX	
A	CONSENT FORM & SURVEY INSTRUMENT .....	30
B	DIRECTOR'S INITIAL CONTACT E-MAIL .....	34
C	DIRECTOR'S FOLLOW-UP CONTACT E-MAIL .....	36

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		Page
1	Demographics.....	17
2	Mean and Standard Deviation.....	18
3	Correlation Matrix.....	19
4	Regression Model 1.....	20
5	Regression Model 2.....	21
6	Regression Model 3.....	21

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	Page
1	Dependent and Independent Variables of Regressions .....19

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Campus recreation departments and their facilities are a vital piece to every student's collegiate experience. The programs offered through campus recreation departments are meant to enhance the experience for each student (Pack, Jordan, Turner, & Haines, 2007). The more involved students become in campus recreation programs, the more likely they are to be satisfied with their overall collegiate experience (Moffitt, 2010; Forrester, 2006). More satisfied students tend to have higher grade point averages and stay in school longer (Astin, 1993).

While studies have explained how active student participants of campus recreation programs are more satisfied with college and thus more likely to become successful in college and beyond, a void in research has developed regarding student staff of campus recreation departments and the benefits related to their job experiences. Since students make up a majority of a recreational sports facility's staff, they become essential to "the performance of tasks associated with the daily operations" of a recreational sports facility (Pack et al., 2007, p. 96).

Due to student staff worker's significance to the operation of a campus recreation department and facility, it should be the goal of the department to keep these students returning every semester. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) estimates the cost of replacing one \$8.00 per hour employee (when considering recruiting, interviewing, hiring, training, reduced productivity, etc) is approximately

\$3,500 (Blake, 2006). In these times of university budget crunches and cuts, it is important to focus on ways to reduce student worker turnover and keep them wanting to come back to work. Blake (2006) suggests surveying top performers “to find out what keeps them there (and) why they might leave.”

Job satisfaction and retention has been evaluated in the context of campus recreation (Moffitt, 2010; Pack, et al. (2007) but not with respect to the student workers. It's critical for campus recreation professionals to understand the valuable services they are providing their student workers. Students make up much of the part-time staff of campus recreation facilities and are the face of the department. They are on the front lines interacting with patrons and dealing with the issues that come up on a daily basis. Through the good and bad, many of them continue to come back to work after each semester that passes and this study intends to find out why they come back.

### **Purpose of this Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the job constructs influencing campus recreation undergraduate student workers' satisfaction and retention and how their job satisfaction relates to job retention. The four constructs measured against job satisfaction and intent to leave are, job embeddedness, perceived organizational support, perceived organizational prestige, organizational commitment, and intent to leave.

Additionally, it is a goal of this study to add to the growing body of research in the campus recreation field. Suggested topics from the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) web site include the benefits and value of recreational sports involvement to students, as well as assessments on the impact facilities have on student recruitment and retention (Recreational Sports Journal Topics, 2010).

## **Importance of Campus Recreation**

Previous research in the field of campus recreation has focused on the impact campus recreation facilities have on the student's academic experience (Forrester, 2006), campus recreation program participation and those effects on student recruitment and retention (Lindsey, Sessoms, & Willis, 2009; Hall, 2006; Lindsey & Sessoms, 2006; Woosnam, Dixon, Brookover, 2006).

A campus recreation facility's importance to a university is no secret. A university's campus recreation facility is a strong student recruitment and retention tool. With just under one-third of students making their decision to either attend or continue to attend that institution based on the recreational sports facility and its programs (Lindsey & Sessoms, 2006; Bryant, Banta, & Bradley, 1995; Tinto, 1975). Additionally, Kampf (2010) suggests that campus recreation facilities are no longer a "nonacademic luxury" to students, rather "a preventative health resource that will improve the overall wellness of a campus community" (Kampf, 2010, p. 113).

The value of a campus recreation facility is more evident by the over \$1.7 billion invested in facility construction, expansions and/or renovations planned at 82 NIRSA institutions between 2010 and 2015 (NIRSA Construction Report, 2010). Previously, in the NIRSA Construction Report (2008) more than \$3.96 billion was invested in facility construction, expansions and/or renovations planned at 174 NIRSA institutions from 2008 through 2013. Those figures illustrate that universities across the country are beginning to understand the value a state-of-the-art campus recreation facility has to its student population.

It has been established that universities recognize the value of recreational sports facilities to their campus', but what about the value to the student population? The direct

benefits campus recreation facilities have on the student population have been well documented over the years. Student involvement is defined as a student participating in a campus recreational program (Moffitt, 2010). The numerous benefits stemming from the student involvement that is centralized at campus recreation facilities includes academic success and satisfaction (Becker, Cooper, Atkins, & Martin, 2009; Hackett, 2007), physical fitness and wellness (Lindsey & Sessoms, 2006; Todd, Czyszczonek, Carr, & Pratt, 2009), and social integration and belonging (Hall, 2006; Becker et al., 2009). The general consensus of these research efforts has been that campus recreation programming tends to have a positive impact on the student's academic success, physical fitness, and social integration, when compared to nonusers of such programs and/or facilities.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### **Job Satisfaction**

Research regarding job satisfaction for campus recreation professionals within NIRSA has recently been measured (Stier, Schneider, Kampf, & Gaskins, 2010). Steir et al. (2010) found that a majority of respondents expressed an overall high level of job satisfaction, 93%. It was also discovered that levels of dissatisfaction were higher in younger, less experienced NIRSA professionals (Steir, et al., 2010). Recommendations to counter dissatisfied younger and less experienced professionals included, providing motivational opportunities for continued growth and assumption of more responsibilities (Steir, et al., 2010).

Even more recently, job satisfaction of student employees of a recreational sports department was investigated (Kellison & James, 2011). Kellison and James (2011) aimed to determine was factors of campus recreation made student employee happy or satisfied and it was found that having an effective supervisor was the strongest predictor of job satisfaction. Other factors positively associated with job satisfaction included: good feelings about the organization, good relationship with coworkers, program area, and the work itself (Kellison & James, 2011).

Moffitt (2010) completed a study examining the relationship between participation in intramural sports and the student satisfaction with their college experience. The Campus Recreation Participation Ladder (CRPL) was introduced and



used for the purpose of Moffitt's (2010) study. The CRPL "proposes that the more involved a student is in any one variation of campus recreation programs, the more likely the student is to be integrated into the institution and therefore more satisfied" (Moffitt, 2010, p. 26).

These studies on job satisfaction within campus recreation indicate that job satisfaction is paramount among campus recreation student users, student workers, and professionals. For that reason, the job satisfaction construct will be measured in the present study.

### **Job Embeddedness**

The construct of job embeddedness was introduced by Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, & Erez (2001) and tested voluntary job turnover of grocery store and hospital workers against constructs and dimensions such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job search, perceived alternatives, and job embeddedness. Mitchell, et al., (2001) explained the differences between job embeddedness, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are that embeddedness accounts for factors both at and outside of work that affect a worker's feelings toward their job (Mitchell, et al. (2001). Those factors are links, fit, and sacrifice. It also showed that this construct can be applicable across a number of other disciplines.

Cunningham, Fink, & Sagas (2005) further examined the Mitchell et al., (2001) job embeddedness construct but within the context of sport as it relates to collegiate softball coaches and athletic department employees. Results of Cunningham, et al., (2005) validated and strengthened the job embeddedness construct. However, within the context of campus recreation, job embeddedness research is nonexistent. Student workers

may find connections within and outside their job that keep them satisfied and coming back to work every semester. For that reason, the job embeddedness construct will be measured in the present study.

### **Organizational Support**

Research regarding the construct of organizational support within campus recreation has recently been investigated (Pack, et al., 2007). Pack, et al., (2007) found that campus recreational professionals provide support to student employees regardless of gender or tenure within the department. This illustrates that if campus recreation departments value their student employees, it may reduce absenteeism and turnover (Pack, et al., 2007).

Furthermore, Pack, et al., (2007) suggest future research measure organizational support, commitment, and satisfaction against student employee tenure within that campus recreation department. With those recommendations in mind, the organizational support construct will be measured in the present study.

### **Organization Prestige**

Organizational prestige research has been completed within the context of sport management and student's attraction to jobs in sport (Todd & Andrew, 2008). The study found that as the perceived prestige of a job in sport increased, so did the degree in which the job seeker perceived a good fit between environment and their personal preference for that job (Todd & Andrew, 2008).

The measurement of organizational prestige within campus recreation research is lacking. In measuring organizational prestige it may be found that it is prestigious to work within campus recreation because it is closely related to sports management or those

universities athletic teams or that an increased amount of visibility on campus provides campus recreation jobs with a certain level of prestige. For that reason, the organizational prestige construct will be measured in the present study.

### **Organizational Commitment**

The construct of organizational commitment has been studied for years across a number of contexts. Porter, Steers, & Mowday (1974) conducted a longitudinal study measuring organizational commitment and job satisfaction as they relate to turnover among psychiatric technicians. The results suggest that organizational commitment within employees took longer to develop than feelings of job satisfaction, within mean score of satisfaction fluctuating over time while commitment generally increased over time (Porter, et al., 1974).

Bartlett & McKinney (2004) studied the organizational commitment, job satisfaction, professional development, and turnover among park and recreation employees. Results indicated organizational commitment was a significant predictor of career development variables such as career progression satisfaction and overall satisfaction with supervisor career planning guidance (Bartlett & McKinney, 2004). However, within the context of campus recreation, organization commitment research is absent. For that reason, the organizational commitment construct will be measured in the present study.

### **Intent to Leave**

Retention of employees has been thoroughly researched, across numerous disciplines in conjunction with a number of job factors and constructs. These include organizational commitment (Porter, et al., 1974), organizational support (Pack, et al.,

2007), professional development (Bartlett & McKinney, 2004), group diversity and occupational commitment (Cunningham & Sagas, 2004).

Blake (2006) showed that the cost of replacing an employee is high and because of the unique nature of campus recreation and the “challenges in the training, retention, and improvement of their (*professionals*) program’s staff” keeping part-time student employee around is so important (Kellison & James, 2011, p. 36). For these reasons, the intent to leave construct will be measured in the present study.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

#### **Subjects**

The subjects for this study were undergraduate student employees in campus recreation. The sampling method for this study was a convenience sample drawn from 14, four-year, public universities in two southeastern states whose campus recreation department was a current member of the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) as of 2010 (NIRSA RSD, 2010).

A total of 127 students responded to the survey and of those responses, 108 surveys were usable after 19 responses were deemed invalid by the researchers. Ten respondents “accepted” consent to the survey but did not complete any of the survey questions. Three respondents started, but did not complete the survey. Three more respondents listed Master’s level majors. Two respondents “denied” consent and one respondent answered reverse coded questions incorrectly.

#### **Instrumentation**

The survey instrument developed by the researchers for the present study used the following six job constructs: (1) job satisfaction, (2) job embeddedness, (3) organizational support, (4) organizational prestige, (5) organizational commitment, and (6) intent to leave. Data were collected using modified versions of six previously implemented and validated survey instruments. Responses to the 39-item survey were answered using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly

agree). This study used modified and revised versions of the original survey instruments. Changes made in the questions terminology, were more suitable for campus recreation employees, e.g. changing the word “organization” to “department.” See Appendix A for the complete version of the consent form and survey used for this research.

### **Indirect Identifiers**

Five indirect identifiers questions were asked of the respondents that “accepted” consent to take the survey. Those five indirect identifiers include: (1) gender, (2) year in college (classification), (3) major, (4) state the university is located, and (5) grade point average. Indirect identifier data were gathered in an attempt to provide statistical analysis against (1) job satisfaction, (2) job embeddedness, (3) organizational support, (4) organizational prestige, (5) organizational commitment, and (6) intent to leave.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction of student workers in campus recreation was measured using a three-item scale based of the work of Mitchell, et al. (2001). Previous research on the construct of job satisfaction has been used to determine behavioral intentions of sporting event volunteers (Love, Hardin, Koo, & Morse, 2011) as well as in the context of campus recreation among student employees (Kellison & James, 2011) and among NIRSA professionals (Stier, et al., 2010; Kaltenbaugh, 2009; Zhang, DeMichele, & Connaughton, 2004).

### **Job Embeddedness**

Job embeddedness of student workers in campus recreation was measured using a seven-item scale based of the work of Crossley, Bennett, Jex, & Burnfield (2007). Crossley, et al. (2007) studied job embeddedness as it relates to voluntary turnover while

previous research by Mitchell, et al. (2001) introduced the construct of job embeddedness to understand why workers stay at their jobs.

### **Organizational Support**

Organization support of student workers within campus recreation was evaluated using a shortened nine-item version of Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) scale in Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa (1986). Previous research in Pack, et al. (2007) used an eight-item version of the SPOS and used it to measure organizational support on student employee attitudes in campus recreation.

### **Organizational Prestige**

Organizational prestige of student workers in campus recreation was measured using a shortened six-item scale based of the work of Mael & Ashforth (1992). Similar scales of organizational prestige have been used in studies in the context of sport management to investigate the attraction of sport management students to jobs in the sport industry (Todd & Andrew, 2008).

### **Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitment of student workers within campus recreation was measured using an adapted nine-item version of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). An extended version of the OCQ was used in Bozeman & Perrewé (2001) to observe the effect overlapping scale content of the OCQ has on turnover cognition measures. The OCQ scale was originally developed by Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979).

## **Intent to Leave**

The intentions to leave of student workers within campus recreation was measured using an adapted three-item scale based of the work of Mitchell, et al. (2001) derived from Hom, Griffeth, & Sellaro (1984). Any correlation found with intent to leave had a negative relationship based on the way the survey questions were asked (a lower score on the five point Likert scale, signifying a score for someone not intending to leave).

## **Survey Implementation**

In order to properly administer the online survey, the implementation procedures for online surveys outlined in Dillman, Smyth, & Christian (2009) were followed. Procedures included personalizing all contacts to respondents (p. 272), maintaining professionalism during the contacts (p. 276), strategic timing of all contacts (p. 278), keeping e-mail contact short and to the point (p. 282), selecting sender name, address, and subject line of e-mail (p. 285), providing clear instructions on how to access the survey (p. 286), and monitoring progress and evaluating early survey completions (p. 294).

## **Data Collection**

The subjects in this study completed an online survey through SurveyMonkey.com. Before releasing the survey online, approval to conduct this research was obtained from the researching university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). After gaining IRB approval, the eight directors of campus recreation departments in "State 1" and the six directors in "State 2" were contacted via e-mail and asked to participate in this study. Each campus recreation department director received an e-mail,



explaining the purpose of the study as well as a link to the online survey. Each director was then asked to forward the survey link to the professional staff within their departments, with the specific instructions to send the link to their undergraduate student workers. See Appendix B for a copy of the director's e-mail.

A follow-up e-mail was sent to each of the 14 campus recreation directors 25 days after the initial e-mail contact, asking each director to forward the survey link to their professional staff so they could send it to their undergraduate student staff again. The follow-up e-mail was sent in an attempt to increase the number of responses the survey would get. Data collection officially stopped four days after the follow up e-mail was sent out. A copy of the director's follow-up e-mail can be seen on Appendix C.

Measures were taken to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the subjects and the universities; all the data from the online surveys was stored on a password-protected computer, in a locked office, in a building on the researching university's campus. To ensure respondent anonymity, no identifying characteristics (i.e. name, address, e-mail, attending university) were asked of the respondents, only indirect identifiers (gender, classification, state the university is located, major, and grade point average).

### **Data Screening**

Data from the completed 108 survey responses were exported into Microsoft Excel from SurveyMonkey.com. In Excel, the eight reverse coded scores were adjusted for each of the 108 responses. For example, respondents answering the job satisfaction question, "In general, I don't like my job" on the five-point Likert scale with "strongly disagree" for a score of "1" would have the reverse coded score of "5" for "strongly

agree.” Salcedo (2010) says that, “reverse-coded items are typically used to help ensure that respondents are reading survey questions and not just providing the same response to each question.”

Following Mitchell, et al., (2001) and Cunningham, et al., (2005) a single value representing each the job constructs was given to each of the 108 respondents. Decimals were rounded to the nearest one hundredth, e.g., 4.33.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### **Demographic Profile**

Of the 108 useable responses, 66 were females (61.1%) and 42 were males (38.9%). More than half of the subjects' majors were Arts & Sciences and Education, with 33.3% ( $n=36$ ) and 32.4% ( $n=35$ ) respectively. More than 63% of the subjects were upperclassmen (juniors 27.8%,  $n=30$ ; seniors 22.2%,  $n=24$ ; 5<sup>th</sup> year or more 13.9%,  $n=15$ ) and approximately 92% earned grade point averages (GPA) between 2.1 and 4.0 (2.1-3.0 equaled 26.9%,  $n=29$ ; 3.1-4.0 equaled 65.7%,  $n=71$ ). More than half of the subjects' (51%) have worked in campus recreation for less than eight months, with 26.9% ( $n=29$ ) having worked there less than four months and 24.1% ( $n=26$ ) having worked there between five and eight months. Additionally, students having worked in campus recreation for more than 17 months accounted for 29.6% ( $n=32$ ). Lastly, 80.6% ( $n=87$ ) of respondents intend to graduate within the next six months. The complete demographic data is summarized in Table 1.

#### **Data Analysis**

Data were transferred into SPSS, version 18.0 once single average values represented each respondent in each of the six job construct areas. Reports on demographic frequencies were initially created (Table 1) followed by mean and standard

Table 1 Demographics

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender		
Female	66	61.1
Male	42	38.9
Major		
Architecture, Art, and Design	6	5.6
Arts & Sciences	36	33.3
Business	11	10.2
Education	35	32.4
Engineering	7	6.5
Forest Resources	3	2.8
Undecided	10	9.3
Classification		
Freshman	16	14.8
Sophomore	23	21.3
Junior	30	27.8
Senior	24	22.2
5th Year or More	15	13.9
GPA		
Less than 1.0	0	0.0
1.1-2.0	2	1.9
2.1-3.0	29	26.9
3.1-4.0	71	65.7
More than 4.1	6	5.6
Tenure within Campus Recreation		
Less than 4 Months	29	26.9
5-8 Months	26	24.1
9-12 Months	9	8.3
13-16 Months	12	11.1
More Than 17 Months	32	29.6
Intent to Graduate in Next 6 Months		
Yes	21	19.4
No	87	80.6

Note. To preserve anonymity, the state data collected is not in this table.

deviations of all six-job factors (presented in Table 2). Multiple regressions were then performed on the results of the survey responses. It is important to note, “the primary

goal of regression analysis is usually to investigate the relationship between a DV (dependent variable) and several IVs (independent variables)” (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p. 118). Furthermore, “regression analyses reveal relationships among variables but do not imply the relationships are causal” (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p. 122).

Table 2 Mean and Standard Deviation

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>
Job Satisfaction	4.61	0.535
Job Embeddedness	3.36	0.894
Organization Support	4.00	0.785
Organization Prestige	3.39	0.710
Organizational Commitment	4.12	0.721
Intent to Leave	2.09	1.365

Note. n=108 for each variable

It was the intention of this study to investigate which job constructs were correlated with job satisfaction and intent to leave of a student employee of campus recreation as well as how the student employee’s job satisfaction was correlated to their intent to leave (retention). Figure 1 illustrates the three regressions used to analyze these relationships.

All but one correlation was significant, as organizational prestige on intent to return ( $r=-.093$ ) was not significant at either the  $p < 0.05$  level or  $p < 0.01$  level. Additionally, only two correlations, job satisfaction on organizational prestige ( $r=.215$ ) and job embeddedness on organizational prestige ( $r=.239$ ), were only significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level. All the correlations between the variables of this study are shown in Table 3.

The results of the first regression (Table 4) used job satisfaction as the dependent variable. 48.9% of the variance was explained by this model ( $R^2=.489$ ). The only

significant predictor of student employee job satisfaction was organizational commitment (t=4.498, p < 0.001).

<p>**DV=Job Satisfaction  IV=Job Embeddedness, Organizational Support  Organizational Prestige, Organizational Commitment</p>
<p>**DV=Intent to Leave (Retention)  IV=Job Embeddedness, Organizational Support  Organizational Prestige, Organizational Commitment</p>
<p>*DV= Intent to Leave (Retention)  IV= Job Satisfaction</p>

Figure 1 Dependent and Independent Variables of Regressions

Note. \*\*Multiple Regression \*Linear Regression

Table 3 Correlation Matrix

	JS	JE	OS	OP	OC	IL
JS	1.00					
JE	.541**	1.00				
OS	.572**	.601**	1.00			
OP	.215*	.239*	.280**	1.00		
OC	.690**	.673**	.785**	.353**	1.00	
IL	-.260**	-.463**	-.267**	-.093	-.297**	1.00

Note. JS = Job Satisfaction OP = Organizational Prestige  
JE = Job Embeddedness OC = Organizational Commitment  
OS = Organizational Support IR = Intent to Leave  
\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)  
\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 Regression Model 1

Variables	B	Std. Error	$\beta$	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.536	.248		10.235	.000
Job Embeddedness	.080	.058	.134	1.386	.169
Organization Support	.036	.079	.052	.452	.652
Organization Prestige	-.025	.057	-.033	-.438	.662
Organizational Commitment	.424	.094	.571	4.498	.000

Note. (R=.700, R<sup>2</sup>=.489, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>=.470) (F=24.683, p < .001)

Dependent Variable is Job Satisfaction

Results of the second regression (Table 5) used intent to leave as the dependent variable. 21.5% of the variance was explained by this model (R<sup>2</sup>=.215). The only significant predictor of student employee intent to leave was job embeddedness (t=-4.033, p < 0.001). As explained previously, the negative relationship presented in this regression was due to the wording of the intent to leave questions.

The third and final regression (Table 6) used intent to leave as the dependent variable and job satisfaction as the independent variable. 6.7% of the variance was explained by this model (R<sup>2</sup>=.067). Job satisfaction was significant predictor of student employee intent to leave (t=-2.767, and p=0.007).

Table 5 Regression Model 2

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
(Constant)	4.295	.784		5.481	.000
Job Embeddedness	-.736	.183	-.482	-4.033	.000
Organization Support	.007	.248	.004	.028	.978
Organization Prestige	.027	.179	.014	.152	.879
Organizational Commitment	.036	.298	.019	.122	.903

Note. (R=.464, R2=.215, Adjusted R2=.185)  
Dependent Variable is Intent to Leave

Table 6 Regression Model 3

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
(Constant)	5.140	1.110		4.631	.000
Job Satisfaction	-.662	.239	-.260	-2.767	.007

Note. (R=.260, R2=.067, Adjusted R2=.059) (F=7.656, p < .001)  
Dependent Variable is Intent to Leave



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

#### **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the job constructs influencing campus recreation undergraduate student workers' satisfaction and retention, and how their job satisfaction relates to retention. The findings from this study indicated student employees with an increased sense of commitment toward their campus recreation department of employment could lead to that student being more satisfied with their job. Additionally, a student employee's sense of job embeddedness toward their campus recreational department of employment could decrease the chances that student quits their job. It is the opinion of the researchers that this study is valid and has reliable and objective assessment measures.

The findings concerning organizational commitment and job satisfaction support previous studies suggesting they are reciprocally related (Huang & Hsiao, 2007). In other words, commitment and satisfaction are directly related; when one increases so does the other. This mean, if an employee shows high levels of commitment toward the organization, they are more likely to have increased amount of job satisfaction.

The organizational commitment construct has an important relationship with job satisfaction. Student worker attendance, job performance, and retention are good gauges as to the commitment level of the worker. Campus recreation professionals can foster

commitment by making efforts to establish a positive rapport with their student staff and by completing regular job performance evaluations.

Many students apply for and accept jobs in campus recreation because of its close ties to sport. One possible reason for taking a job in campus recreation is the student was former high school and collegiate athlete and they want to stay close to something they are good at and enjoy. Another reason could be the student's major is related to sport (teaching, coaching, sports management, exercise science) and they want to gain more experience outside the classroom. These types of students would tend to be more committed to their jobs given the reasons previously stated. Campus recreation practitioners that recognize these trends have the ability to recruit, hire, and retain these highly committed student workers.

Additionally, the findings concerning job embeddedness and intent to leave support Mitchell, et al., (2001, p. 1116) saying, "people who are embedded in their jobs have less intent to leave and do not leave as readily as those who are not embedded." Job embeddedness focuses on three dimensions: (1) links; connections made among coworkers, (2) fit; perceived comfort within an organization and environment and (3) sacrifice; physical or psychological benefits that might be given up by leaving the job (Mitchell, et al., (2001). If the employee identifies with one or more of these dimensions it could become difficult for said employee to leave that job.

Campus recreation professionals should understand the importance of job embeddedness and its relationship to retention for many of the same reasons the organizational commitment and job satisfaction relationship is important. Student workers that create links or perceive a fit within the organization establish those by having close ties to sport.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

Certain limitations exist within the present study that the reader should carefully consider. The first limitation of this study is multicollinearity. Multicollinearity can occur when, “the independent variables themselves are highly correlated or because (the) interactions among independent variables (were included)” (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p. 124). Due to the similarity of the job constructs used, levels of multicollinearity were detected in the multiple regressions. It is the option of the researchers that the variables are simply different operationalizations of the same concept (e.g. several construct measures hit the same personality trait). Due to the sample size for this study being smaller than anticipated, it is best to simply realize that multicollinearity is present and be aware of its consequences. Future research should try to increase the sample size and possibly run statistical regressions or stepwise regressions to help identify multicollinearity variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

The second limitation of this study relates to the sample size as well. Since the overall sample size was  $n=127$ , the demographics breakdown totals were even smaller. This did not allow for regressions to be run using gender, major, classification, grade point average, and tenure with campus recreation. Regression data would not be significant with such small sample sizes. Future research might investigate the differences between the constructs with respect to those demographic characteristics previously mentioned with a larger sample size. A larger sample size will increase the power of a study and will allow for demographic data to be analyzed against the job constructs being measured.

Third, the overall ability to generalize the research is limited to 14 public, four-year universities in two states in the southeast region of the United States. An

investigation of this size generally falls in the middle of research that investigates at one university and research that investigates across the entire NIRSA community. It is a comfortable middle ground for this type of research, however the more institutions that are survived across the county, the more likely the results will be generalizable. Future research should expand the population sampled in order to get a better idea of what satisfies and retains student workers across the country. Expanding the population could also increase the sample size, solving this study's second limitation at the same time.

While this research has its limitations, it is maintained that the study conducted is valid and can serve as a stepping stone for future research to investigate the types of job constructs and job factors that help satisfy and retain student workers in campus recreation.

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APPENDIX A  
CONSENT FORM & SURVEY INSTRUMENT

## Consent Form

Please take all the time you need to read through this document and decide whether you would like to participate in this research study.

Survey Topic: Student Worker Satisfaction and Retention in Campus Recreation

Researchers: Michael Grimes, Dr. Alan Morse, Dr. Adam Love, and Dr. James Vardaman

Purpose of Research: To investigate what job factors influence student worker satisfaction and what motivates them to return to their jobs.

Voluntary Participation: Please understand that your *participation is voluntary*. Your *refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss* of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You *may discontinue your participation* at any time, for any reason, without penalty or loss of benefits by simply clicking the “QUIT” button located on that page. If you *decide to participate, your completion of this online survey indicates your consent*. Please keep this form for your records.

For questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or to express concerns or complaints, please feel free to contact the MSU Regulatory Compliance Office by phone at (662) 325-3994, by e-mail at [irb@research.msstate.edu](mailto:irb@research.msstate.edu), or on the web at <http://orc.msstate.edu/participant/>.

Risks and Discomforts: There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts from your participation in this research.

Confidentiality: To ensure anonymity and confidentiality of your responses, the data from your completed online survey will be stored on a password-protected computer, in the locked office, and will only be accessible to the researcher.

Please note that these records will be held by a state entity and therefore are subject to disclosure if required by law. Research information may be shared with the MSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP).

Questions about the Research: If you have any questions about this research project or your role in this study, please feel free to contact the student researcher Michael G. Grimes, Mississippi State University Graduate Student, by telephone at (440) 552-6443 or via email at [mgg81@msstate.edu](mailto:mgg81@msstate.edu). You may also contact the faculty advisor of this research, Dr. Alan L. Morse, Mississippi State University Assistant Professor of Sport Studies, by telephone at (662) 325-2789 or via email at [amorse@colled.msstate.edu](mailto:amorse@colled.msstate.edu).

**Please answer the following demographic questions.**

*Once you've answered all fields, please select the "NEXT" button.*

- Please select your gender.
- Please input your major.  
(If you do not currently have a major, please input "UD" for "undeclared")
- Please select your class standing.
- Please select the state in which the university you attend is in.
- Please select your current overall grade point average.

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<b>All of the following questions were answered on 5 point Likert scale</b>	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
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**Please answer the following statements on Job Satisfaction.**

*Once you've answered all statements, please select the "NEXT" button.*

- All in all, I am satisfied with my job.
- In general, I don't like my job. (R)
- In general, I like working here.

**Please answer the following statements on Job Embeddedness.**

*Once you've answered all statements, please select the "NEXT" button.*

- I feel attached to this department.
- It would be difficult for me to leave my job with this department.
- I'm too caught up in this department to leave.
- I feel tied to this department.
- I simply could not leave the department that I work for.
- It would be easy for me to quit my job with this department. (R)
- I am tightly connected to this department.

**Please answer the following statements on Organizational Support.**

*Once you've answered all statements, please select the "NEXT" button.*

- The department strongly considers my goals and values.
- Help is available from the department when I have a problem.
- The department really cares about my well-being.
- The department is willing to extend itself in order to help me perform my job to the best of my ability.
- Even if I did the best job possible, the department would fail to notice. (R)
- The department cares about my general satisfaction at work.
- The department shows very little concern for me. (R)
- The department cares about my opinions.
- The department takes pride in my accomplishments.

**Please answer the following statements on Organizational Prestige.**

*Once you've answered all statements, please select the "NEXT" button.*

- People in my community think highly of my campus recreation department.
- It is considered prestigious in this industry to work for my campus recreation department.
- My campus recreation department is considered to be one of the best in this industry.
- People at other recreational departments look down upon my campus recreational department. (R)
- My campus recreation department does not have a good reputation in my community. (R)
- A person seeking to advance his/her career in this industry should downplay his/her association with my campus recreation department.

**Please answer the following statements on Organizational Commitment.**

*Once you've answered all statements, please select the "NEXT" button.*

- I am willing to put fourth a great deal of effort, beyond what is normally expected in order to help this department be successful.
- I talk positively about this department to my friends as a great organization to work for.
- I feel very little loyalty to this department. (R)
- I find that my personal values and the department's values are very similar.
- I am proud to tell others that I am part of this department.
- This department really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.
- I am extremely glad that I chose this department to work for over the others I was considering at the time I was hired.
- Often, I find it difficult to agree with this department's policies on important matters relating to its employees. (R)
- I really care about the fate of this department.

**Please answer the following questions on your plans to return to your job.**

*Once you've answered all statements, please select the "FINISH" button.*

- What are the chances that you will leave organization during the next 6 months?
- I intend to leave organization during the next 6 months.
- I intend to quit my present job.
- How many months have you worked for this department?
- Do you intend to graduate during the next 6 months?

*Note. (R) Stands for reverse coded question.*

APPENDIX B  
DIRECTOR'S INITIAL CONTACT E-MAIL

Dear (Insert Campus Recreation Director's Name Here),

I am Michael Grimes, the Club and Intramural Sports Graduate Assistant at Mississippi State University and I am in the process of completing a thesis, which is part of the requirements for a Master's degree in Sport Administration.

The thesis topic focuses on factors influencing campus recreation student workers' satisfaction and how their satisfaction relates to job retention. The study intends to discover what motivates our student workers to return to their jobs each semester. My study is limited to four-year universities in Mississippi and Alabama.

The research plan includes an online survey. I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in this study by sending the survey link below to the professional staff within your department with instructions to forward it directly to their undergraduate student workers so that they may participate.

I hope my results will be beneficial to all campus recreation departments in the Mississippi/Alabama region as well as throughout NIRSA. If you have any questions regarding my research, please do not hesitate to email me at [mgg81@msstate.edu](mailto:mgg81@msstate.edu) or call me at (440) 552-6443. Dr. Alan Morse of the Sport Studies Program at Mississippi State University will be supervising this study and can be contacted at [amorse@colled.msstate.edu](mailto:amorse@colled.msstate.edu) or at (662) 325-2789.

The survey link:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JobSatisfactionInRecreationalSports>

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Michael G. Grimes  
Club and Intramural Sports Graduate Assistant  
Department of Recreational Sports  
Mississippi State University  
[mgg81@msstate.edu](mailto:mgg81@msstate.edu)

APPENDIX C

DIRECTOR'S FOLLOW-UP CONTACT E-MAIL

Dear (Insert Campus Recreation Director's Name Here),

I am Michael Grimes, the Club and Intramural Sports Graduate Assistant at Mississippi State University and I recently contacted you about the thesis I am completing on the factors influencing campus recreation student workers' satisfaction and how their satisfaction relates to job retention.

I am still collecting survey responses and am reaching back out to you in hopes of increasing the number of responses. I would greatly appreciate it if you could once again send the survey link below to the professional staff within your department with instructions to forward it directly to their undergraduate student workers so they may participate.

If you have any questions regarding my research, please do not hesitate to email me at [mgg81@msstate.edu](mailto:mgg81@msstate.edu) or call me at (440) 552-6443. Dr. Alan Morse of the Sport Studies Program at Mississippi State University will be supervising this study and can be contacted at [amorse@colled.msstate.edu](mailto:amorse@colled.msstate.edu) or at (662) 325-2789.

The survey link:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JobSatisfactionInRecreationalSports>

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Michael G. Grimes  
Club and Intramural Sports Graduate Assistant  
Department of Recreational Sports  
Mississippi State University  
[mgg81@msstate.edu](mailto:mgg81@msstate.edu)