

University of New Hampshire
University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository

Doctoral Dissertations

Student Scholarship

Spring 2019

Workplace creativity and motivation among counselors in a residential summer camp setting

Myles L. Lynch

University of New Hampshire, Durham

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation>

Recommended Citation

Lynch, Myles L., "Workplace creativity and motivation among counselors in a residential summer camp setting" (2019). *Doctoral Dissertations*. 2457.

<https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation/2457>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact nicole.hentz@unh.edu.

WORKPLACE CREATIVITY AND MOTIVATION AMONG CAMP COUNSELORS IN A
RESIDENTIAL SUMMER CAMP SETTING

BY

MYLES L. LYNCH

B.A. Psychology, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2009

M.S. Recreation Management and Policy, University of New Hampshire, 2015

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire

in Partial fulfillment of

The Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

May 2019

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

© 2019

Myles L. Lynch

This dissertation has been examined and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D. in Education by:

Dissertation Chair, Robert J. Barcelona, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department Chair,
Recreation Management and Policy, University of New Hampshire

Nate E. Trauntvein, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Kinesiology and Health
Science, Utah State University

Cari A. Moorhead, Ph.D., Affiliate Professor of Education and Interim Dean, Graduate School,
University of New Hampshire

Cindy L. Hartman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Recreation Management & Policy, University of
New Hampshire

Erin H. Sharp, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Human Development and Family Studies, University
of New Hampshire

On April 5, 2019

Original approval signatures are on file with the University of New Hampshire Graduate School.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my mom, Aileen Condon. Lynch. I continue to be inspired by your drive, passion, and love of life. Your love of education taught me the importance of listening to different perspectives. I would not be able to complete this program without your support, guidance, and mentorship. I love you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to begin by thanking Professor Nate Trauntvein. Nate, I sincerely appreciate the countless hours you scheduled with me in your office, over the phone, and via email. I appreciated the long statistics meetings and the guidance in developing a study worthy of a dissertation. Over my six years at UNH, you were a mentor, friend, therapist, and now I consider you a trusted colleague. I appreciate the time you spent visiting potential research sites around New Hampshire. Professor Robert 'Bob' Barcelona, you provided me with invaluable professional development opportunities and mentorship throughout my time at UNH. Bob, thank you for providing me the opportunity to teach at a collegiate level. Teaching has taught me the importance of listening and having a plan. Bob, your guidance and approachable nature throughout the conclusion of the dissertation process was invaluable. I enjoyed meeting with you and talking all things camp.

Professor Cindy Hartman, your guidance as a committee member helped position my thoughts pertaining to creativity among camp counselors. Your feedback and mentorship made me feel like a true colleague with a voice. Cindy, thank you for taking the time to meet with me and provide teaching advice on several occasions. Professor Erin Sharp, your guidance, professionalism, and calm disposition make you very approachable and understanding. I learned a substantial amount of content in your human development course, which largely informed my decision to pursue research related to emerging adults. Dean Cari Moorhead, you have been a significant mentor in my life from both a professional and academic standpoint. You took a chance hiring me as a graduate assistant during my second year as a master's student. I have significantly grown largely due to your mentorship and 'can do' attitude. I respect your ability to

not be satisfied with the ‘status quo’ but instead a desire to draw out someone’s full potential.

Thank you for your guidance pertaining to summer camp and camp counselors.

I would also like to thank Artie Lang, Ryan Reed, Jayson Seaman, Michael Ferguson, Linda Noon, Dovev Levine, Sean McLaughlin, Nora Lynch, Liam Lynch, Madra Lynch, Shawn Goodspeed, Freyja Goodspeed, Eliza Goodspeed, and Art, Kori, Betty, and Arran Bardige. Your support throughout this process was instrumental.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| COMMITTEE PAGE..... | iii |
| DEDICATION..... | iv |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... | v |
| LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES..... | ix |
| ABSTRACT..... | x |
| I. INTRODUCTION | |
| John Dewey and Education..... | 3 |
| Creativity and Summer Camp..... | 6 |
| Motivation..... | 8 |
| Conclusion..... | 11 |
| Statement of the problem..... | 13 |
| Purpose and significance of the study..... | 15 |
| Definition of Terms..... | 16 |
| References..... | 19 |
| II. ARTICLE I: | |
| Abstract..... | 23 |
| Introduction..... | 25 |
| Part I: History of summer camp..... | 27 |
| Foundations of creativity..... | 31 |
| Part II: Conceptual links..... | 34 |
| Sociocultural theory and creativity..... | 35 |
| Dynamic systems perspective of novelty..... | 41 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Community of practice and creativity..... | 43 |
| Conclusion and future directions..... | 46 |
| References..... | 51 |

III. ARTICLE II:

| | |
|--|----|
| Executive Summary..... | 57 |
| Introduction..... | 60 |
| Literature review..... | 62 |
| Methodology..... | 66 |
| Results..... | 69 |
| Discussion..... | 72 |
| Management implications..... | 73 |
| Limitations and areas for future research..... | 75 |
| Conclusion..... | 77 |
| References..... | 78 |

IV. ARTICLE III:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Abstract..... | 82 |
| Introduction..... | 83 |
| Theoretical Foundation..... | 83 |
| Methodology..... | 89 |
| Results..... | 91 |
| Discussion..... | 96 |
| Limitations..... | 99 |
| Conclusion..... | 100 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| References..... | 101 |
| APPENDICES..... | 106 |
| Appendix A. IRB Approval Letter and Application..... | 107 |
| Appendix B. Basic Need Satisfaction and Creativity Scale..... | 115 |
| Appendix C. Invitation and Consent Letters..... | 121 |

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

| TABLE/FIGURE | PAGE |
|--|------|
| ARTICLE I | |
| Table 1 Camp areas and examples of tools and signs..... | 39 |
| Figure 1: Programmatic features of summer camp and creativity..... | 31 |
| Figure 2: Sociocultural theory and mediated activity..... | 37 |
| Figure 3: Dynamic systems of summer camp and creativity..... | 43 |
| ARTICLE II | |
| Table 1: Descriptive statistics..... | 67 |
| Table 2: Pearson correlations among BNT variables and willingness to return..... | 70 |
| Table 3: Pearson correlations among camp experience variables and willingness to return..... | 70 |
| Table 4: Pre-Post and SDT construct..... | 70 |
| Table 5: Final Regression model..... | 71 |
| Figure 1: Regression process model..... | 71 |
| Figure 2: Final regression model..... | 72 |
| ARTICLE III | |
| Table 1 Sample characteristics..... | 91 |
| Table 2: Pre-Post change first year and return counselors..... | 92 |
| Table 3: Pre-difference first year and return counselors creativity..... | 93 |
| Table 4: Post difference first year and return counselor creativity..... | 93 |
| Table 5: Frequency of themes and sub-themes of barriers to creativity..... | 94 |

ABSTRACT

WORKPLACE CREATIVITY AND MOTIVATION AMONG CAMP COUNSELORS IN A RESIDENTIAL SUMMER CAMP SETTING

by

Myles L. Lynch

University of New Hampshire

The following dissertation includes an overarching introduction and three conceptually linked articles described below. First, the introduction describes the educational and programmatic components of summer camp, a nonformal educational setting, based on the foundational writing of educational philosopher John Dewey. The introduction also identifies key definitions, concepts, and theoretical frameworks related to outdoor education, creativity, and motivation. The three articles, briefly described below, are self-contained and include distinct introductions, discussions, and implications for future research.

Article 1. Summer camp is often anecdotally described as a context which may support creativity due to its unique programmatic features. For instance, residential summer camps are often located in natural setting, provide varied activities, and lack distracting technology. These features may provide ample opportunities for camp participants to try new things and exercise their own creativity. However, only two empirical studies have specifically explored creativity in a summer camp context. This article contains two sections which aim to unpack the mechanisms of summer camp being considered a creative venue for participants. Part one provides a theoretical foundation which includes a brief historical review of summer camp and psychological components of creativity. Part two positions Sociocultural theory, dynamic system approach to novelty, and communities of practice as theoretical foundations for creativity in the context of summer camp. Ultimately, well-run summer camps, which strive to create a creative

and supportive context, should provide opportunities for participants (both camper and counselor) to introduce new ideas regardless of experience level.

Article 2. Camp directors spend countless hours recruiting and hiring seasonal employees only to repeat the same process the following year. Unfortunately, competing internships and the sentiment that camp is not considered a ‘real job’ are primary reasons for camp workforce shortages across the United States. In fact, staff retention has been identified by the American Camp Association as the number two (of seven) major emerging issues facing the camp industry. To mitigate staff turnover and retention issues, camp directors may need to consider different training methods, adjustment of workplace culture, and redistribution of workplace tasks, which may better support the needs of the staff. Aside from competing internships, more nuanced factors may influence a camp counselors’ willingness to work at camp the following summer. Basic Needs Theory (BNT), a sub theory of Self Determination (SDT), describes overall motivation, satisfaction, and well-being in various contexts (including work contexts). BNT provides a foundation for understanding camp counselor perceptions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness as primary predictors of willingness to return the following year.

Article two focused on camp counselor basic need fulfillment and camp experience variables (i.e. number of years as camper and counselor) throughout the course of the summer. as predictors of a counselor’s willingness to return to work at camp the following year. Ultimately, camp directors need to focus training and the culture of camp on the support of basic needs among counselors as one way to create a healthy and sustainable workforce return rate.

Article 3. Creativity is a valuable skill needed for idea generation, innovation, and empowerment. People who feel supported in their creativity can make choices freely, feel a sense of autonomy, and are more intrinsically motivated and passionate in their pursuit of goals.

Certain social contexts (i.e. work, relationships, school, etc.) are shown to either support or inhibit creativity based on facilitation values, and culture. Due to its programmatic features (varied activities, communal living) and unique context (outdoor, rural, technology free), summer camp is anecdotally considered a work context which may support creativity among camp counselors. However, no known empirical studies have specifically addressed perceptions of workplace creativity among counselors in a residential camp setting. Furthermore, differences may exist between first year and returning staff in their confidence, capacity, and general support for creativity in a residential camp work context. Article three explored differences in organizational support for creativity in a summer camp workplace among first year and returning camp counselors. The third article uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore workplace creativity at the beginning and end of one season of employment.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the United States, the summer camp industry grew rapidly from the 1880's-1920's (Paris, 2008). This expansion was largely credited to the long school summer break and the organization of camp as a child (not adult) centered educational context (Smith, 2006; Van Slyck, 2006). In other words, camp primarily focused on enriching child development through choice and skill building using a variety of experiential and unique outdoor activities. The child centered approach was widely popular among parents in the early 1900's because it provided an alternative to traditional summer vacations which were typically at hotels or beach resorts that heavily on adult centered activities (Van Slyck, 2006). Camp provided youth with role models of similar age who were different from their teachers at traditional school. Additionally, counselors, were often within close age range of the campers they oversaw, creating a 'big brother/sister' mentorship atmosphere.

Camp was appealing because many activities were not offered in typical school settings such as, woodworking, camp craft, drama, archery, sailing, hiking, leatherwork, outdoor cooking, etc. The many skill-based and outdoor camp activities provided a healthy alternative to typical sedentary summer breaks on beaches or resort hotels (Paris 2008; Van Slyck, 2006). The natural setting instilled a sense of self-reliance and independence which was a draw for parents looking to send their child to pursue meaningful activity during the summer (Miranda 1987). Ultimately, early camps provided a healthy respite, away from fast paced urbanized life, in which children and counselors, could authentically live and learn together in a tight knit community (Van Slyck, 2006). In this sense, ideas, traditions, and activities, were self-contained, creating a 'micro society', where interaction and cooperation were necessary for living and the continuation of meaningful social practices.

Summer camps continued to grow throughout the 1940s-1960's and best practices, industry standards, and research pertaining to outcomes started to become a primary focus. Most notably, the American Camp Association (ACA), founded in 1910 (originally called Camp Directors Association, CDA), provided resources, advice, and support for camp professionals (Eells, 1986). Currently, the ACA accredits roughly 2,400 camps and hosts professional conferences and trainings throughout the United States (ACA Facts and Trends, 2019). More recently, a focus on research and outcomes pertaining to camp attendance is prevalent among camp professionals. In 2005, the ACA formed a Committee for the Advancement of Research and Evaluation (CARE) to "...advise and support the research function of the association as it serves to develop and enhance knowledge generation and dissemination within the ACA (CARE Operating Code, 2019). CARE consists of current professionals, researchers, and academics who produce and advise on empirical research.

CARE is in year two of a five-year impact study, which aims to explore the long-term benefits related to camp attendance and employment (CARE Research Initiatives, 2019). One major goal of the 5-year impact study is to understand specific long-term benefits which are distinct to camp attendance such as communication skills, skill-building, long term friendship, and sense of attachment to a place. While there have been many studies on youth in summer camp, fewer studies specifically address staff outcomes. During the 2019 ACA National Conference in Nashville Tennessee, one area of research identified as lacking were outcomes associated with camp counselors and seasonal staff retention issues (Henderson, 2018; Warner, 2019).

The current study adds to the advancement of research on camp counselors, in which camp is often their first job, and therefore may have specific needs in the workplace. The three

distinct articles focus on historical foundations and larger frameworks using quantitative and qualitative data to explore motivation and creativity among camp counselors. The current introduction employs the writing of educational philosopher John Dewey to describe foundational concepts of nonformal education, and how they relate to creativity and motivation. Dewey's writing provides a framework for understanding how summer camp is an educational venue due to its programmatic features. Camp practitioners need to remain diligent in their aim to cater to the learner within the camp context through providing meaningful activities and community involvement.

John Dewey and outdoor education

Experiential educators often use the writing of philosopher John Dewey to explain the benefits of 'learning by doing'; a foundational component of outdoor education. Dewey, an educational philosopher, who lived from 1859-1952, wrote on non-formal and formal (school) educational settings, and their impact on the learner and teacher. Dewey provided a foundation for why outdoor education programs, such as summer camp, can be creative venues which provide meaningful activity beyond formalized schooling. Dewey wrote "...the effort at isolated intellectual learning (school) contradicts its own aim...it has yet to be proved that learning occurs most adequately when it is made a separate conscious business" (1916, p. 39). In other words, dichotomous views of education bolster student and teacher isolationism and add to the confusion of answering: 'What is education?'. From a historical perspective, summer camp was thought to be an antidote to formalized schooling. Through immersive socialization, camp provided meaningful joint activities which opposed school isolationism (Paris, 2008).

Quay and Seaman assert that "Educational reforms can get caught in dichotomous ways of thinking that wind up reproducing the dominant structures of institutionalized schooling that

marginalize important initiatives like outdoor education” (2013, p. 2). In other words, oftentimes educational reformists have great intentions when trying to shift an educational paradigm, but they may wind up reproducing the same concepts they were trying to evade in the first place (i.e. isolation). The communal practices contained within the programmatic features of summer camp may have the capacity to reduce dichotomous ways of thinking and reduce isolationism among the learner (camper) and teacher (counselor). This reduction is accomplished via shared experience (communal practices), meaningful activities (cooking, woodworking, fire building, etc.), and authentic mentorship (between counselor and camper). The communal mentor-mentee component of summer camp may help in breaking a common cycle of isolationism often felt by typical student and teacher relationship in more structured educational settings.

Much like any educational venue, summer camp has the capacity to get caught in dichotomous ways of thinking and confusion which bring forth isolationism. Most notably, progressive, outdoor educational organizations have problems identifying their central aim, and have had a slew of interpretations, and definitions which range from outdoor education, place based education, expeditionary learning, experiential education, camping education, wilderness education, etc. (Knapp, 1997; Quay & Seaman, 2013; Sobel, 2004). Confusion in identifying end goals within educational systems creates confusion and conflict regarding approaches to method (teaching delivery), subject matter (content), and staff training (counselors) (Quay & Seaman, 2013). While summer camp is fun, the main purpose of summer camp is not to simply enjoy recreational activities but to provide meaningful educational opportunities through guidance, support, and challenging activities.

Under more formal conditions (i.e. school), education is organized as needing to fill students with information, as they progress through sequential steps (grade acquisition). A

sequential and proscribed type of education, akin to a bank depository box, considers achievement and mastery using a chronological timeline such as grade level advancement based on age (Edmondson, 2014; 2006; Quay, 2015). The information ‘deposited’ for a student mainly coincides with societal norms, teacher subjectivity and forms of standardized and routine testing (i.e. SAT and ACT testing). Therefore, formal schooling becomes routine and inflexible, which may not consider pupils, and teachers existing within a larger social context and negotiation of material (Quay, 2015). Ultimately, a depository box style of education counters non-formal and experiential educational structure, which emphasize experience and reflection, as paramount learning objectives (Kolb, 1984). An emphasis on how those reflections apply to real world problems is crucial, in hopes of attaining what Dewey (1916) described as a democratic and therefore reciprocal education for the learner and educator.

Practitioners in formal and non-formal educational settings need to have a critical eye when implementing programs and forms of teaching. Dewey (1916) wrote that “...to be intelligent we must stop, look, and listen in making the plan of an activity” (p. 103). Within the larger social context, there must be a future purpose to an activity, rather than doing something with no direction or purpose. Standardized mechanisms for learning may counter the overall goal of education, which aims to connect the learner to a larger social context with practical application and community building (Lave & Wenger, 1990). Ultimately, the goal summer camp is not to simply fill a camper and counselor with skill through activities and training, but rather provide a social context and facilitation in which idea sharing and communal reciprocity are valued beyond the immediate context.

The understanding of social context in education allows the individual an opportunity to situate themselves within a community, which has certain functions of joint activity,

consequences, and contextual meaning (Dewey, 1916). Through communal organization, summer camp may provide an ideal context for a more democratic type of education. Democratic education allows humans to view their action as more than purely individualistic, competitive, but rather connected to a larger system of social interaction, differing perspectives, and joint living with shared meaning and creativity (Glassman, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991). From this educational perspective, summer camp has the capacity to support creativity through a constant negotiation of expectations, traditions, and organization of programs.

George Bernard Shaw once said: “We are made wise not by the recollection of our past, but by the responsibility of our future”. This sentiment illustrates how the collective human society must be aware of the past, but also look forward, to improve conditions for future generations. Oftentimes, it is hard to look forward, because society typically operates within dichotomies, which hinders creativity and motivation to implement new ideas. Within summer camp, longstanding traditions embed structured educational philosophies which may deter innovative progress and an allowance of new ideas. Rigidness is enacted in both traditional and progressive education systems, in which learning is often viewed as dichotomous; either formal, traditional school or informal, out of school contexts. Democratic summer camps heed the warnings of Dewey by having a propensity for innovation and creativity. Innovative camps understand the value of social context and communal living as being paramount features of the camp experience.

Creativity and summer camp

Pablo Picasso once observed, ‘Every act of creation is first of all an act of destruction’. Picasso is referring to the process of creativity, and to create new ideas, old ideas need to be pushed aside, altered, or even destroyed. Traditions and the ‘status quo’ often douse creativity

and motivation, which inhibit the capacity for risk taking and innovation (Kumar, Scheer, & Kotler, 2000). Creativity is an essential component of culture, society, and human life; without creativity, motivation for initiating society altering inventions, exploratory research, and interpretations of aesthetic experience may not exist (Batey & Furnham, 2006; Torrance, Ball, & Safter, 1966). Creativity is linked to intrinsic motivation and free choice, or doing something for the sake of doing it, and not being motivated based on external rewards, such as money, fame, or power (Koestner, Ryan, Bernieri, Holt, 1984).

According to Albert & Runco, “The history of research on creativity began with the recognition that research constitutes an effective and practical way of learning about, and understanding the world around us” (1999, p. 17). In 1950, renowned psychologist J.P. Guilford proposed that creativity was the most important psychological construct to research (1956; 1967). Guilford made this statement, as part of a presidential address at the American Psychological Association National Conference, to a room full of prominent researchers in the field of psychology. After Guilford’s influential statement, interest and empirical research associated with creativity skyrocketed from the 1950’s to 1980’s.

More recently, Plucker, Beghetto, & Dow (2004), who are prominent creativity researchers, have identified core attributes and social components necessary for creativity (2004). For instance, Plucker, Beghetto, & Dow defined creativity as, “The interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context” (2004, p. 90). The aforementioned definition of creativity, adopted for this dissertation, positions social context as a necessary feature for implementing novelty across various domains (work, school, relationships, summer camp, etc.). Furthermore, the dynamic interaction among novelty, utility, and social

context explain the concept of ‘meaningful activity’ related to John Dewey’s educational value of ‘learning by doing’ (1916). Within summer camp, meaningful activity should involve components of creativity in activities which support a positive culture.

Creativity involves a sense of ownership, autonomy, and connection to work and life (Amabile, 1997). Well organized summer camps provide are non-formal educational contexts which may help support social systems for creativity and motivation among participants (Goor & Rapoport, 1977; Lynch, Hegarty, Trauntvein, & Plucker, 2018; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). Dynamic social systems include an established culture (expectations for creativity/motivation), the field (barriers to creativity/motivation), and the individual (creative identity/confidence and creative self-efficacy) of counselors (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). Like all work contexts, camp employees must consider systems, and to introduce new ideas they must contribute as members within the parameters of their respective job (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). In other words, simply doing something new (or different) is not necessarily creative, the idea must have value and practical application within the parameters of the summer camp context. Ultimately, an awareness of social systems are necessary for the effective implementation and support of creativity over time.

Motivation

Every summer, camp directors struggle to fill open seasonal positions due to staff turnover and competing internships (ACA 2017, 2011). This may be due in part to camp counselors being affected by the economy (low wage camp jobs), internship importance, and pressure to get a ‘real job’ (ACA, 2017, 2011; Crossen & Yerkes, 1998). The misconception that employment as a camp counselor is not a ‘real job’ has plagued the camping industry for years. Camp counselors are forced to defend working at summer camp to parents, friends, and society

while at the same time being compensated with low wages and little personal time (Powell, 2004). External factors such as internships, salary, and parental pressure, are largely out a camp directors' control, and may inhibit a counselor's decision to return the following summer. Therefore, camp directors must pay special attention to counselor motivation within the camp setting with a strict intentionality toward training throughout the summer.

Camp counselors typically fall within the developmental stage of emerging adulthood (18-25 years old) in which identity formation and exploration are central features (Arnett, 2000). Residential summer camp is a complex 24-hour job, in which counselors are tasked to teach, manage, and take on similar responsibilities as parents. While many studies address the benefits of camp attendance among youth, fewer focus on outcomes associated with camp counselors' motivation and creativity (Lynch et al., 2018; Warner, 2019). The camping industry needs a study which explores perceptions of motivation and creativity among camp counselors as factors which may influence organizational structure, training, willingness to return, and overall satisfaction.

Self Determination Theory (SDT) explains overall motivation and need fulfillment in relation to a person's willingness to be engaged and self-regulate positive behavior (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Motivation is described as an 'energizing state' and involves proactive or disengaged behavior related to human needs (Niv, Joel, & Dayan, 2006; Dickinson & Balleine, 2002). People who feel connected or cared for feel related and self-determined in their choices and work, and behaviors appear to come from within rather than being controlled externally (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008; Williams, Freedman, & Deci, 1998). If one or two of the needs are not fulfilled, then psychological health and well-being will suffer (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Basic Needs Theory (BNT), posits that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are universal human needs, and through their fulfillment, people have feelings of intrinsic motivation, proactive behavior, and engagement, rather than being passive or distant (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Ryan & Deci (2002) explain basic psychological needs as: *Autonomy*: psychological ownership and choice and feelings of freedom and independence. *Competence*: or effectiveness in individual pursuits and feeling capable and needed. *Relatedness*: concern for others and reciprocal care and feeling warmth, care, and respect.

Summer camp provides a communal context and co-construction of social expectations that could reduce isolationism and support the basic needs of counselors. Additionally, camp directors should pay attention to psychological factors including autonomy support, self-efficacy beliefs, personal well-being, immersion in activities, and instructional styles (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008; Csikszentmihalyi, & Rathunde, 1993; Deci & Ryan, 2012; Collins & Amabile, 1999). Psychological factors play an important role in motivation among counselors who are emerging adults and entering the workforce for the first time.

Two empirical studies apply the concepts of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) in a camp setting (Hill & Sibthorp; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). These studies found that noncompetitive and camper centered instructional approaches produced increased perceptions of autonomy support in the form of engagement, goal direction, and self-regulation (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). Activities that were more creative, such as the arts and drama, had instructional styles related to autonomy support, rather than competitive activities such as sports, athletics, or games. Competitive activities related to top down instructional approaches which hindered feelings of autonomy. Summer camp provides ample opportunities for children and camp counselors to have

genuine face to face interaction. The immersive social experience [of camp] may counteract isolationism and promote creativity and motivation among participants.

Conclusion

This overarching introduction explains how educational philosopher John Dewey influenced general understanding of nonformal educational settings. Dewey (1916) provided philosophical ideas which promoted communal, reciprocal, and meaningful activities and connected real world situations to educational practice. Dewey's writing informs current outdoor education professionals and explains the importance of learning by doing and facilitation. For education to be democratic, camp practitioners need to constantly revisit, and reevaluate delivery methods to avoid systematization, dichotomies, and isolationism. In this sense, camp counselor training is crucial for implementing learner centered instructional styles across all programmatic areas.

Dewey warned that, "Education that is isolating is immoral and does not promote foresight or future results" (1916, p. 101). Even though Dewey wrote this in 1916, these issues still exist today. Dewey asserted that the many definitions of education, including: progressive, outdoor, indoor, experiential, place based, and traditional, lead to confusion, and a lack of social aim. The camping industry, much like other education and recreation venues, is susceptible to similar confusion. For instance, camp directors and owners may get stuck in the day to day operations of running camp, instead of focusing on how their program is structured to be better suited to the needs of both campers and staff.

Dewey noted,

...the fundamental issue is not of new versus old education nor of progressive against traditional education but a question of what anything whatever must be to be worthy of

the name education....the basic question concerns the nature of education with no qualifying adjectives prefixed...we will make surer and faster progress when we devote ourselves to finding out just what education is” (1938, p. 90-91).

No adjectives prefixed is a powerful and precise way of encapsulating John Dewey’s position pertaining to democratic education, and the issues regarding the dichotomies that permeate formal and nonformal educational settings today (Quay, 2015). Unfortunately, summer camp has the capacity to fall in the same dichotomous trap, as described by Dewey, which would result in isolation among both campers and counselors alike.

Camp directors do not operate a summer camp to simply provide recreational opportunities for youth and adults. Instead, progressive directors, who place value on improvement, strive to achieve what Dewey (1916) described as a democratic form of education. Using a democratic perspective, camp activities and overall culture have a larger connected purpose via learning through deliberate and intentional practices which cater to a learner centered approach. Creativity and motivation (among counselors, organization, and campers) should be deliberately sought by camp leaders to build a strong community of practice and a sense of learning ahead to future goals (Lave & Wenger & 1991). One way to apply meaningful activities is to show the value of learning ahead and applying the skills within summer camp to other venues. At summer camp, this could come in the form of professional development opportunities, attending conferences, articulation of camp skills on resumes, benefits of teaching, social integration of new staff, habits for effective mentorship, and meaningful programmatic structure.

As the leading authority, the American Camp Association should take responsibility in the promotion and marketing of progressive educational philosophers (i.e. John Dewey), which

may provide emerging professionals with a theoretical basis for understanding the importance, skill-set, and defining characteristics associated with camp employment. Activities and programmatic goals, which account for social context, and real-world application, would be one way to highlight how camp can be a part of educational reform and action. Additionally, camps have the advantage in building genuine camper and counselor relationships using an apprenticeship model that does not replicate the values of an individualistic systematized school setting based on grade acquisition (Rogoff, 1990; Dewey, 1916).

From my own experience, summer camp counselors can serve as mentors, who value the overall well-being of the camper, instead of merely achieving a skill or receiving an award. Focusing on the mentor-mentee relationship in camp settings provides joint activity and shared meaningful experience. This relationship needs to be fostered by camp directors, owners, and the ACA, who can implement the stance that activities in camp are more than recreational but serve as ‘occupations. Ultimately, children and adults have different modes of growth. They are both growing but should not be compared as one being better than the other (Dewey, 1916, p. 50). Future research in camp settings should account for differences between campers and staff members related to how they “fit” within the community. There may be differences in how campers and counselors interpret the meaning of community within a camp setting. Camp directors could implement appropriate creativity and motivation exercises which involve social interaction, joint activity, and collaboration.

Statement of the problem

Counselors’ perceptions of creativity in a summer camp work context is largely unknown. In addition, based on hundreds of thousands of Torrance Tests for Creative Thinking (TTCT), creativity has been on the steady decline in the United States since the 1990’s (Kim,

2011). The decline in creativity in conjunction with opportunities for young adults to work in a unique environment make summer camp a worthy context to explore outcomes associated with creativity and motivation. The camp context may be similar to the description of a systems understanding of creativity in which individual, community, and social context are paramount features (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014)

Additionally, hiring and retaining well qualified seasonal camp counselors continues to be a major issue among camp directors (ACA, 2017, 2014; McCole, Jacobs, Lindley, & McAvoy, 2012). The American Camp Association posits that a lack of empirical research related to counselor outcomes leaves a gap in understanding the overall camp work environment (Henderson, 2018; Warner, 2019). Anecdotal evidence suggests that camp is a viable setting to support counselors in feelings of creativity and motivation (Sheets, 2013). More specifically, as part of a recent keynote speech during an American Camp Association National Conference, eminent creativity scholar Scott Barry Kaufman, stated that summer camp includes features which help to support creativity (ACA Keynote Address, 2014).

Kaufman (2014) asserted that these features included vast opportunities for risk taking, choice of activities, exploration of possibilities, and the natural outdoor setting. Furthermore, practitioners and researchers frequently promote that camp is a nurturing environment which supports feelings of creativity (Sheets, 2013). Kaufman's (2014) anecdotal evidence in conjunction with my own personal observations as a camp director for 5 years in NH, suggest that residential camp is a viable context to understand creativity and basic need fulfillment among counselors. However, no known studies empirically address or unpack this sentiment.

Studies which explore the widely held notion that camp is a creative setting is critically needed. More specifically, understanding perceptions of creativity and motivation among camp

counselors may aid in future studies based on retention, best practices, and supporting the overall needs of emerging adults in a seasonal workplace. Unpacking nuanced social factors, like creativity and motivation, will help fill this gap and inform workplace culture, organizational behavior, staff training methods, and programmatic structure.

Purpose and significance of the study

The purpose of this multi method quasi-experimental dissertation was to explore creativity and motivation among camp counselors from the beginning to end of employment in a residential camp setting. Furthermore, largely held sentiment which state that summer camp is a creative venue, is unpacked to conceptually understand the social mechanisms for creativity in summer camp. This dissertation provides conceptual frameworks and methods for understanding why this sentiment exists among camp professionals. To further understand the camp workplace, two data driven studies, related to motivation and creativity, asses counselor perceptions from beginning to end of employment.

This dissertation employed various theoretical frameworks to unpack and explore the overall culture for creativity and motivation at summer camp. More specifically, article 1 used Socio-Cultural theory, and related conceptual frameworks, to explain psychological, historical, and social mechanisms of creativity in summer camp (Vygotsky, 1978; Article 1). In addition, Self Determination Theory and basic need fulfillment (autonomy, competence, relatedness) in conjunction with camp experience variables (dosage, camper years, counselor years), were used to understand counselor willingness to return (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Article 2). Finally, perceptions of organizational creativity, creative identity, and barriers to creativity among first year and returning camp counselors were compared from the start and end of one season of employment (Article 3).

The knowledge gained from this study will add to the overall literature and conceptual understanding of motivation and creativity in residential summer camp workplaces. In addition, based on the demographics, this study adds to the literature and understanding of basic need fulfillment and creativity among emerging adults (18-25 years old) who have distinct needs of identify, exploration, and risk taking (Arnett, 2000). This study lays a foundation for future research pertaining to motivation and creativity among camp counselors. Findings may aid in successful implementation and practical application of hiring and training techniques which focus on creativity and motivation. Camp directors and administrators can use these findings to understand their own camp culture and potentially re-organize program offerings to better cater to creativity and motivation. Ultimately, the purpose of this dissertation was to empirically explore motivation and creativity among camp counselors from various perspectives.

Definition of Key Terms

Autonomy supportive camp. A camp that creates a context or environment that provides choices within limits, freedom, encouragement toward autonomy, involvement with others in decision making, and the ability to facilitate motivation that originates from within and inevitably leads to increased Self Determination (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008, p. 66)

Autonomy supportive context. Autonomy-supportive (rather than controlling) contexts support autonomy, well-structured (rather than chaotic and demeaning) contexts support competence, and warm and responsive (rather than cold and neglectful) contexts support relatedness. (Vansteenkiste, Niemiec, & Soenens, 2010, p. 132).

Basic needs theory (BNT). BNT posits that humans have innate psychological ‘nutriments’ that are necessary for psychological and physical health, and social wellness

(Vansteenkiste, et al, p. 131). These nutriments include the basic human needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness which support intrinsic motivation and satisfaction.

Camp. A sustained camp experience that provides recreational, and educational opportunities in outdoor group living. It utilizes trained leadership and the resources of natural surroundings to contribute to each camper's mental, physical, social, and spiritual growth (American Camp Association, 2013)

Camp counselor. Older youth or adults who have accepted the responsibility for teaching, supervising, and caring for younger campers in a camp setting (Garst & Johnson, 2005)

Camping. The act of *camping* by individuals or groups that camp on their own without staff or planned programming (American Camp Association, 2013). In summer camp the act of 'camping' comes in the form of brief overnight trips away from the established residential camp.

Creativity. The adopted definition of creativity for this dissertation is: "Creativity is the interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context" (Plucker, Beghetto, & Dow, 2004, p. 90). This definition accounts for the importance of social context as a paramount feature of creativity which helps to explain social mechanisms for creativity in summer camp.

Divergent Thinking (DT). The cognitive process of developing multiple responses to open-ended questions and linked to certain personality traits such as openness to experiences, extraversion, and risk taking (Kaufman, Plucker, & Baer, 2008; McCrae, 1987). Divergent thinking is linked to creative potential and idea formation in individuals (Runco & Acar, 2012).

Emerging Adulthood. A key developmental stage, between the age of 18-25 years old, in which identity formation, exploration of possibilities, instability, and experimentation are key

components (Arnett, 2000). Camp counselors, who are emerging adults, are the key demographic for this dissertation.

Residential camping. A camping experience consisting of a minimum of four nights when camp staff members are responsible for campers at all times (American Camp Association, 1998). Residential camps provide an immersive and communal context for campers and counselors to interact.

Reflexivity. A theory of socialization, in which an individual's actions can be largely influenced based on expectations within a social context (Soros, 2013). In other words, actions are informed by what the context values and expects from the person (a reciprocal approach). Reflexivity is similar to a sense of autonomy, in which a person is influenced on a spectrum, based on social expectations and individual action.

Self Determination Theory. SDT explains overall motivation and need fulfillment in relation to a person's willingness to be engaged and self-regulate positive behavior (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Basic Needs Theory (BNT), is one of five mini theories (of SDT) which uses the basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness to explain basic need fulfillment in relation to motivation.

Socio-Cultural Theory. A cognitive developmental theory (as opposed to strictly biological) which stresses the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition. (Vygotsky, 1978). Community interaction and social roles within residential camping play an integral role in meaning making and joint activity.

REFERENCES

- Albert, R. S., & Runco, M. A. (1999). A history of research on creativity. *Handbook of creativity*, 2, 16-31.
- Amabile, T. M., & Conti, R. (1999). Changes in the work environment for creativity during downsizing. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42(6), 630-640.
- American Camp Association (2011). *Camp emerging issues survey*. Retrieved from: [http://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/images/research/improve/EI%20all%20results%20\(wozip\)11.pdf](http://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/images/research/improve/EI%20all%20results%20(wozip)11.pdf).
- American Camp Association (2016). *Compensation, Benefits, and Professional Development Report*. Retrieved September 26th, 2018 from: <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/research/compensation-benefits-and-professional-development-report>
- American Camp Association (2017) *Camp Database*. Retrieved from: <http://find.acacamps.org/>
- American Camp Association (2017). *Camp emerging issues survey*. Retrieved March 29th, 2018 from: https://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/resource_library/2017-Emerging-Issues-Report.pdf
- American Camp Association (2017). *Camp Sites, Facilities, and Programs Report*. Retrieved April 1st, 2018 from: <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/research/camp-sites-facilities-and-programs-report>
- American Camp Association (2019) *Research Advisory Committee Operating Code*. Retrieved on February 26th, 2019 from: https://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/page_documents/volunteers/CARE-operating-code.pdf
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55, 469 – 480.
- Batey, M., & Furnham, A. (2006). Creativity, intelligence, and personality: A critical review of the scattered literature. *Genetic, social, and general psychology monographs*, 132(4), 355-429.
- Collins, M. A., & Amabile, T. M. (1999). Motivation and creativity. *Handbook of creativity*, 297, 1051-1057. In. R.J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Handbook of creativity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England (1999), pp. 297-312
- Crossen, B., & Yerkes, R. (1998). Recruiting and Retaining Summer Staff. *Camping Magazine*, 71(6), 35-38.

- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2014). *Society, culture, and person: A systems view of creativity* (pp. 47-61). Springer Netherlands.
- Csikszentmihályi, M. (1999). Implications of a Systems Perspective for the Study of Creativity. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.). (1999). *Handbook of creativity* (pp. 313-336). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Rathunde, K. (1993). The measurement of flow in everyday life: Toward a theory of emergent motivation. In J. E. Jacobs (Ed.), *Current theory and research in motivation*, Vol. 40. Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, 1992. Developmental perspectives on motivation (pp. 57- 97). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2012). Motivation, personality, and development within embedded social contexts: An overview of self-determination theory. In R. M. Ryan (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of human motivation* (pp. 85-107). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195399820.001.0001
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227-268.
- Dewey, J (1916). *Democracy and education*. New York, The Free Press
- Dewey, J (1938). *Logic, the theory of inquiry*. New York: Holt Publishing.
- Dickinson, A., & Balleine, B. (2002). The role of learning in the operation of motivational systems. *Steven's handbook of experimental psychology: Learning, motivation and emotion*, 3, 497-534.
- Edmondson, H. (2014). *John Dewey and the decline of American education*. Open Road Media.
- Eells, E. (1986). Eleanor Eells' history of organized camping: The first 100 years. Martinsville, IN: American Camping Association, Inc.
- Goor, A., & Rapoport, T. (1977). Enhancing creativity in an informal educational framework. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 69(5), 636-643. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.69.5.636
- Glassman, M. (2001). Dewey and Vygotsky: Society, experience, and inquiry in educational practice. *Educational researcher*, 30(4), 3-14.
- Guilford, J.P. (1967). *The nature of human intelligence*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Guilford, J. P. (1956). The structure of intellect. *Psychological bulletin*, 53(4), 267.
- Henderson, K. A. (2018). Camp Research: What? So What? What's Next? *Journal of Youth Development*, 13(1-2), 316-326. doi:10.5195/jyd.2018.607

- Hill, E., & Sibthorp, J. (2006). Autonomy support at diabetes camp: a self-determination theory approach to therapeutic recreation. *Therapeutic recreation journal*, 40(2), 107.
- Kim, K. H. (2011). The creativity crisis: The decrease in creative thinking scores on the Torrance tests of creative thinking. *Creativity Research Journal*, 23, 285-295.
doi:10.1080/10400419.2011.627805.
- Koestner, R., Ryan, R. M., Bernieri, F., & Holt, K. (1984). Setting limits on children's behavior: The differential effects of controlling vs. informational styles on intrinsic motivation and creativity. *Journal of personality*, 52(3), 233-248.
- KoIb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Kumar, N., Scheer, L., & Kotler, P. (2000). From market driven to market driving. *European management journal*, 18(2), 129-142.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge university press.
- Lynch, M. L., Hegarty, C. B., Trauntvein, N., & Plucker, J. A. (2018). Summer camp as a force for 21st century learning: Exploring divergent thinking and activity selection in a residential camp setting. *Journal of Youth Development*, 13(1-2), 286-305.
doi:10.5195/jyd.2018.544
- McCole, D., Jacobs, J., Lindley, B., & McAvoy, L. (2012). The relationship between seasonal employee retention and Sense of Community: The case of summer camp employment. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 30(2), 85-101.
- Miranda, W. (1987). "The Genteel Radicals". *Camping Magazine*. American Camp Association, February. p 12.
- Niv, Y., Joel, D., & Dayan, P. (2006). A normative perspective on motivation. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 10(8), 375-381.
- Paris, L. (2008). *Children's nature: The rise of the American summer camp*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Plucker, J. A., Beghetto, R. A., & Dow, G. T. (2004). Why Isn't Creativity More Important to Educational Psychologists? Potentials, Pitfalls, and Future Directions in Creativity Research. *Educational Psychologist*, 39(2), 83-96.
- Powell, G. (2004). Exploring what staff gains from work at camp. *The Camping*.
- Quay, J. (2015). *Understanding life in school: From academic classroom to outdoor education*. Springer.

- Quay, J., & Seaman, J. (2013). *John Dewey and education outdoors: Making sense of the 'educational situation' through more than a century of progressive reforms*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Ramsing, R., & Sibthorp, J. (2008). The Role of Autonomy Support in Summer Camp Programs: Preparing Youth for Productive Behaviors. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 26(2), p. 61-77.
- Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. Oxford university press.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist*, 55(1), 68.
- Smith, M. B. (2006). 'The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper' and the Nature of Summer Camp. *Environmental History*, 11(1), 70-101.
- Sobel, D. (2004). Place-based education: Connecting classroom and community. *Nature and Listening*, 4(1), 1-7.
- Soros, G. (2013). Fallibility, reflexivity, and the human uncertainty principle. *Journal of Economic Methodology*, 20(4), 309-329.
- Torrance, E. P., Ball, O. E., & Safter, H. T. (1966). Torrance tests of creative thinking. Scholastic Testing Service.
- Van Slyck, A. A. (2006). *A manufactured wilderness: Summer camps and the shaping of American youth, 1890-1960*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Vansteenkiste, M., Niemiec, C. P., & Soenens, B. (2010). The development of the five mini-theories of self-determination theory: An historical overview, emerging trends, and future directions. In T. C. Urdan & S. A. Karabenick (Eds.), *Advances in motivation and achievement*, v. 16A—*The decade ahead: Theoretical perspectives on motivation and achievement* (pp. 105-165). London, England: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Vygotsky L S (1978) *Mind in society* Harvard University Press, Cambridge
- Warner, R (2019). *What I learned about camp research at the ACA National Conference*. Retrieved from: [acacamps.org/news-publications/blogs/research-360-what I learned about camp research](http://acacamps.org/news-publications/blogs/research-360-what-i-learned-about-camp-research).
- Williams, G.C., Freedman, Z.R., & Deci, E.L. (1998). Supporting autonomy to motivate glucose control in patients with diabetes. *Diabetes Care*, 21, 1644-1651.

II. Article I

Conceptual links between creativity and summer camp: The importance of community, collaboration, and nature

Abstract

In the United States, summer camp is an 18-billion-dollar industry which provides a variety of outdoor educational activities to more than 14 million children every year. Due to its natural and technology free setting, summer camp is often anecdotally considered to be a creative outdoor experiential education (OEE) context. However, only two empirical studies have specifically addressed the concept of creativity in summer camp. Due to the growing and complex demands of the 21st century, creativity is identified as an important workforce skill needed for critical thinking, innovation, and idea generation. In an age of indoor activity and social isolation, in which children spend on average 6 hours a day in front of screens, summer camp may provide a natural, unedited, and socially immersive respite for participants to exercise their own imagination and creativity. The current article unpacks historical, conceptual, and social mechanisms which help to explain the relation between the unique programmatic features and activities of summer camp relevant research associated with creativity.

Part one discusses pertinent historical foundations of summer camp and psychological underpinnings of creativity. In addition, mythology associated with historical and modern viewpoints of creativity may help to explain misunderstanding and applicability of creativity in summer camp. Part two connects historical and psychological foundations to relevant conceptual frameworks such as a dynamic systems approach to novelty, participation in communities of practice, and Socio-Cultural Theory. These frameworks explain the dynamic social practices within camp communities of domain, individual, and society, which ought to be considered for

the introduction and continuation of value for new ideas. The concepts discussed provide direction for future empirical research and application of creativity among camp professionals in training. Conceptual underpinnings explain how well-run summer camps can support creativity due to the unique programmatic features of community, collaboration, and natural setting. Future empirical studies should utilize quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the specific lived experiences and activities which help to support (or hinder) creativity. Experienced camp directors understand that each camp is different and therefore should consider their own culture, staff, and programmatic offerings when incorporating novel ideas. Ultimately, practitioners and researchers in the field of summer camp can use this paper to explain and demystify social mechanisms associated with creativity in hopes of implementing effective training which often leads to a positive workplace culture.

Keywords: *Summer camp, creativity, Sociocultural theory, dynamic systems*

Introduction

In the United States, parental fear and online technology are deemed as major contributors in the creation of a generation of ‘indoor kids’ (Riney-Kehrberg, 2014). Whether accurate or exaggerated, cultural fears associated with children include injury, abduction, and violence often perpetuated and sensationalized by a variety of media outlets. Cultural fears, combined with access to readily available internet access, are primary reasons why children have spent more time inside, and on screens, than ever before (Riney-Kehrberg, 2014). In fact, screen time has significantly increased since 2011, with 8-12 years old’s spending on average 4 hours and 36 minutes in front of screens per day (Common Sense Report, 2015). The ‘indoorness’ and forthcoming “online addiction” of the modern child, in conjunction with parental fears, may be largely responsible in the decline of imaginative free play, experiences in nature, unedited face to face social interaction, and creativity, which are vital components for critical thinking and psychological well-being (Kim, 2011; Louv, 2008; Russ, 2014).

Summer camp, a nonformal outdoor educational context, is anecdotally described as a setting which supports creativity among participants largely due to the programmatic features and unique activities within a natural and technology free setting (Goor & Rapoport, 1977; Lynch, Hegarty, Trauntvein, & Plucker, 2018; Paris, 2008; Sheets, 2013). For instance, camp activities, such as archery, sailing, kayaking, woodworking, campcraft, outdoor cooking, and skit campfires, are not typically offered in traditional school settings, which creates an ideal context for participants to try new things and explore possibilities. Furthermore, the natural setting [of summer camp] incorporates technology free distractions (distinct from online distractions) and a reprieve from congested and fast paced urban areas (Van Slyck, 2006). The internet free context of summer camp may provide unscripted and face to face interaction which may encourage

negotiation of complex and unedited social interaction. Ultimately, communal living within residential camp, requires counselors and campers to work together to achieve common goals such as maintaining cabin cleanliness, meal time preparation, engagement through activities, and mentorship among counselor and camper (McCole, Jacobs, Lindley, & McAvoy, 2012)

The aforementioned programmatic and social features of residential summer camp may help to explain why this context supports creativity. However, only two known empirical studies specifically address connections between summer camp and creativity. First, Lynch, Hegarty, Trauntvein, & Plucker (2018) found significant increases in camper divergent thinking (a measure of creative potential) in a residential camp setting after two-weeks of attendance. In their study, girls scored significantly higher than boys from pre to post test on the divergent thinking measures of fluency, flexibility, and originality (Lynch et al., 2018). Second, Goor & Rapoport (1977) found that creativity was enhanced among campers through periodic ‘creativity trainings’ during attendance at a residential summer camp. Goor & Rapoport (1977) found that intentional creativity training, in conjunction with attending an informal educational setting [summer camp], supported and enhanced creativity among youth. Lynch et al., (2018) and Goor & Rapoport (1977) findings leave room for understanding more nuanced social mechanisms of creativity and summer camp. While these studies provide a foundation for understanding creativity at camp, a gap between general sentiment and conceptual foundations within the camp experience still exists.

This paper aims to address this gap [between creativity sentiment and conceptual links] through explaining relevant theoretical frameworks and historical foundations which link the dynamic components of creativity and the general camp experience. Part one explains the history of summer camp and psychological foundations of creativity (Guilford, 1950, 1956). Part two

positions Socio Cultural Theory, dynamic systems approach to novelty, and communities of practice to explain the communal and social processes of summer camp and creativity (Csikszentmihályi, 1999; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). For instance, residential summer camp is a social context, in which creativity may be influenced based largely on participant expectations (campers, counselors, directors), traditions (generational practices), organizational structure (value of creativity), and programmatic features (natural setting and activity offerings). Unlike more isolated and online indoor activities, outdoor activities require face to face interaction which may be a necessary component for the enhancement of collaboration and creativity via the navigation of complex social cues. Ultimately, the features of nature, collaboration, and community, which are foundational components of most residential camps, provide ample opportunities to mitigate ‘indoorness’, and therefore may enhance creativity through active, engaged, and meaningful experiences.

Part I: History of summer camp

Summer camp was founded on the notion of exploration and recreation based in natural out of school settings, which helped to “...emancipate children from school and city structure” (Vinal, 1935, p. 463). In the United States, organized summer camps gained mainstream popularity in the early twentieth century due to unique outdoor activities and a child-centered learning approach, in which activities were based largely on a child’s (not adults) interest (Smith, 2006; Van Slyck, 2006). The Gunnery Camp, founded in 1861, was the first organized American summer camp, which focused on outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, hunting, and fishing (Paris, 2008). Due to Gunnery’s widespread popularity, camps began to emerge with similar features, with an ethos and mission of going back to nature and character development through the participation in rustic activities which developed the whole child (Van Slyck, 2006).

Progressive summer camp directors aimed to eliminate top down superficial social control often found in structured school and general society, which placed importance on grades, prestige, and external rewards (Ward, 1935). Instead, summer camp provided the child centered approach incorporated a sense of freedom, exploration, self-interest, expression, and a focus on internal rewards (Paris, 2008; Van Slyck, 2006). An exponential surge in camps occurred at the turn of the twentieth century and was due to the school summer break and the lure of opportunities for youth to venture out of congested urban areas and into more natural settings (Ward, 1935; Quay & Seaman, 2013). Camp programs focused on connecting a child to a larger community, in which activities were not graded and free choice and interest were paramount objectives (Dimock & Hendry, 1929).

Early summer camps only allowed boys to attend and were thought to “...offer a potent antidote to the feminized homes that threatened to undermine American manliness” (Van Slyck, 2006, p. 24). However, as the camping industry grew, organizations such as Camp Fire Girls and Girl Scouts emerged in the early 20th century, which accepted girls and women as employees. In the formative years of camp, girls were offered similar structured and ‘back to nature’ types of programming. As girls became more mainstream in camping, a myriad of activities such as jewelry making, arts and crafts, and drama began to emerge (Paris, 2008; Quay & Seaman, 2013; Van Slyck, 2006). New camp activities provided opportunities for both male and female campers to interact in different ways and try new things. Furthermore, the emergence of co-ed camps gave rise to even more activity offerings and skill-based camps (i.e. music camp, sports camp, drama camp, etc.) throughout the United States.

Fast forward roughly 100 years to 2019, and summer camp has grown to an 18-billion-dollar industry with 1.5 million staff (seasonal and year-round), 14 million children, and 14,000

camps across the United States (ACA, 2019). Founded in 1910, the American Camp Association (ACA) is the leading authority of summer camp and seasonal youth development. The ACA provides resources for standards, professional development, and conferences for practitioners and researchers in the field (ACA, 2019). Furthermore, in 2005 the ACA charged the Committee for Advancement of Research and Evaluation (CARE), a group of professional researchers and academics, to advise, support, and enhance the research function of the ACA (CARE Operating Code, 2019). One primary goal of CARE is to support empirical research which focuses on the transference and implementation of skills learned at camp to other areas of life (i.e. work, school, and day to day activities). Creativity is an essential skill, which may be supported because of salient programmatic features inherent in well-organized residential camp settings (Henderson, 2018; Lynch et al., 2018).

The programmatic features of community, collaboration, and nature (Figure 1) make summer camp a viable context to support and understand creativity. First, summer camp is a *communal* setting, in which campers and counselors live, eat, and work together within close-proximity. Residential camps typically provide lodging in which six or more participants live together in rustic accommodations (cabins or yurts). The communal setting provides an immersive environment for idea sharing, negotiation of rules, the emergence of traditions, and frequent face to face social interaction. The communal setting may also support the emergence of unique traditions which are shared among counselors, campers, and administrative staff.

Second, summer camp requires a *collaborative* effort among campers, counselors, and administration. In other words, activities, traditions, and general programmatic functioning requires campers and staff to work together to achieve common goals. For example, collaboration is enacted in the dining hall, when campers clean up after a meal or on the

challenge (ropes) course when an obstacle is completed using teamwork, or in the cabin when campers and staff regularly clean up after themselves to maintain hygiene and keep track of their belongings. Ultimately, collaboration is a key element for creativity and must be situated within a social context to have value and promote idea sharing through frequent social interaction (Plucker, Beghetto, & Dow, 2004). Ultimately, individuals in a camp community are connected to a larger social network, which instills elements of shared sense of ownership and experience.

Third, residential summer camps are typically located in *natural settings*, away from distractions associated with technology and fast paced urban life. The natural setting creates an immersive context to support creativity. In one study, enhancement of creativity among outward bound participants was attributed to the natural setting, in which technology was not readily available (Atchley, Strayer, & Atchley, 2012). In this study, participants took a remote association tasks (a measure of creativity) in which they had significant increases from pre to post wilderness experience attributed to immersion in nature (Atchley, Strayer, & Atchley, 2012). Furthermore, a more recent ailment, Nature Deficit Disorder, describes how children are not spending enough time outside which results in a myriad of behavioral and psychological problems (Louv, 2008). The natural setting of summer camp may provide opportunities for campers to create their own distractions instead of being constantly distracted by technology. Foundations of creativity help explain the required social mechanisms for creativity in camp.

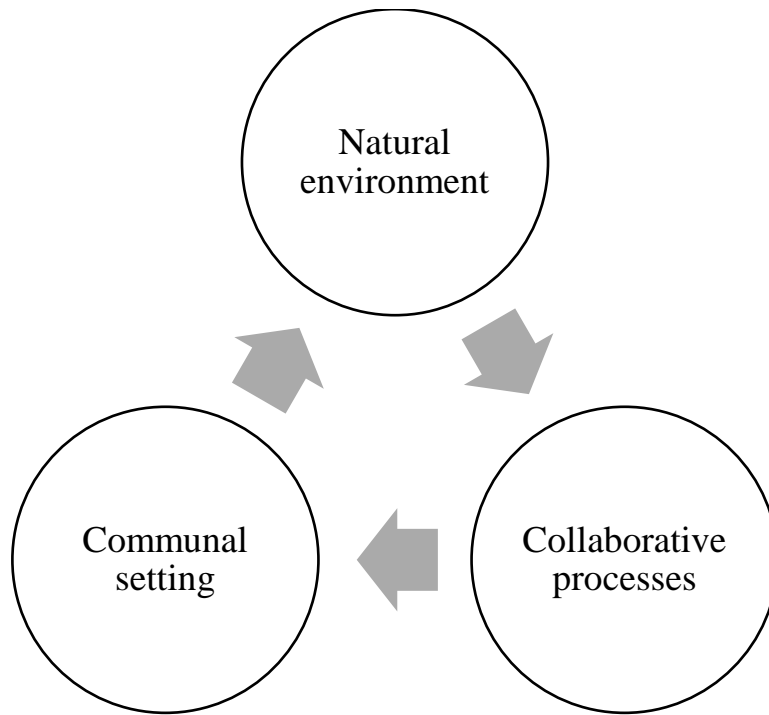


Figure 1: Programmatic features of summer camp and creativity

Foundations of creativity

Creativity can inspire people to be open to new experience which helps in the generation of ideas, promotes economic growth, and spurs innovation (McCrae, 1987; Plucker, Beghetto & Dow, 2004; Runco & Acar, 2012). Additionally, creativity can lead to movements in art, social programs, and inventions. Simonton (1994) linked the capacity for creativity to variables such as: cultural diversity, role models, and availability and choice of resources (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999).

According to Plucker, Beghetto, & Dow (2004) creativity is:

...the interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context (p. 90).

The current definition accounts for the importance of social context as a paramount feature to support creativity. However, Sternberg & Lubart (1999) distinguished roadblocks in

the advancement of creativity which include creativity as mystical and spiritual, largely commercialized, having broad definitions, and as a ‘pseudo-science’ peripheral to psychology. First, creativity as a special trait held by a few individuals and as something risky, strange, or distant could hinder camp counselor’s self-efficacy beliefs and confidence when implementing new ideas (Burkus, 2013; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). Second, historical underpinnings trivialize creativity as being an isolated person in a frenzied or manic mental state distant from society (i.e. Vincent Van Gogh or Sylvia Plath) rather than someone functioning normally in society (Amabile, 1996; Feist, 1998). The stigma that creativity emerges from a dysfunctional ‘creative type’ perpetuates the notion that creativity just ‘happens’ rather than something that emerges as a social feature or learned via proper facilitation and education (Plucker & Makel, 2010). Third, creativity is often commercialized, which creates a plethora of ‘trainings’ largely not based on empirical research. The commercialization of creativity produces inaccurate information pertaining to proper staff training methods related to the facilitation of creativity (Burkus, 2013).

Ultimately, myths detract from current definitions of creativity and how social context is a vital component of novelty and idea generation (Amabile, 1996; Plucker et. al., 2004). To build understanding about creativity, summer camp practitioners should take time to explain and dispel myths through proper training and facilitation. Camps may equate brainstorming with creativity. However, creativity is best achieved through enacting collaboration in which participants have time to generate ideas on their own and come back to a larger group to share their perspective. The knowledge and accuracy that creativity can be enhanced and learned may produce camp counselors who are more confident in their own creativity and therefore model creative behavior.

Divergent Thinking. A key component of creativity, and more specifically creative problem solving are divergent thinking (DT) and convergent thinking (CT). Developed by J.P.

Guilford (1950), DT is the cognitive process of providing multiple responses to open-ended questions (Kaufman, Plucker, & Baer, 2008). CT is the ability to distill all the ideas to come up with the best, or most appropriate solution. DT and CT represent one method to produce something novel (DT) and practical (CT). Guilford (1967) hypothesized that fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration of ideas are the best indicators of divergent production, and a means of quantifying responses that are considered creative. Guilford's (1967) structure of intellect model (as cited in Baer, 2014) explains DT using four categories: 1) Fluency is the ability to produce many ideas. 2) Flexibility is the ability to produce a wide variety of ideas. 3) Originality is the ability to produce unusual ideas. 4) Elaboration is the ability to develop or embellish ideas (p. 14).

Practical examples of DT within summer camp include producing solutions to complex problems such as: creating new activities, minimizing food waste in the dining hall, revamping the daily schedule, developing new strategies to mitigate risk at the infirmary, etc. Once an individual (counselor) or group (camp community) exhausts their ideas, they utilize CT, in which they arrive at the best or most appropriate solution that can be used in practical ways (Cropley, 2006). For example, in general there are many ways to reduce food waste (DT), but some methods are more applicable and appropriate for the camp community (CT). Torrance (1966) defined creativity as having the ability to sense problems, or gaps in information, and continuously testing and modifying hypotheses to come up with a solution(s) (Gass, 1982). In this sense, for a camp to be creative it needs to constantly test the boundaries of what is considered appropriate, while operating within logical parameters. DT and CT apply to outdoor education programs, like summer camp, because programs often provide participants with new experiences and skill building. However, DT and CT is largely based on individual effort and

therefore could fall short when considering the importance of social context and how community plays an integral role for idea sharing.

To produce an accepted and novel idea, people need to consider their social context, which includes culture, society, and personal background (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). The inclusion of novelty and utility are also vital because a creative idea must add value and be useful. In other words, simply doing something new may not necessarily be creative, the idea must have value and practical application within the constraints of the social context. Socio-Cultural Theory and a systems model of novelty help to explain the social mechanisms for creativity and the acceptance of new ideas in summer camp (Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). The systems view explains summer camp with the features of an established culture (domain of specific summer camp), the field (or societal constraints, parental input), and the individual (camp counselor, camper, director).

Part II: Conceptual links

Summer camp directors should take time to support and implement creativity for both campers and counselors because it is linked to feelings of intrinsic motivation, well-being, and empowerment (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Furthermore, optimal functioning is best enacted when creativity, flexibility, and sense of purpose are considered as important for performance and behavior (Kasser, Davey, Ryan, 1992; Shalley, Zhou, Oldham, 2004; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). The introduction of this paper provided a brief history of summer camp and psychological foundations of creativity. The following section unpacks relevant theory and conceptual frameworks which explain how creativity is a complex social construct. The concepts provide methods for practical application [of creativity] and explain why residential summer camp is often considered a creative venue.

Sociocultural Theory and creativity

Sociocultural theory is the study of how social processes play a central role in the development of ‘meaning making’ which arise from interaction within communities of people (Vygotsky, 1978). In other words, Sociocultural theory identifies how humans internalize social and cultural influences through interacting with tools, symbols, and signs of other cultures which is formed through social interaction over time (Hutchins, 1997). Residential summer camp is one type of culture, which co-constructs meaning, and places value based on communal importance, identity, and negotiation of rules among members (Henderson & Ainsworth, 2000; Hutchins, 2006). Furthermore, Vygotsky (1962, 1978) asserted that social cognitive development is different from biological development because it stems from social interaction and co-construction of knowledge by ‘learning ahead’ based on a process known as the zone of proximal development (ZPD). ZPD stresses the importance of a mentor-apprentice model and access to mature thought. If incorporated effectively, ZPD may help to support a less skilled member (i.e. new camp counselor) ‘learn ahead’ to effectively function within an established social context (Chaiklin, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978).

In the context of well-run summer camps, experienced camp counselor assists a new counselor to learn the skills required to teach an activity and learn ahead (such as: waterskiing, archery, horseback riding, etc.). This process establishes a continuation and ‘automation’ of necessary cultural practices (Hutchins, 2006). To be successful, the more experienced counselor ought to teach the younger staff how to properly function as an ‘active and contributing member’ within the camp community based on role expectations, modeling, and disposition. One aspect often overlooked in cultural practices are the necessary components of social interaction needed to either support or inhibit creativity. Vygotsky (1990) asserted that creativity and imagination

are integrated at an early age and help to distinguish how culture is a valuable feature of all human experience. From this perspective, creativity can be an established norm within a culture if given appropriate support and necessary tools for implementation.

Sociocultural theory states that the combination and use of ‘tools’ and ‘signs’ explain human behavior and learning in relation to internal (thoughts) and external (objects) which are influenced by culture, social interaction, and memory (Vygotsky, 1978). The notion that behaviors stem from an intermediate social link (mediated activity) was groundbreaking when first proposed by Vygotsky. The notion of social and cultural human development, combined with mediated activity, challenged the behaviorist stimulus response theory and Piaget’s (1977) sequential steps for human development in which the subject (person) is separate from the object (Figure 2). Pavlov proposed a model for human developmental behavior using a Stimulus → Response explanation which largely ignored the influence of social factors and cultural influences on human behavior (Figure 2). Similarly, Piaget (1977) positioned human development based on specific stages of development (i.e. sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete, and formal operational) which according to Vygotsky (1978), did not account for the importance of language and culture.

Mediated activity introduced a way to understand human behavior outside of purely coming from response of the body or sequential steps in development. Vygotsky (1978) asserted that social factors in the form of tools and signs (mediated activity) are major influences for human behavior beyond only the behaviorist S → R model (Figure 2).

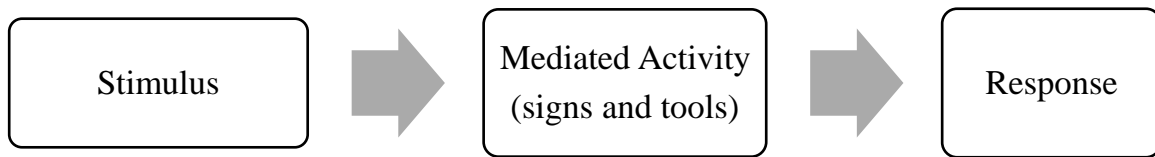


Figure 2: Socio-Cultural theory and mediated activity (Vygotsky, 1978)

One way to understand mediated activity and internal and external objects is through the example of tying a string to your finger. When a person ties a piece of string on their finger to remember something, they are associating that string with an external object, or a tool (perhaps to remember to buy groceries). The memory from the string is separate from the biological body because it accounts for social context and ‘remembering ahead’ of what to do. In this example, the person is transforming memory into an external activity, i.e. buying groceries (Vygotsky, 1980). Signs are internal activities and do not change the external object but have the capacity to modify the object. In other words, the string is a sign which provides a way for the person to remember to complete the task; becoming an automated cultural process (Hutchins, 1997). The internal sign is a way for someone to master oneself through the effective use of tools available to them (Vygotsky, 1980).

Within a summer camp context, an archery instructor uses the tools available such as bows, arrows, and targets to implement effective lesson plans throughout the summer. Activity theory states that the relationship between the subject (microsystem) and macrosystem (social), coevolves through continuous transformations based on numerous factors (Engestrom & Miettinen, 1999). Lesson plans can be modified based on the counselor’s experience, participant

skill level, and overall expectation for how the activity is taught (competitive v. noncompetitive). Variation exists in relation to the effectiveness and value of the archery lesson such as availability of materials (new/used bows and arrows), time allowed for training, and overall expectation of the counselor. For instance, at a well-run summer camp, one objective of the archery instructor is to provide enough mentorship and support to effectively aid participants in goal direction, motivation, and confidence in the use of a bow and arrow. In this sense shooting a bulls-eye (a lofty goal) is not a basic Stimulus→Response sequence but rather, is mediated using tools and signs used by the instructor which help build the confidence of the participant to achieve the goal over time. Table 1 provides examples of tools and signs in general areas of a residential camp setting. Table 1 can be further expanded to include other programmatic features of summer camp.

Creativity is not something that ‘just happens’ instead, camps ought to be intentional in modifying or continuing programs which incorporate elements of creativity. Creativity can be implemented across various activity areas and throughout staff training. Sociocultural theory positions residential summer camp as providing a dynamic and communal context which has the capacity to either support or inhibit creativity. Support and opposition [of creativity] is largely based on the mediation of tools and signs and symbols across programmatic areas, instead of solely a behaviorist explanation related to a stimulus response mechanism (Piaget, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978; Table 1).

Table 1 Camp area and examples of tools and signs

| Camp area | Tools | Signs | Mediated Creativity |
|--|--|--|--|
| Skit campfire | Costumes Fire pit Skits | Cultural understanding Social cues Language and speech | This is a communal activity with the capacity to alter tools and signs |
| Archery | Bow Arrow Target | Safety signs Competition Approval | The instructor and camp can alter both tools and signs to cater to creativity |
| Swimming | Lesson plans Swimming ‘levels’ Swimming area | Expectation Instructor cues Safety signs | A safety conscious activity which can use signs and tools to accommodate creativity |
| Arts and Crafts | Facility Art materials Lesson plans | Instructional style Rules Expectations | A+C is thought to be a creative activity but could vary depending on instructional style/materials |
| Dining Hall | Seating/layout Food Utensils | Signs for meals General ambiance Expectations/rules | The dining hall is a central feature of camp and contains many tools and signs for creative activity |
| Housing (i.e. cabin, yurt, etc.) | Bed arrangement Number of campers Number of staff Cabin proximity | Signs in cabin Cleanliness Expectations/rules Counselor style | The cabin can provide a sense of belonging (or not). Rules, guidelines, and overall feel largely influence expectations for creativity and choice. |
| Line up (morning, midday, evening, etc.) | Frequency Position of campers Position of counselors Flags/other items | Presentation style Information provided Announcements and by whom (i.e. director, counselor, camper) | Line-ups are common practice in camp settings. Line-ups serve to take attendance, announce activities, and start the day (flag raising). How line-ups are facilitated is often overlooked by camp professionals. |
| Theme Days | Type of theme Activities offered Input from campers Frequency Attire/dress | Instructional style Events leading up to theme day Fantasy world Expectations/prizes | Theme days in camp are common practice (i.e. Olympic day, superhero day, etc.). However, theme days can become formulaic and need creativity to stay fresh. |

Note: This table represents a small portion of activities contained in summer camp

Note: There are additional tools and signs for each activity. The ones listed are provided to give the reader an idea of the format.

Leont'ev & James (1981) described the combination of tools (bows, arrows, etc.) and signs (perception, internal thoughts) as cultural artifacts distinctly associated with other human beings. Furthermore, humans use tools and signs to fulfill biological needs and may gain interest (something goal-directed or mastery oriented) from an original fundamental need. When a person or group performs a creative task or comes up with new ideas it typically takes time and has elements of collaboration. For example, when the archery instructor introduces a new way of using a bow and arrow they must explain the purpose of the new method and use the appropriate tools (lesson plans, demonstration, training) for the campers to understand the basic concepts. The concept of creativity has elements of external objects and value, based on culture, history, and social context which have changed over time (Kaufman, 2016). A new way of shooting a bow and arrow provides a creative method (mediated component) which could be adopted or dismissed based on perceived value, technique, or other factors (Lindqvist, 2003). People, in every social context, use different tools and signs based on experience and their implicit cultural significance.

One aspect of mastery (of oneself) is the creative use of tools and signs throughout camp activities. General activities vary in the degree of their expectation for creativity which is largely influenced by the activity itself and how it is facilitated by relevant staff members (Lindqvist, 2003; Park, Seo, & Sherf, 2015). For instance, arts & crafts is often perceived as creative due to the tools and features of the activity (painting, coloring, creating) and non-competitive camper-centered instructional style. Therefore, arts and crafts may cater to a counselor with an autonomy supportive instructional style, focused on participant choice and flexibility of material, rather than being competitive and rule centered (i.e. structured sports, games) (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). On the other hand, archery, a rule bound activity, may not be perceived as a creative

activity. Therefore, the leader driven instructional style of archery may be an expectation for the counselors who teach archery. Using Socio-Cultural Theory as a framework, differences in perceptions among activities is largely due to social factors and mediated activity, which influence expectations for how the activity is taught. In other words, arts & crafts is expected to be creative and therefore the instructors and campers who take the course may be more amicable to creative ideas, open lesson plans, and less rule bound instruction. Archery may be considered 'less-creative' due to programmatic features and social expectations.

Dynamic systems perspective for novelty

Another way to understand the social components necessary for creativity in summer camp is by using a systems perspective of novelty (Csikszentmihalyi & Wolfe, 2014). A systems perspective of novelty considers culture, personal background, and society as vital components for the introduction of novel ideas (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999, Figure 3). According to Csikszentmihalyi (1999), original and creative ideas must operate within a system of rules, traditions, and values in which symbols are transferred from one generation to the next. Furthermore, how information is stored related to systems and traditions is a key factor in how it is implemented and valued generationally. In other words, some materials and symbols are orally transmitted while others have more systematized and rigid record keeping methods to maintain valued cultural attributes and traits. Summer camp holds similar features of systems which ought to be considered for the introduction of new ideas. When summer camps do not consider their communal systems, it is likely that a creative idea will be pushed aside, misunderstood, or even opposed by the camp community. Using a systems model, new ideas need to have a sense of 'buy in' among members, especially if the community has longstanding cultural practices. Furthermore, 'gate-keepers' are individuals with more influence, who oftentimes consider the

parameters of a new idea; i.e. money, laws, social acceptability (Csikszentmihalyi & Wolfe, 2014).

A systems-based approach to novelty can be understood using the example of carpentry. To be a carpenter, a person must acquire a certain skill-set associated with carpentry (domain) such as sawing, measuring, drawing, visualization, etc. The skills needed for carpentry are based on set rules, laws, and expectations which exist for the general carpentry profession (societal law/gate-keepers). Obviously, expectations for carpentry may vary based on country, state, and culture. For a carpenter to be considered creative and introduce a novel idea to the domain of carpentry, they must produce a new and useful change which is adopted by the general field. Using a systems approach, for a new idea to be adopted, the carpenter must consider culture, society, and personal background. The consideration of these factors may aid the carpenter in their legitimacy, social capital, and overall success among other similar craftsmen.

Similarly, within summer camp (domain), the role of a camp counselor is largely influenced by personal background (experience level, certifications, social capital), culture (traditions of a specific camp), and societal rules and guidelines (American Camp Association, laws, parental expectations). Therefore, for a camp counselor (or anyone working in camp) to effectively present a creative idea they must consider the systems related to the introduction of novelty within their respective social context. The systems perspective of novelty is dynamic in that it places value on the individual effort and disposition of the camp counselor, as well as the influence and values of the larger camp organization. For example, some camp directors may be more open to new ideas while others adhere to traditions and the status quo. Camp practitioners can use Csikszentmihalyi (1999) systems-based approach to understand barriers to creativity and

implement new traditions, activities, and general training while accounting for society, culture, and personal background.

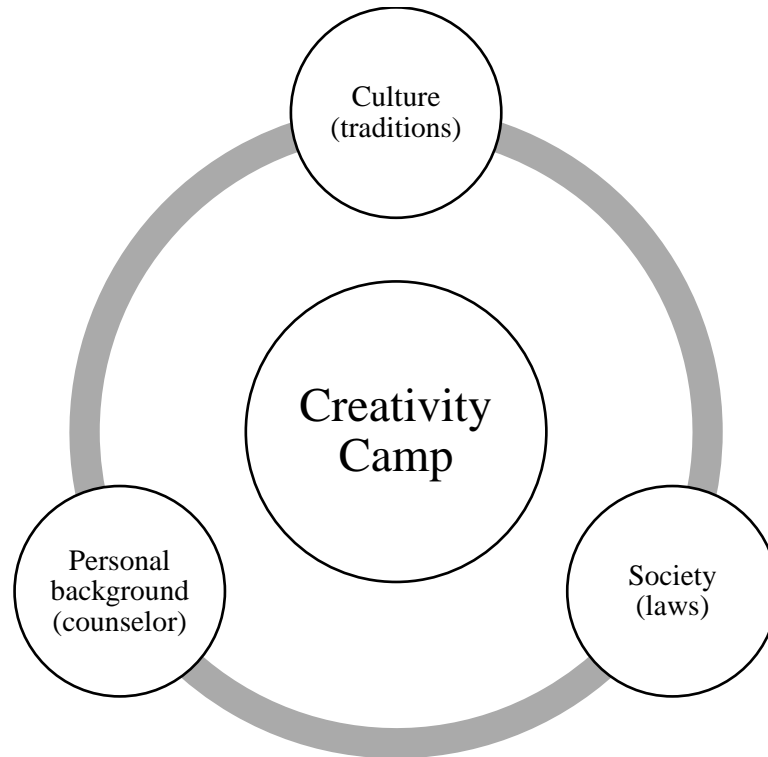


Figure 3: Dynamic systems of summer camp and creativity. Based on Csikszentmihalyi (1999) model

Community of Practice and Creativity

The systems perspective described the dynamic connection and attributes to consider when introducing a novel idea. Social practices, and day to day activities, provide an explanation of the communal processes for creativity in camp. Every human being is *situated* or belongs to a framework which includes inherent understanding of accepted social practices. Sinha asserted that situatedness is a process of contestation and negotiation among people which leads to novelty (1999). Novelty is a valued trait in society and a key ingredient for creativity (Plucker, Beghetto & Dow, 2004). Communities contain various domains (or practices) that vary in the degree of flexibility based on tradition, expectations, and values. Therefore, domains contain

processes that may or may not produce novelty (Sinha, 1999). Summer camps often uphold longstanding traditions (practices) which become fully embedded and perhaps less contested. Whereas, new traditions have a higher capacity to be contested and negotiated among community members (staff, counselors, camp directors). The community processes of idea sharing, and contestation can lend itself to vibrant social practices which generate ideas across all ages.

Within outdoor education venues, the process of negotiation and contestation of traditions is marked by social processes related to social capital (of director or counselor), background of counselors (prestige and experience), culture of organization (accepting of new ideas), and to a lesser extent logistics (organization of company) (Beames & Atencio, 2008). Social capital involves structural, relational, and cognitive processes which combine to form a web of social understanding and communication within a specific domain (i.e. summer camp) (Sinha, 1984). Lave & Wenger (1991) description of communities of practice, and the acceptance of creative activities, relies heavily on a collaborative atmosphere among group members. Ultimately, collaboration involves undertaking tasks with meaning and choice which span beyond purely individualized needs.

A community of practice positions camp culture as a dynamic learning environment between members who are newcomers (new counselors and international staff), or masters of a specific trade (administrative camp staff, camp alumni, camp board members, etc.) in which an even and equitable balance of power is established (Engestrom, 2001). New counselors may adopt the practices of more experienced counselors, while at the same time negotiate new practices and traditions within camp. Lave & Wenger (1991) describe that within a community of practice both new and old members need to have opportunities for legitimate peripheral

participation as a pedagogical form which involves “being located in the social worlds...changing locations and perspectives...developing identities, and forms of membership” (p. 36). Full membership and participation in a camp community must involve “diversity of relations” using an apprentice model (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 37).

Camp counselors (and campers) are situated in a ‘community of practice’, in which social practices are passed down generationally from experienced member to newcomer. According to Lave & Wenger (1991), “...shaping the relation of masters to apprentices, the issue of conferring legitimacy is more important than the issue of providing teaching” (p. 92). In relation to creativity, providing a collaborative environment, in which legitimacy is conferred by more experienced members of the community, is essential for novel idea generation and growth for new camp counselors, who are adjusting to established norms. For example, simply learning the mechanisms of teaching an activity in summer camp, such as archery or basketball, is not as impactful as a prior archery program head mentoring younger staff in archery, and eventually symbolically transferring the ‘power’ and legitimacy of archery to the next generation of camp counselors. In this example, the experienced counselors ‘confer legitimacy’ to the younger generation to support the continuation of generational knowledge.

Lave & Wenger assert that “...to be able to participate in a legitimately peripheral way entails that newcomers have broad access to arenas of mature thought” (1991, p. 110). Using communities of practice as a framework, creativity may be enacted at camp through intentional support for idea sharing and access to ‘mature thought’ via an apprentice and master model which confers legitimacy. For example, well run summer camps should strive to provide a community of practice, in which legitimate participation is valued, and tasks relate to the greater good of the camp. Legitimate participation is enacted when masters of a field (i.e. archery

program heads) help train younger counselors in their craft which generationally passes on teaching methods and activity values; how campers and counselors interact and what skills are valued for being successful within the activity of archery. Ultimately, to have a stable community of practice, camp directors should remain steadfast and vigilant throughout the entire summer in providing support for both new and experienced staff members. An adherence to consistency of logical social practices may provide regulation of expectations and a continuation of a healthy and well-adjusted camp community (Lave & Wegner, 1991; McCole, Jacobs, Lindley, & McAvoy, 2012).

Conclusion & Future Directions

Akin to a dynamic systems approach, well run residential summer camps can provide a community in which members (campers, counselors, staff) adhere to distinct social practices which are largely informed by the individuals, society, and culture (Csíkszentmihályi, 1999, Figure 3). Social practices and general expectations (guidelines for activities, etc.) emerge based on interaction among campers, counselors, and administrative staff. Therefore, the process of ‘meaning making’ [within summer camp] and the acceptance of new ideas can be understood via Socio-Cultural Theory, in which social interactions are necessary for creativity (Csikszentmihalyi 1999; Dewey, 1916; Lindqvist, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). In this regard, the people within summer camp act as community members who, through the aforementioned social mechanisms, are strong influencers for either the support or opposition of creativity.

Creativity is one adaptive psychological function (among many others), which is given meaning largely based among participant expectations and values within a residential summer camp context (Lynch et al., 2018; Runco, 2007). Adaptive psychological functions are described as a set of necessary skills need for human well-being and to successfully navigate the

complexities of daily living (Russ, 1998). Within summer camp, ‘meaning making’, associated with creativity, is related to program organization (i.e. competitive v. noncompetitive), counselor training approach (consideration of creativity within training), organizational structure (managerial value of creativity), materials provided (tools and objects associated with creativity), and traditions (generational values) (See Table 1). Creativity is vital because it supports optimal experience, intrinsic motivation, innovation, and a sense of autonomy (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Camps which identify creativity as important, heed the call to support autonomy (among counselors and campers) as well as the components of microsystems (activity) and macrosystems (social) throughout the activities within camp (Engeström, & Miettinen, 1999).

Autonomy supportive environments provide meaningful rationale for doing tasks, and an acknowledgement that people may not find tasks always enjoyable (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Prior studies assert that noncompetitive and camper centered instructional approaches increased perceptions of autonomy support in the form of engagement, goal direction, and self-regulation (Hill & Sibthorp, 2006; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). Furthermore, workplaces that encourage the expression of voice (and choice) within an organization may lead to opportunities for creativity, satisfaction, and motivation (Zhou & George, 2001). Creative activities, such as arts, drama, photography, may be more learner centered and autonomy supportive, rather than leader center and more competitive activities such as sports (archery, baseball, basketball, etc.) or rigid team-oriented theme days (i.e. Olympic day, treasure hunt, etc.). If camps wish to promote creativity and choice, they should consider organizing all activities to support autonomy and choice and flexible programming.

Ramsing & Sibthorp (2008) assert,

An autonomy supportive camp is one that creates a context or environment that provides choices within limits, freedom, encouragement toward autonomy, involvement with others in decision making, and the ability to facilitate motivation that originates from within and inevitably leads to increased self-determination (p. 66).

Features to consider in an autonomy supportive camp include: instructional style used by leaders, which can be either camper, or leader centered (Sheldon, William, & Joiner, 2003), characteristics of program areas which may include differences in type of activity such as sports, games, athletics, and the arts (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008), gender differences (Henderson 2005), and overall cultural attitude. To support creativity, camp directors and counselors should consider methods to incorporate autonomy support within camp culture and activities.

The components of Socio-Cultural Theory and a systems-based approach provide a foundation for understanding the features of community, collaboration, and natural setting as salient features of summer camp and methods for the incorporation of creativity. However, lack of empirical research may prevent creativity from being fully understood and therefore endorsed in outdoor educational programs like summer camp. Outdoor education practitioners should aspire to what Lave & Wenger (1991) describe as a 'community of practice', in which members actively participate through meaningful activities and exposure to 'mature thought'. Using this model, skills and traditions are generationally passed down and newcomers are provided with opportunities for creativity. Active participation helps to promote feelings of legitimacy, confidence, and an overall positive culture toward creativity in which campers and staff feel connected to something bigger than themselves.

Camp programs can get stuck adhering to archaic traditions which may lead to operating programs based on the status quo. However, weaving creativity throughout the summer can bring new life to old traditions and bring forth new ideas and at the same time accounting for the psychological benefits of autonomy and workplace empowerment among counselors (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Furthermore, an organizational value of creativity may also motivate staff to provide new and exciting programs, feel ownership of their tasks, and lend support for creative self-efficacy (Gong, Huang, & Farh, 2009). In turn, campers may feel supported and cared for by staff who show an interest in providing new and exciting activities. More research is needed to understand the relationship between the constructs of autonomy and creativity in outdoor programs. Specifically, how participants and staff perceive and exercise their creativity in outdoor programs; such as summer camp, wilderness therapy, day camp, experiential education, outdoor adventure education, etc.

One major component of support for creativity is having the ability to choose (rather than being controlled), which encourages self-direction, intrinsic motivation, and empowerment regarding creative task completion (Amabile & Gitomer, 1984). A semi-structured setting which includes logical parameters, instead of one that is highly structured (or one that lacks structure altogether), may provide more opportunities for choice and creativity for individuals in various social contexts; i.e. work, school, day to day activities (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996; Amabile & Gitomer, 1984; Foster & Penick, 1985). For instance, a semi-structured summer camp values a learner centered approach, in which instructional style is flexible and permits opportunities for creativity, choice, and autonomy among campers and staff (Amabile & Gitomer, 1984; De Alencar, & De Bruno-Faria, 1997; Gass, 1982; Russ, 2014). Within a summer camp context, the components of community, collaboration, and nature

provide a framework for camp professionals to understand and implement creativity using various tools and programmatic mechanisms for support (as described in Table 1). In our age of ‘indoord-ness’ and sedentary lifestyle, children and adults are more isolated than ever before (Louv, 2008).

Summer camp, a communal outdoor context, may provide a needed antidote to support creativity and reduce isolationism via shared experience, daily social interactions, and the opportunity to try new things. Ultimately, directors should be aware of the unique residential camp features of community, collaboration, and nature as major selling points for their respective camp. Through this awareness, directors should implement new staff trainings, unique program offerings, and choice which focus on outcomes and goals associated with creativity. Implementation of creativity throughout programmatic and general camp areas will provide both campers and staff with meaningful experiences that build skills which may help to mitigate feelings of isolation and disconnection.

REFERENCES

- American Camp Association (n.d.). *Timeline 100-year anniversary of the American Camp Association*. Retrieved on January 28th, 2019 from:
<http://www.acacamp.org/anniversary/timeline/>
- American Camp Association (2019). *Facts and Trends*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.acacamps.org/press-room/aca-facts-trends>
- Amabile, T. M. 1996. *Creativity in context: Update to the social psychology of creativity*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press
- Amabile, T. M. (1997). Motivating creativity in organizations: On doing what you love and loving what you do. *California management review*, 40(1), 39-58.
- Amabile, T.M. (1998). How to kill creativity (Vol. 87). Boston, MA: *Harvard Business School Publishing*.
- Amabile, T. M., Conti, R., Coon, H., Lazenby, J., & Herron, M. (1996). Assessing the work environment for creativity. *Academy of management journal*, 39(5), 1154-1184.
- Amabile, T. M., & Gitomer, J. (1984). Children's artistic creativity: Effects of choice in task materials. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 10(2), 209-215.
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55, 469 – 480.
- Atchley, R. A., Strayer, D. L., & Atchley, P. (2012). Creativity in the wild: Improving creative reasoning through immersion in natural settings. *PloS one*, 7(12), e51474
- Baer, J. (2014) *Creativity and divergent thinking: A task-specific approach*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc
- Beames, S., & Atencio, M. (2008). Building social capital through outdoor education. *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning*, 8(2), 99-112.
- Burkus, D. (2013). *The myths of creativity: The truth about how innovative companies and people generate great ideas*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Chaiklin, S. (2003). The zone of proximal development in Vygotsky's analysis of learning and instruction. *Vygotsky's educational theory in cultural context*, 1, 39-64
- Common Sense Report (2015). *The Common-Sense Census: Media us by tweens and teens*. Retrieved on January 28, 2019 from:
<http://cdn.cnn.com/cnn/2017/images/11/07/commonsensecensus.mediausebytweensandteens.2015.final.pdf>

- Cropley, A. J. (2010). Creativity in the classroom: The dark side. *The dark side of creativity*, 297-315.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & LeFevre, J. (1989). Optimal experience in work and leisure. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 56(5), 815.
- Csikszentmihályi, M. (1999). Implications of a Systems Perspective for the Study of Creativity. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.). (1999). *Handbook of creativity* (pp. 313-336). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Wolfe, R. (2014). New conceptions and research approaches to creativity: Implications of a systems perspective for creativity in education. In *The systems model of creativity* (pp. 161-184). Springer, Dordrecht.
- Dimock, H. S. & Hendry, C. E. (1929). *Camping and character: A camp experiment in character education*. New York: Association Press
- De Alencar, E. M. S., & De Bruno-Faria, M. F. (1997). Characteristics of an organizational environment which stimulate and inhibit creativity. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, 31(4), 271-281.
- Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual review of psychology*, 53(1), 109-132.
- Engestrom, Y. (1999). Activity theory and individual and social transformation. *Perspectives on activity theory* (pp. 19-38). Cambridge University Press: New York.
- Engeström, Y., & Miettinen, R. (1999). *Perspectives on activity theory*. Cambridge university press: New York.
- Feist, G. J. 1998. A meta-analysis of the impact of personality on scientific and artistic creativity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 2(4): 290-309.
- Foster, G. W., & Penick, J. E. (1985). Creativity in a cooperative group setting. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 22(1), 89-98.
- Gass, M. (1982). *The Role of Creativity in Learning in the Outdoor Classroom*. ERIC Institute of Educational Sciences
- Gong, Y., Huang, J. C., & Farh, J. L. (2009). Employee learning orientation, transformational leadership, and employee creativity: The mediating role of employee creative self-efficacy. *Academy of management Journal*, 52(4), 765-778.
- Goor, A., & Rapoport, T. (1977). Enhancing creativity in an informal educational framework. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 69(5), 636.

- Guilford, J. P. (1950). Creativity. *American Psychologist*, 5, 444-454
- Guilford, J. P. (1956). The structure of intellect. *Psychological Bulletin*, 53, 267–293.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0040755>
- Guilford, J. P. (1967). *The nature of human intelligence*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Henderson, K.A., & Ainsworth, B.E. (2000). Sociocultural perspectives on physical activity in the lives of older African American and American Indian women: a cross cultural activity participation study. *Women & Health*, 31(1), 1-20.
- Henderson, K. (2005). What about the girls? In P. Witt and L. Caldwell (Eds.), *Recreation and Youth Development* (pp. 407-424). State College, PA: Venture
- Henderson, K. A. (2018). Camp Research: What? So What? What's Next?. *Journal of Youth Development*, 13(1-2), 316-326.
- Hill, E., & Sibthorp, J. (2006). Autonomy support at diabetes camp: a self-determination theory approach to therapeutic recreation. *Therapeutic recreation journal*, 40(2), 107.
- Hutchins, E. (1997). Mediation and automatization. In M. Cole, Y. Engeström, & O. Vasquez (Eds.), *Mind, culture, and activity: Seminal papers from the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition* (pp. 338–353). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Kasser, T., Davey, J., & Ryan, R. M. (1992). Motivation and employee-supervisor discrepancies in a psychiatric vocational rehabilitation setting. *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 37(3), 175.
- Kaufman, J. C., Plucker, J. A., & Baer, J. (2008). *Essentials of creativity assessment* (Vol. 53). John Wiley & Sons.
- Kaufman, J. C. (2009). *Creativity 101*. Springer, New York.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge university press.
- Leontiev, A.A. (1981), Control in Foreign Language Learning (pp. 44-45.) *Psychology and the Language Learning Process*, James, C.V. (ed.), Pergamon Press Ltd.
- Lindqvist, G. (2003). Vygotsky's theory of creativity. *Creativity Research Journal*, 15(2-3), 245-251.
- Louv, R. (2008). *Last child in the woods: Saving our children from nature-deficit disorder* (updated and expanded ed.). Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill.

- Lynch, M. L., Hegarty, C. B., Trauntvein, N., & Plucker, J. A. (2018). Summer camp as a force for 21st century learning: Exploring divergent thinking and activity selection in a residential camp setting. *Journal of Youth Development*, 13(1-2), 286-305. doi:10.5195/jyd.2018.544
- McCole, D., Jacobs, J., Lindley, B., & McAvoy, L. (2012). The relationship between seasonal employee retention and sense of community: The case of summer camp employment. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 30(2).
- McCrae, R. R. (1987). Creativity, divergent thinking, and openness to experience. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 52(6), 1258.
- Paris, L. (2008). *Children's nature: The rise of the American summer camp*. New York University Press.
- Parke, M. R., Seo, M. G., & Sherf, E. N. (2015). Regulating and facilitating: The role of emotional intelligence in maintaining and using positive affect for creativity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100(3), 917.
- Piaget, J. (1977). The role of action in the development of thinking. *In Knowledge and Development* (pp. 17-42). Springer, Boston, MA.
- Plucker, J. A., Beghetto, R. A., & Dow, G. T. (2004). Why isn't creativity more important to educational psychologists? Potentials, pitfalls, and future directions in creativity research. *Educational psychologist*, 39(2), 83-96.
- Plucker, J. A., & Makel, M.C. (2010). Assessment of creativity. *The Cambridge handbook of creativity*, 48-73.
- Quay, J., & Seaman, J. (2013). John Dewey and education outdoors: Making sense of the 'educational situation' through more than a century of progressive reforms. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Ramsing, R., & Sibthorp, J. (2008). The Role of Autonomy Support in Summer Camp Programs: Preparing Youth for Productive Behaviors. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 26(2).
- Riney-Kehrberg, P. (2014). *The nature of childhood: An environmental history of growing up in America since 1865*. University of Kansas Press.
- Runco, M. A. (2007). *Creativity- Theories and themes: Research, development, and practice*. Boston, MA: Elsevier Academic Press.
- Russ, S. W. (1998). Play, creativity, and adaptive functioning: Implications for play interventions. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 27(4), 469-480.

- Russ, S. W., & Wallace, C. E. (2013). Pretend play and creative processes. *American Journal of Play*, 6(1), 136.
- Russ, S. W., & American Psychological Association. (2014). Pretend play in childhood: Foundation of adult creativity (pp. 45-62). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist*, 55(1), 68.
- Sheets, Ann, (2013). Nurture Creativity at Camp. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/news-publications/blogs/camp-connection/nurture-creativity-camp>
- Sheldon, K. M., Williams, G. C., & Joiner, T. (2003). Self-determination theory in the clinic: Motivating physical and mental health. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Simonton, D. K. (2000). Creativity: Cognitive, personal, developmental, and social aspects. *American psychologist*, 55(1), 151.
- Sinha, C. (1999). Situated Selves: Learning to be a Learner. In J. Bliss, R. Stiljo, & P. Light (Eds.), *Learning sites: social and technological resources for learning* (pp. 32-46). Pergamon: Oxford.
- Smith, M. B. (2006). 'The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper and the Nature of Summer Camp. *Environmental History*, 11(1), 70-101.
- Sternberg, R. J., & Lubart, T. I. (1999). The concept of creativity: Prospects and paradigms. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Handbook of creativity* (pp. 3–15). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Torrance, E. P., Ball, O. E., & Safer, H. T. (1966). Torrance tests of creative thinking. Scholastic Testing Service.
- Van Slyck, A. A. (2006). A manufactured wilderness: Summer camps and the shaping of American youth, 1890-1960. U of Minnesota Press.
- Vinal, W. G. (1935). The value of nature leadership in camp as training for the teaching of elementary science. *Science Education*, 19(1), 16-19.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1962) *Thought and Language*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1990). Imagination and creativity in childhood. *Soviet psychology*, 28(1), 84-96.

Ward, C. E. (1935). *Organized camping and progressive education*. Printed by Cullom & Ghertner co.

Zhang, X., & Bartol, K.M. (2010). Linking empowering leadership and employee creativity. The influence of psychological empowerment, intrinsic motivation, and creative process engagement. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(1), 107-128.

Article II

Autonomy, competence, and relatedness among residential summer camp counselors: Using Basic Needs Theory to understand the relationship between need fulfillment and counselor willingness to return

Executive Summary

In the United States, summer camps hire around 1.5 million staff for a variety of roles (ACA Compensation and Benefits Report, 2016). Camps typically employ a handful of year-round staff and therefore must rely on seasonal employees to operate most of their summer programs. Hiring and retaining seasonal camp staff continues to be a top issue among camp directors (ACA, 2017, 2011). Over the past 40 years, there has been a significant decrease in the percentage of teens working in the summer labor force. In 1978 there was an all-time high of 71.8% of teens working in the summer labor force, and in 2017 that number was 43.2% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017).

In a recent American Camp Association (ACA) survey, training and recruitment of qualified seasonal staff was the number two (of seven) emerging issues among camp professionals, and 65% of camps reported having trouble retaining staff due to competing internships (ACA, 2017). Low staff retention is problematic because recruitment and training of new employees is expensive and consumes precious time and organizational resources. In order to address retention issues, camp administrators need to understand staff motivation. Understanding motivation may help administrators support the basic needs of staff (DeGraaf, 1996; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Using Self Determination Theory (SDT) as a framework, this study investigated how the fulfillment (or lack of fulfillment) of basic needs while working at camp, and camp experience variables, influence intentions to return to work.

Data was collected at one traditional rural co-ed residential summer camp in New Hampshire. A total of 113 staff (Mean age = 20.5, SD=2.07) participated in the study. The Basic Need Satisfaction Scale is a family of scales that addresses need satisfaction in general, as well as in specific domains (Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, Soenens, & Lens, 2010). The Work Basic Needs Satisfaction Scale (W-BNS) was administered to understand the fulfillment of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The W-BNS consists of 21 items on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “Not at all true (1)” to “Very true (7)”. Example items include: “There are not many people at work that I am close to” (sense of relatedness) and “I am free to express my ideas and opinions on the job” (sense of autonomy).

A quasi-experimental design was used for the current study. Baseline responses (i.e. pre-test) for W-BNS items (autonomy, relatedness, and competence), dosage (weeks worked), camper years, counselor years, and plan to return to work at camp were compared to post-test responses using independent sample t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA). Multiple regression analysis was used to develop the process and final model to understand the predictors for the dependent variable of staff retention (willingness to return the following summer).

It was hypothesized that basic need predictors and variables associated with camp experience would have varying degrees of impact on staff willingness to return to camp (Regression process Model I). Camp experience predictors included number of years working at camp, amount of camper years, and dosage. Dosage was not a significant predictor. Number of years working at camp negatively related to staff retention ($\beta=-.402$) and camper years positively predicted retention ($\beta=.282$). Relatedness (not autonomy or competence) was the most salient SDT predictor of staff retention ($\beta=.288$). Camp experience predictors of dosage, camper year, and staff years did not relate to measures of W-BNS but only directly to retention. Results

indicate that camp experience and W-BNS are separate predictors of a staff member's choice to return the next year. This study expands upon a model for understanding overall need fulfillment and motivation (Browne & D'Eloia, 2016). Due to its significance, camp directors should cater training and culture on the fulfillment of relatedness while also being aware of differences between camp experiences. Relatedness focuses on warmth, care, and respect, which could aid staff during the unstable and exploratory stage of emerging adulthood (Niemic & Ryan, 2009).

Keywords: *Basic needs, camp counselors, pre-post, retention*

Introduction

In the United States, summer camps hire around 1.5 million staff for a variety of roles (ACA Compensation and Benefits Report, 2016). Camps typically employ a handful of year-round staff and rely predominantly on seasonal employees to operate their summer programs. A majority of seasonal staff are emerging adults, ages 18-25 (Arnett, 2000). As they experience this developmental stage of life, staff face identity exploration, seeking out possibilities, and direction (Arnett, 2000). As these emerging adults mature, retaining them as camp employees becomes increasingly difficult. In fact, hiring and retaining this demographic continues to be a top issue among camp directors (ACA, 2017, 2011). Over the past 40 years, there has been a significant decrease in the percentage of teens working in the summer labor force. In 1978 there was an all-time high of 71.8% of teens working in the summer labor force, and in 2017 that number was 43.2% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). This decrease is due in part to young workers pursuing opportunities such as internships, instead of a traditional summer job (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). Aside from competition with internships and other work opportunities, low staff retention may be due in part to busy camp directors primarily focusing on camper and parent, rather than staff basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness). The fulfillment of a basic need moves someone toward health and well-being but, if not satisfied, contributes to disengagement and apathy (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

A recent American Camp Association (ACA) survey indicated that training and recruitment of qualified seasonal staff was one of the top two emerging issues among camp professionals, and 65% of camps reported having trouble retaining staff due to competing internships (ACA, 2017). Low staff retention is problematic because recruitment and training of new employees is expensive and consumes precious time and organizational resources. To

address retention issues, camp administrators need to understand camp counselor motivation throughout the summer. Understanding motivation may help administrators support the basic needs of staff (DeGraaf, 1996; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Additionally, camp work experiences such as burnout may play a role in decreased motivation, emotional exhaustion, and lack of engagement, which has been linked to the demographic variables of age and experience level (Browne & D'Eloia, 2016; Ko, Lunsky, Hensel, & Dewa, 2012; Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Due to the short summer season, emotional exhaustion is a significant factor for motivation among camp staff (Ko et. al, 2012). Few studies have investigated the day-to-day motivation and need fulfillment of staff and how it relates to willingness to return (Browne & D'Eloia, 2016; Garst, Franz, Baughman, Smith, & Peters, 2009; Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007). Camp directors may need to consider nuanced factors, such as staff motivation and need fulfillment, which may have a significant impact on willingness to return (DeGraaf, 1997; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Self Determination Theory (SDT) explains overall motivation and need fulfillment in relation to a person's willingness to be engaged and self-regulate positive behavior (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Motivation is described as an "energizing state" and explains certain proactive or disengaged behaviors related to human needs (Niv, Joel, & Dayan, 2006; Dickinson & Balleine, 2002). A mini theory of SDT, Basic Needs Theory (BNT), posits that the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are innate and universal and through their fulfillment help support feelings of intrinsic motivation, proactive behavior, and engagement, rather than being passive or distant (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). BNT was used as a theoretical framework because it explains the necessary components of basic need fulfillment and motivation. BNT

asserts that humans have innate psychological necessities required for psychological and physical health, social wellness, and energized behavior (Vansteenkiste, et al).

In short, people who feel competent and supported feel they have choice and autonomy and are therefore more engaged and proactive in their environment (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). People who feel connected or cared for feel related and self-determined in their choices and work and behaviors appear to come from within rather than being controlled (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008; Williams, Freedman, & Deci, 1998). If one or two of the basic needs is not fulfilled then psychological health and well-being will suffer (Deci & Ryan, 2000). One solution for understanding motivation and staff retention is for camp directors to focus on the fulfillment of these basic psychological needs. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to empirically investigate staff basic need fulfillment and their impact on retention while also accounting for other factors of the camp experience like number of years working at the camp.

Review of the literature

Camp staff are "...a central piece of a camp's identity, projecting, and protecting, the feel, personality, and the reputation of the camp" (Gregg & Hansen-Stamp, 2015). Counselors are entrusted to act as 'in loco parentis' (in place of the parent) for the duration of the camper's stay and responsibilities include teaching activities, mental and physical camper care, and resolving social conflicts. The position of camp counselor is also a common first job for many young adults and provides opportunities for risk management training, personal growth, interpersonal skills, and decision making (Bialeschki, Henderson, & Dahowski, 1998).

Camp staff typically fall within the developmental stage of emerging adulthood (18-25 years old) in which identity development is a key factor (Arnett, 2000). Emerging adults have specific needs related to identity which include: exploration of possibilities, sense of belonging,

experimentation (Arnett, 2000). Camp can be a powerful developmental context for this demographic because it promotes personal growth and self-confidence (McCole et al., 2012). Due to the intimate work setting, camp provides a strong communal bond between staff members who must live, eat, and work together for extended periods of time as well as a venue for sense of belonging, identity formation, increased self-confidence, and problem solving (Bialeschki, Henderson, & Dahowski, 1998; Garst, et al., 2009). Additionally, emerging adults are moving towards independence and greater experiences of responsibility which relates to the SDT concept of autonomy and choice.

As a work setting, summer camp provides opportunities for staff to develop resilience, identity and interpersonal relationships, future work choices, and creates a ‘home away from home’ (Duerden, Witt, Garst, Bialeschki, Schwarzlose, Norton, 2014; Ferrari & McNeely, 2007). In spite of the heavy responsibilities placed on the predominantly seasonal staff, as well as low staff retention rates, relatively little research has been dedicated to understanding basic need fulfillment in relation to why a camp counselor is willing to return the following summer (Digby & Ferrari, 2007; Gillard, Witt, & Watts, 2010; Roark, Ellis, Ellis, & Gillard, 2010).

Self Determination Theory

People who feel connected or cared for feel related in their choices and work, and behaviors appear to come internally rather than being controlled externally (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008; Williams, Freedman, & Deci, 1998). Furthermore, psychological health, well-being, and motivation will suffer if basic needs are not met (Deci & Ryan, 2000). A sub-theory of SDT, Basic Needs Theory (BNT), was used as a framework to explain camp counselor basic need fulfillment in relation to willingness to return. BNT posits that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are innate and universal needs, and through their fulfillment, people have supportive

feelings of intrinsic motivation, proactive behavior, and engagement, rather than being passive or distant (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Ryan & Deci (2002) explain the basic psychological needs as:

- Autonomy: Psychological ownership and choice (feeling freedom and independence)
- Competence: Effectiveness in individual pursuits (feeling capable and needed)
- Relatedness: Concerns for others and reciprocal care (feeling warmth and care)

Workplace conditions

People are embedded in cultural norms, economic structures, and workplace settings that span beyond individual perception, and impact behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2012; Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Gagne & Deci, 2005; Broeck, Vansteenkiste, Witte, Soenens, Lens, 2010). Quality of social contexts vary and can either help or hinder motivation and predictions of psychological well-being, emotional experience, and satisfaction (Deci & Ryan 2012; Deci & Ryan 2000).

People in every work setting have innate psychological needs that must be met in order to obtain fulfillment, satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness must be continuously satisfied to achieve optimal health and well-being of employees. Workplaces vary in the degree to which managers either support perceptions of autonomy and freedom, versus control, restrict, or micro-manage behavior (Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992; Gagne & Deci, 2005).

Organizations that intentionally support the needs of employees produce intrinsically motivated staff who internalize the goals of the organization and thus customers are more satisfied (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Gagne & Deci, 2005). Supportive workplaces are settings in which employees can make choices (instead of being controlled), managers provide a meaningful rationale for doing a task, and an acknowledgement that employees may not find the

tasks always enjoyable (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Unlike most work venues, residential camp provides a context for young adults to live, work, and collaborate in one setting. Working at camp influences future life goals, career choice, and an affinity for certain work industries (Garst, Baughman, Whittington, & Gagnon, 2015; Kahn, 1990). Camp is also unlike typical work venues because many staff, who attended camp as a youth, have stronger motivation to return as an employee (DeGraff & Glover, 2003). The connection between camper and staff suggests a level of autonomy, competence, and relatedness unlike other work venues in which there may be lower degrees of personal connection.

Work settings that do not support the needs of employees may create a context in which staff lack motivation, have poor psychological health, and do not perform at an optimal level (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). Optimal functioning is best enacted when creativity, flexibility, sense of purpose, co-worker relatedness, positive supervisor relations, are considered as important for task performance and behavior (Kasser, Davey, Ryan, 1992; Shalley, Zhou, Oldham, 2004; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). These feelings may change from week to week depending on the work context and whether an employee is engaged which is why it is essential for managers to create supportive contexts for workers (Bakker & Bal, 2010).

Social contexts can either reinforce or discourage the basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Environments which support these basic needs help participants develop a sense of purpose, meaning, and belonging, because they have more perceived choice, freedom, and control of their daily activities (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Hill & Sibthorp, 2006; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). However, autonomous settings are not simply "do whatever you want" but must have structures in place that are not too restrictive in order to allow for a sense of freedom (Amabile, 1997; Amabile & Gitomer, 1984). Residential camp provides a setting in

which these basic needs can be met for both camper and staff if proper instructional style and programmatic delivery is enacted (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). This study proposes that summer camp is similar to what Deci & Ryan (2002) describe as an ‘autonomy supportive’ setting, in which conditions are present that elicit choice, freedom, and support which influence a staff members choice to return the following year. However, few studies address how the basic psychological needs relate to a staff members willingness to return the following year.

Research questions

1. How are camp counselor basic psychological needs related to willingness to return?
2. Do camp experience variables such as years as a camper, years working, dosage predict willingness to return?

Methodology

Setting and participants

Data was collected at one traditional rural co-ed residential summer camp in Northeast USA. This camp was of interest because it offers traditional activities such as swimming, archery, arts and crafts and encourages staff to create new activities. Staff are required to take part in a week-long training prior to campers arriving. The camp season is eight weeks long, broken up into four two-week sessions. The camp hires staff as camp counselors but also for a variety of other roles such as management, kitchen crew, and maintenance. Camp counselors, with varying years of experience, were the main demographic for the current study. A total of 114 counselors (Mean age = 20.5, SD=2.07, Table 1) participated in the study. Participants included 36% female and 62% males who were primarily enrolled in college (70%).

Table 1 Descriptive statistics

| Variable | % or M (SD) | N |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-----|
| Age (years) | M=20.5 (2.07) | 114 |
| 19-20 | 39.5% | 45 |
| 21-22 | 31.6% | 36 |
| 23-24 | 21.9% | 25 |
| 25-28 | 6.1% | 7 |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 36.0% | 41 |
| Female | 62.3% | 71 |
| Other | 1.8% | 2 |
| Schooling | | |
| High school | 1.8% | 2 |
| College | 70.2% | 80 |
| Other* | 25.4% | 29 |
| Years as camper | M= 5.36 (SD= 3.69) | 114 |
| 0 | 28.1% | 32 |
| 1-5 | 11.5% | 13 |
| 6-8 | 37.7% | 43 |
| 9-11 | 22.8% | 26 |
| Years as staff | M= 2.46 (1.62) | 114 |
| Dosage (in weeks) | M= 3.61 (1.16) | 114 |
| Nationality | | |
| International** | 17.6% | 20 |
| Domestic | 82.4% | 94 |
| I plan to work at camp next summer | M=5.26 (1.8) | 114 |

*Includes: college graduate, gap year, did not attend college

**Countries of international staff include: Australia, England, Germany, Mexico, Poland, Wales

Data Collection

Participating staff completed one survey at the end of the week-long training, but before the arrival of the campers, and then again at the end of their summer employment. Consent was obtained via the camp director in an email to staff members before their arrival at camp. Surveys were administered in the camp dining hall using paper and pencil and each survey took around 15 minutes to complete. The pre-test, during staff training, was matched to the post test for each staff member and then de-identified to provide anonymity. Staff provided demographic

information pertaining to their age, number of employee/camper years, and questions related to their status as an enrolled college student (e.g., year in college, major, Table 1).

Data Analysis

A quasi-experimental design was used for the current study. Baseline responses (i.e. pre-test) for W-BNS items (autonomy, relatedness, and competence), dosage (number of weeks worked), camper years, counselor years, and plan to return to work at camp were compared to post-test responses using independent sample t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA). Multiple regression analysis was used to develop the process and final model to understand the predictors for the dependent variable of staff retention (willingness to return the following summer). Descriptive and correlational data was reported and analyzed using SPSS Version 24.0 (IBM, Corp., 2013). To help mitigate internal validity concerns all participants were administered the instrument by the researcher using the same protocols. To provide consistency, the pre and post-test were administered in the same location around the same time of day.

Instrumentation

The Basic Need Satisfaction Scale is a family of scales that addresses need satisfaction in general, as well as need satisfaction in specific domains. For this study the Work Basic Needs Satisfaction Scale (W-BNS) was administered to understand staff perceptions and fulfillment of the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The W-BNS consists of 21 items on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from Not at all true (1) to Very true (7). Example items include: There are not many people at work that I am close to (sense of relatedness), I am free to express my ideas and opinions on the job (sense of autonomy), and People I know tell me I am good at what I do (sense of competence).

The scale has evolved since its first use as a 15-item scale in Kasser, Davey, and Ryan (1992) study on motivation and employee supervisor discrepancies. The scale has been primarily used in various work contexts including factories and companies (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993). Interestingly, this scale has shown a strong relationship between degree of satisfaction of the relatedness need and the security of attachment in relationships while also considering the constructs of autonomy and competence (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000).

The Work Basic Needs scale provides well developed construct validity, factor structure, and internal consistency over time (Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993). A reliability analysis was performed for Work Basic Need satisfaction scale to test for internal consistency. A Cronbach's alpha score was recorded for each sub-domain as well as the recalculated alpha scores if each sub-item was removed. Each sub-domain for W-BNS received acceptable Cronbach's alpha scores, with the lowest being competence ($\alpha = .69$) but was still considered to be an acceptable value in social survey statistics. The next lowest sub-domain was autonomy ($\alpha = 0.71$), which is considered a moderate value. The remaining sub-domain of relatedness had a high Cronbach Alpha score ($\alpha = .80$).

Results

To address research question 1, pertaining to psychological needs and staff willingness to return, Pearson Correlations and paired t-tests were performed (Table X). The pre and post tests indicated that autonomy stayed roughly the same whereas competence significantly decreased, and relatedness significantly increased (Table X). Pearson's bivariate correlations were performed based on BNT and camp experience variables and willingness to return (Table X). To

address strength of the predictor variables on willingness to return, regression analysis was used to create a process and final model for the predictors of camp experiences and BNT constructs.

Table 2 Pearson Correlations Among BNT variables and Willingness to return (n=114)

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. Autonomy | - | .567** | .620** | .132 |
| 2. Competence | .567** | - | .627** | .202* |
| 3. Relatedness | .620** | .627** | - | .271** |
| 4. Willingness to return | .132 | .202* | .271** | - |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 Pearson Correlations Among Camp Experience variables and Willingness to return (n=114)

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--------------------------|--------|-------|---------|---------|
| 1. Camper years | - | -.088 | .421** | .163 |
| 2. Dosage (weeks worked) | -.088 | - | -.037 | .003 |
| 3. Employee years | .421** | -.037 | - | -.254** |
| 4. Willingness to return | .163 | .003 | -.254** | - |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 Pre-Post and SDT Construct

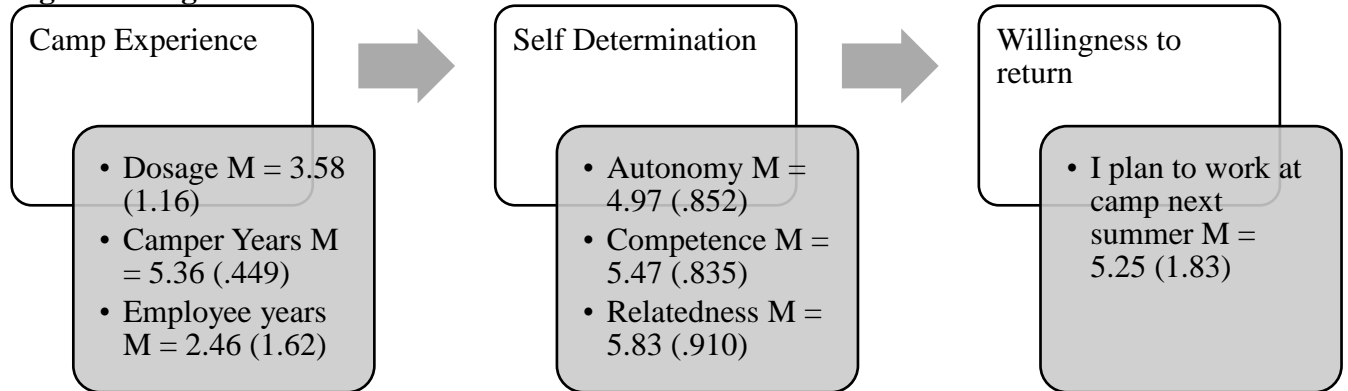
| SDT Construct | n | Mean (SD) | Pre (SD) | Post (SD) | T | Significance |
|---------------|-----|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------|--------------|
| Autonomy | 114 | 4.97 (.852) | 4.95 (.694) | 4.96 (.851) | .143 | .887 |
| Relatedness | 114 | 5.83 (.910) | 5.62 (.551) | 5.82 (.910) | 2.42 | .017 |
| Competence | 114 | 5.47 (.835) | 5.79 (.683) | 5.46 (.834) | -4.23 | .000 |

Note. 1= *Not at all true*, 4= *Somewhat True*, 7= *Very true*

Based on prior literature, it was hypothesized that autonomy, competence, and relatedness and variables associated with camp experiences would have varying degrees of impact on staff willingness to return to camp (Figure 1, regression process model). Camp experience predictors included number of years working at camp, amount of camper years, and

dosage. Dosage was not a significant predictor, however number of years working at camp negatively related to staff retention ($\beta=-.402$) and camper years positively predicted retention ($\beta=.282$).

Figure 1: Regression Process Model



Note. Process model includes camp experience and BNT constructs as the main predictors of counselor willingness to return.

In the final model, relatedness (not autonomy or competence) was the most salient BNT predictor on counselor willingness to return ($\beta=.288$, Table 5, Final Regression Model). Camp experience predictors of camper year, and staff years did not relate to measures of BNT but only directly to willingness to return. These results indicate that camp experience and BNT are separate and distinct predictors of willingness to return.

Table 5 Final Regression Model (n= 114)

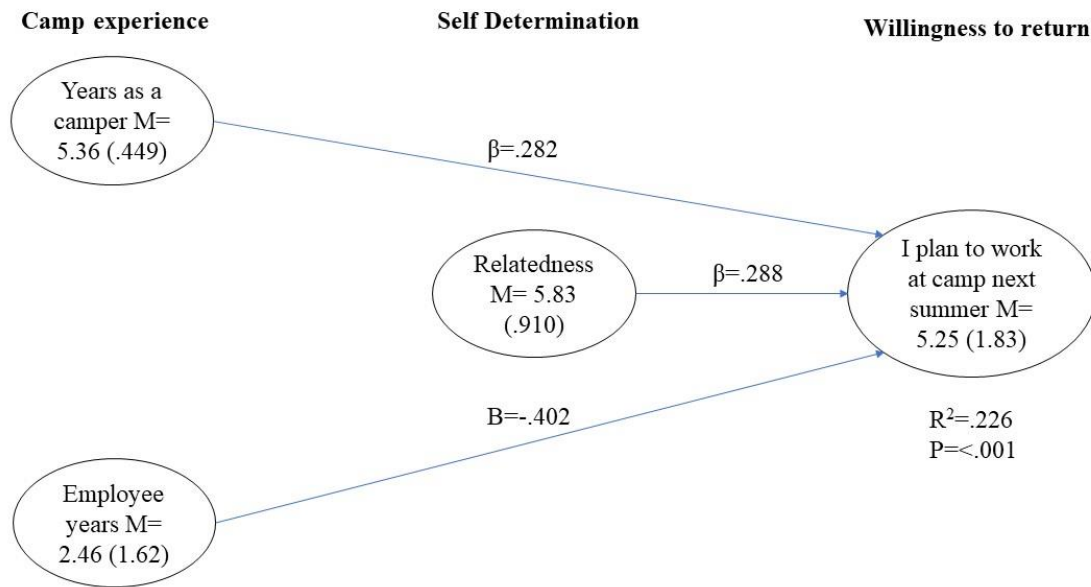
| Model | Predictor | B | R squared | Significance |
|-------|----------------|-------|-----------|--------------|
| 1 | Relatedness | .288 | .226 | .001 |
| | Employee years | -.402 | | .000 |
| | Camper years | .282 | | .003 |
| 2 | Relatedness | .304 | .155 | .001 |
| | Employee years | -.292 | | .001 |
| 3 | Relatedness | .267 | .072 | .004 |

*** $p < .001$. Only significant variables were used in this model

Note. Predictor variables: autonomy, competence, and dosage (weeks) were not significant

Note. Dependent variable: willingness to return to work the following year

Figure 2: Final Regression Model



Note. In the final model BNT predictors of autonomy and competence were not significant predictor of willingness to return.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to empirically investigate basic need fulfillment and camp experience variables and their impact on counselor’s willingness to return. The current study found that aside from camp experience variables, relatedness was the most significant BNT predictor on a counselor’s decision to return the following summer. Other notable findings include that sense of competence decreased and autonomy stayed roughly the same. Camp experience predictors including dosage (number of weeks worked) was not a significant factor. However, camper years positively impacted decision to return, whereas staff years significantly negatively predicted willingness to return. The interpretation of these results are discussed in the ensuing sections.

Management implications

When managers understand the needs of employees and take their perspective, the employee feels supported, satisfied, and motivated (Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004). The most effective leaders, who support autonomy, relatedness, and competence directly impact employee performance, satisfaction, and well-being (Baard & Aridas, 2001; Baard et al., 2004). Results from the current study indicate that camp experience and W-BNS variables are distinct and separate predictors of a staff member's willingness to return the next year. Due to its significance, camp directors should cater training and culture on the fulfillment of relatedness, autonomy, and competence. At the same time, directors should pay special attention to returning staff who may not be as challenged, or their needs may change.

Relatedness support

When a person feels a sense of relatedness in their workplace they are intrinsically motivated and have a degree of adjustment and performance (Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004). Summer camp staff with a higher perceived sense of communal involvement, practically understood in the form of sense of belonging and support for knowledge relates to a higher willingness to return (McCole et al., 2012). Relatedness focuses on warmth, care, and respect, which could aid staff during the unstable and exploratory stage of emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). *Warmth*: Administrators should understand that staff make mistakes and create intentional mechanisms for support. This could be enacted through implementation of appropriate mentorship programs between younger and older staff which could aid in feelings of connection and relatedness. *Care*: Prior studies assert that counselors who show high levels of resiliency have less emotional exhaustion and burnout (Wahl-Alexander, Richards, & Washburn, 2017). However, all counselors need regular time for self-

maintenance, breaks, and signs of approval. This may be enacted by incorporating logical breaks throughout the day or providing personalized perks and incentives. Less experienced staff may have different needs in terms of approval and self-care. *Respect*: Restraining judgement and meeting people as if they are on the same level. Training should incorporate methods of deeper understanding and connection between staff; beyond ice breakers and ‘get to know you games’.

Autonomy support

BNT suggests that contexts which provide choice, are well organized, and responsive help to support autonomy (Vansteenkiste, et al). To support autonomy, camp directors must provide choice, meaningful activities, and acknowledgment of feelings (Niemic & Ryan, 2009). Autonomy supportive settings provide people with clear expectations, and most importantly quality interactions (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008; Williams, Gagne, Ryan, & Deci, 2002). Autonomy is not just 'do whatever you want' but the ability to feel a sense of freedom within your job and to achieve a sense of mastery within realistic constraint. In other words, training should be intentional and have a clear purpose which moves beyond only learning technical skills or behavior management strategies. In this sense, camp directors should focus training on learning beyond the confines of a camp environment and develop skills which are meaningful throughout the year. Camp directors could achieve autonomy support through providing counselors with opportunities for professional development outside of camp (i.e. funding to attend regional and national conferences).

Competence support

Surprisingly, competence significantly decreased among counselors from beginning to end of employment. This decrease could be due in part to staff training not matching the lived experience and demands of the work required to be a camp counselor. Camps should focus

workshops and training to better support feelings of competence throughout the summer. Competence support could come in the form of trainings between sessions, intentional pairing of younger staff with mentors, and providing on-going feedback related to performance. Creating a mentor-mentee model which matches counselors would provide added challenge and incentive for counselors to get to know one another on a different level.

Additionally, counselors may benefit from the challenge of teaching new activities each session to avoid monotony and feelings of burnout. For example, archery instructor heads often teach the same lesson plan every day throughout the summer. Allowing the archery head to teach another activity would break up the mundane schedule and at the same time challenge the counselor to learn a new activity. Strategies for enhancing competence also include providing effectance-relevant feedback and appropriately challenging tasks (Niemic & Ryan, 2009). In other words, staff need opportunities to explore their work environment in relation to their own prior experiences and confidence in teaching certain activities. If staff are always teaching one prescribed activity, their motivation for teaching may dwindle. A work setting, which builds competence allows for flexibility and choice in teaching and general responsibilities.

Limitations and areas for future research

There were several limitations to the study. First, the study was delimited to the developmental stage of emerging adulthood. The narrow age range, combined with small sample size, did not allow for an examination of interactions with age. Second, the camp drew staff from a limited geographic region (mostly New England), and most of the camp counselors were college students. A more diverse sample, including additional geographic locations, age ranges, and educational backgrounds may enhance the generalizability of this study. Third, the study used primarily quantitative techniques to answer the research questions. Incorporating qualitative

methods, such as interviews or focus groups with counselors, could provide additional depth on the concepts of relatedness, competences, and autonomy, and could identify specific themes or traditions in the camp work setting to help further explain BNT.

Per Niemec & Ryan, to develop relatedness, camps should focus on warmth, care, and respect of staff (2009). Furthermore, differences may exist among first year and more experienced staff in how these needs are perceived (by the counselor) and met (by the organization). Future studies should replicate the current study using both quantitative and qualitative methods and analysis to further identify why competence and autonomy were not strong predictors on willingness to return. Similar to prior studies, camps should focus on building an 'autonomy supportive' work setting for staff which places less emphasis on competition and structure, and more emphasis on choice, freedom, and camper centered activities (Hill & Sibthorp, 2006; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). Camp experience predictors varied in their impact on willingness to return. Future researcher should further investigate the reason(s) behind the relatively large decrease in staff retention between the first year and second year. Additionally, research should address differences between staff who were campers and those who were not in relation to differences in basic need fulfillment.

Conclusion

This study builds upon prior studies in camp settings which used components of SDT to understand ways of supporting autonomy and sense of community (Hill & Sibthorp, 2006; McCole et. al., 2012; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). Additionally, this research expands upon a model for understanding overall workplace engagement and motivation among emerging adults (Arnett, 2000; Browne & D'Eloia, 2016). The final model indicates differences between variables associated with camp experience and SDT and their impact on retention. This study

adds to the literature pertaining to what emerging adults need in a camp work setting and their willingness to return. Additionally, this research will provide valuable information for camp directors and practitioners as they look to address the rapidly diminishing pool of qualified seasonal staff.

REFERENCES

- American Camp Association (2017). Camp emerging issues survey. Retrieved March 29th, 2018 from: https://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/resource_library/2017-Emerging-Issues-Report.pdf
- American Camp Association (2017). Camp Sites, Facilities, and Programs Report. Retrieved April 1st, 2018 from: <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/research/camp-sites-facilities-and-programs-report>
- American Camp Association (2016). Compensation, Benefits, and Professional Development Report. Retrieved September 26th, 2018 from: <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/research/compensation-benefits-and-professional-development-report>
- American Camp Association (2011). Camp emerging issues survey. Retrieved from: [http://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/images/research/improve/EI%20all%20results%20\(wozip\)11.pdf](http://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/images/research/improve/EI%20all%20results%20(wozip)11.pdf).
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55, 469 – 480.
- Baard, P. P., & Aridas, C. (2001). Motivating your church: How any leader can ignite intrinsic motivation and growth. New York, NY: Crossroad.
- Baard, P. P., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2004). Intrinsic need satisfaction: A motivational basis of performance and well-being in two work settings. *Journal of applied social psychology*, 34(10), 2045-2068.
- Bakker, A. B., & Bal, M. P. (2010). Weekly work engagement and performance: A study among starting teachers. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83(1), 189-206.
- Ball, A., & Ball, B. (2009). *Basic camp management: An introduction to camp administration* (7th ed.). Monterey, CA: Coaches Choice
- Bialeschki, M. D., Henderson, K. A., & Dahowski, K. (1998, July/August). Camp gives staff a world of good. *Camping Magazine*, 71(4), 27–31.
- Browne, L. P., & D'Eloia, M. (2016). Toward a Model of Camp Staff Engagement: A Look at University-Based Day Camps. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 34(4).
- Deci, E. L., Ryan, R. M., Gagné, M., Leone, D. R., Usunov, J., & Kornazheva, B. P. (2001). Need satisfaction, motivation, and well-being in the work organizations of a former eastern bloc country: A cross-cultural study of self-determination. *Personality and social psychology bulletin*, 27(8), 930-942.

- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227-268.
- DeGraaf, D. (1996). The key to unlocking your staff's potential. *Camping Magazine*, 69(1), 19.
- DeGraaf, D., & Glover, J. (2003). Long-term impacts of working at an organized camp for seasonal staff. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 21(1), 1-20.
- Dickinson, A. and Balleine, B. (2002). The role of learning in the operation of motivational systems. In *Learning, Motivation and Emotion* (Vol. 3) (Gallistel, C.R., ed.), pp. 497–533, Wiley
- Digby, J. K., & Ferrari, T. M. (2007). Camp counseling and the development and transfer of workforce skills: The perspective of Ohio 4-H camp counselor alumni. *Journal of Youth Development*, 2(2), 103-122
- Duerden, M., Garst, B. A., & Bialeschki, D. (2014). The benefits of camp employment: More than just fun and games. *Parks & Recreation*.
- Duerden, M. D., Witt, P., Garst, B., Bialeschki, D., Schwarzlose, T., & Norton, K. (2014). The impact of camp employment on the workforce development of emerging adults. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 32(1), 26–44.
- Ferrari, T. M., & McNeely, N. N. (2007). Positive youth development: What’s camp counseling got to do with it? Findings from a study of Ohio’s 4-H camp counselors. *Journal of Extension*, 45(2). Retrieved from: <http://www.joe.org/joe/2007april/rb7p.shtml>
- Garst, B. A., Franz, N. K., Baughman, S., Smith, C., & Peters, B. (2009). “Growing without limitations”: Transformation among young adult camp staff. *Journal of Youth Development*, 4(1), 24–36.
- Gregg, R.C., Hansen-Stamp, C (2015). Staffing Issues for a Quality Camp Program. Retrieved from: <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/articles/staffing-issues-quality-camp-program>
- Henderson, K. A. (2018). Camp Research: What? So What? What’s Next?. *Journal of Youth Development*, 13(1-2), 316-326. doi:10.5195/jyd.2018.607
- Hill, E., & Sibthorp, J. (2006). Autonomy support at diabetes camp: a self-determination theory approach to therapeutic recreation. *Therapeutic recreation journal*, 40(2), 107.
- Ilardi, B. C., Leone, D., Kasser, T., & Ryan, R. M. (1993). Employee and supervisor ratings of motivation: Main effects and discrepancies associated with job satisfaction and adjustment in a factory setting. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 23(21), 1789-1805.

- Kasser, T., Davey, J., & Ryan, R. M. (1992). Motivation and employee-supervisor discrepancies in a psychiatric vocational rehabilitation setting. *Rehabilitation Psychology, 37*(3), 175.
- Ko, C., Lunskey, Y., Hensel, J., & Dewa, C. S. (2012). Burnout among summer camp staff supporting people with intellectual disability and aggression. *Intellectual and developmental disabilities, 50*(6), 479-485.
- La Guardia, J.G., Ryan, R.M., Couchman, C.E., & Deci, E.L. (2000). Within-person variation in security of attachment: A self-determination theory perspective on attachment, need fulfillment, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79*, 367-384.
- Maslach, C., Jackson, S. E., & Leiter, M. P. (1996). *The Maslach Burnout Inventory manual* (3rd ed.). Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press
- McCole, D., Jacobs, J., Lindley, B., & McAvoy, L. (2012). The relationship between seasonal employee retention and sense of community: The case of summer camp employment. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 30*(2).
- Niemiec, C. P., & Ryan, R. M. (2009). Autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the classroom: Applying self-determination theory to educational practice. *School Field, 7*(2), 133-144.
- Niv, Y., Joel, D., & Dayan, P. (2006). A normative perspective on motivation. *Trends in cognitive sciences, 10*(8), 375-381.
- Ozier, L.W. (2018). Learning landscapes: The educational spectrum from camps to classrooms. *Journal of Youth Development, 13*(1-2), 4-13. doi:10.5195/jyd.2018.612
- Ramsing, R., & Sibthorp, J. (2008). The Role of Autonomy Support in Summer Camp Programs: Preparing Youth for Productive Behaviors. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration, 26*(2).
- Roark, M. F., Ellis, G. D., Ellis, M. S., & Gillard, A. (2010). Measuring relationships between camp staff and camper developmental outcomes: An application of Self-Determination Theory. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 28*(3).
- Roark, M. F. (2005). Counselor motivations for choosing summer resident camp employment. Paper presented at the American Camp Association's Research Symposium, Orlando, FL.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist, 55*(1), 68.
- Thurber, C. A., Scanlin, M. M., Scheuler, L., & Henderson, K. A. (2007). Youth development outcomes of the camp experience: Evidence for multidimensional growth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 36*(3), 241-254.

- Wahl-Alexander, Z., Richards, K.A., & Washburn, N. (2017). Changes in perceived burnout among camp staff across the summer camp season. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 35(2).
- Williams, G.C., Gagne, M., Ryan, R.M., & Deci, E.L. (2002). Facilitating autonomous motivation for smoking cessation. *Health Psychology*, 21, 40-50.
- Williams, G.C., Freedman, Z.R., & Deci, E.L. (1998). Supporting autonomy to motivate glucose control in patients with diabetes. *Diabetes Care*, 21, 1644-1651.
- United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017). Summer employment: A snapshot of teen workers. Retrieved June 2018 from:
<https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2017/article/pdf/youth-summer-employment.pdf>
- Van den Broeck, A., Vansteenkiste, M., De Witte, H., Soenens, B., & Lens, W. (2010). Capturing autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work: Construction and initial validation of the Work-related Basic Need Satisfaction scale. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83(4), 981-1002.
- Vansteenkiste, M., & Ryan, R.M. (2013). On psychological growth and vulnerability: Basic psychological need satisfaction and need frustration as a unifying principle. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, 23(3), 263-280.
- Vansteenkiste, M., Niemiec, C. P., & Soenens, B. (2010). The development of the five mini-theories of self-determination theory: An historical overview, emerging trends, and future directions. In T. C. Urdan & S. A. Karabenick (Eds.), *Advances in motivation and achievement: The decade ahead: Theoretical perspectives on motivation and achievement* (pp. 105-165). London, England: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Williams, G.C., Freedman, Z.R., & Deci, E.L. (1998). Supporting autonomy to motivate glucose control in patients with diabetes. *Diabetes Care*, 21, 1644-1651.

Article III

Camp organizational support for creativity among new and returning camp counselors

Abstract

Creativity supports interest, imagination, empowerment, intrinsic motivation, and overall engagement. Satisfied employees, who are supported in their creativity, have increased performance, motivation, and commitment. Residential summer camp is a demanding 24-hour job in which camp counselors use creativity via planning, teaching activities, resolving camper conflict, and living within close-proximity to coworkers. The main purpose of this study was to explore organizational creativity among first year and returning staff at the beginning and end of one season of employment. Camp counselors ($n=114$) participated in the current study utilizing quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative analysis compared pre-test data on creativity to post-test items using paired samples t-tests. First year and returning counselors indicated significant decreases in perceptions of the camp organization valuing creativity. Counselors' self-identification as a creative employee significantly decreased among returning employees. Qualitative data analysis produced 46 independent responses and three content areas related to inter/intra personal (intimidation, inexperience), structural (time/money), and camp traditions (status quo) barriers to creativity among counselors. Summer camps should prioritize support for creativity as a vital component needed for a positive work culture. Ultimately, a camp mission, culture, and training, which support creativity, may empower counselors (of various experience level) to create new ideas, camp traditions, and activities.

Keywords: *Camp counselor, creativity, multi-method, organizational behavior, professional development*

Introduction

In the United States, summer camp is an 18-billion-dollar industry which hires around 1.5 million staff every year (ACA Business Operations Report, 2015). Camp counselors are typically within the developmental stage of emerging adulthood (18-25 years old) in which identity formation, exploration of possibilities, and instability are key factors (Arnett, 2000). Prior research asserts that well-organized summer camps provide camp counselors with a supportive work environment which includes opportunities for professional development, life-long friendships, sense of community, identity exploration, and college and workplace readiness (DeGraaf & Glover, 2003; Duerden, Witt, Garst, Bialeschki, Schwarzlose, & Norton, 2014; McCole, Jacobs, Lindley, & McAvoy, 2012; Whittington & Garst, 2018; Wilson & Sibthorp, 2018).

Creativity has been extensively researched in school and work contexts, however, no known studies empirically address workplace creativity among new and returning camp counselors in a residential summer camp (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996; Goor & Rapoport, 1977; Lynch, Hegarty, Trauntvein, & Plucker, 2018). Understanding and implementing creativity for counselors in a camp work context may help support novel training and professional development throughout the summer. This study explored differences in creativity among first year and returning staff at the beginning and end of a single camp summer season.

Theoretical Foundation

According to Plucker, Beghetto, and Dow (2004), creativity is "...the interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context" (p. 90). For something to

be considered creative, it needs to be both new (novel) and have appropriate use (utility) within a social context. In summer camp, creativity may be enacted via new theme days or traditions, which are organically formed through social negotiation and an awareness of camper needs.

Within the United States, creativity has been on the decline since the 1990's, based on hundreds of thousands of creative thinking assessments (Kim, 2011). This decline could be attributed to numerous factors including the amount of time spent in front of screens, dwindling recess and imaginative free play in school, or low self-efficacy and confidence regarding creative identity and ability (Kim, 2011; Runco, 2015; Russ, 2014; Russ, Robins, & Christiano, 1999; Tierney & Farmer, 2011). The decline could also be to what has been described as Nature Deficit Disorder in which psychological and behavioral ailments emerge because of children spending less time outside (Louv, 2008). The decline in creativity is troubling because innovation and critical thinking are essential skills for future employee and organizational success (Plucker, Kaufman, Beghetto, 2015) Employees feeling as if they have a voice [within an organization] is linked to creative performance, job satisfaction, and empowerment (Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Zhou & George, 2001).

Summer camp provides a challenging outdoor work setting for camp counselors to explore different possibilities and methods of instruction. In one study, immersion in natural settings was shown to enhance creativity after an outward-bound experience in which technology was not readily available (Atchley, Strayer, & Atchley, 2012). Furthermore, at work creativity is enhanced when people feel a sense of volition and freedom in their tasks, instead of being controlled by supervisors, rigid structures, or co-worker judgement (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Broeck, Vansteenkiste, Witte, Soenens, Lens, 2010). Ultimately, identity, organizational value, and expectations are major influencers for support of creativity in the workplace.

Creative Role Identity (RICE). Bandura asserted that self-efficacy views influence motivation and the desire and confidence to engage in specific behaviors; one of which is creativity (1997). Creative self-efficacy may influence employee creative identity based on prior experience (Tierney & Farmer, 2011; 2002). If an employee has positive past experiences related to creativity, they may have increased creative self-efficacy and feel confident in pursuing future creative work. The concept of self-efficacy situates and explains the culture of camp as being co-constructed based on job experience, self-efficacy beliefs, and a dynamic social interplay between first year and return staff expectations of creativity (Bandura, 1997; Tierney & Farmer, 2011; 2002). Furthermore, creativity is often mischaracterized as a special skill held by a few ‘lone geniuses’ instead of a universal skill in which social context and positive affect is necessary (Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005; Montuori & Purser, 1995). However, prior research suggests that whether creativity is domain general or domain specific it can be enhanced using appropriate context and facilitation (Plucker & Beghetto, 2004). Employee creativity can be supported (or hindered) based largely on workplace expectations and understanding creative self-efficacy. In other words, how employees self-identify as being creative (or not) is influenced by experience (new and returning) and current organizational support (Farmer, Tierney, & Kung-Mcintyre, 2003; Grube & Piliavin, 2000).

Organizational Valuing Creativity (POVC). Companies that allow for a degree of flexibility and an allowance for negotiation (of tasks) for employees tend to have intrinsically motivated and creative workers (Amabile, 1997; Broeck, et. al., 2010). Therefore, staff training, managerial expectations, and culture all play a role in how an employee perceives their work valuing creativity. Within summer camp, the process of employee creativity can be understood using reflexivity. Reflexivity explains the camp work setting as a continuous social loop where

employee actions are largely based on social cues and past experiences, which emerge in their environment and vice versa (Soros, 2013). Reflexivity explains how camp counselors may adjust actions according to social cues and expectations from the environment (Soros, 2013). In other words, if workers are expected to act creative (either by management, coworkers, or social norms) they will likely adjust to fit that norm, whereas if they are not expected to be creative they may not consider creativity as an important component of their job. Using reflexivity, creativity becomes largely a constructed (rather than discovered or subjective) social framework, which is either supported or inhibited based on various factors including culture, management, and coworker expectations.

Coworker Expectation for Creativity (PCEC). Residential camp counselors are constantly within close-proximity to one another. Therefore, job role expectations are largely formed through the culture, communication, and interactions among employees. Expectations regarding how to behave in various social settings are a major source of an individual's self-concept (Tierney & Farmer, 2011). Coworkers can be a major source for encouraging or diminishing creativity through communication, feedback, and social cues (Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993). Therefore, camp counselor expectations in relation to creativity may be influenced based on coworker expectations.

Autonomy Supportive Camp

Workplaces are social settings and consist of values, belief systems, attitudes, and managerial expectations for how employees should appropriately function within their respective context (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983). In this regard, competent and effective employees act as contributing members of a work 'community' in which trust, communication, creativity, and engagement contribute to the overall work 'climate' (Ekvall,

1996). Within work contexts, job expectations can often vary between new and more experienced employees. More experienced employees have a sense for how things already operate whereas new employees are still trying to adjust to the job role expectations (Bolman & Deal, 1991). Creativity is one such organizational expectation and contributes to overall work climate, job satisfaction, and the production of new ideas (Amabile, et. al., 1996; Ko & Butler, 2007; Zhou & George, 2001). Furthermore, creativity is important because it is an essential tool for critical thinking, innovation, openness to experience, and risk taking (Amabile; 1997; McCrae, 1987).

High performing companies understand and respond to the needs of employees of varying experience (camp counselors) as well as different customer needs (campers, camp parents) and appropriately challenge workers to do a superior job (Bolman & Deal, 1991). Furthermore, prior research links the fulfillment (or lack thereof) of the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness with creativity of employees (Eisenberger & Shanock, 2003; Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Ryan & Deci, 2000). This is enacted when managers intentionally support self-efficacy beliefs regarding creativity and therefore better support staff who internalize the goals and mission of an organization (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Tierney & Farmer, 2011; Tierney & Farmer, 2002). In other words, workplaces that are supportive of creativity allow employees to make choices (autonomy), managers provide meaningful rationale for tasks (competence), and systems are in place which build self-efficacy, confidence, and community (relatedness) (Amabile, Gagne & Deci, 2005; Bolman & Deal, 1991; Tierney & Farmer, 2002).

Optimal functioning among employees is best enacted when creativity, flexibility, sense of purpose, co-worker relatedness, positive supervisor relations, are considered as important for

task performance and behavior (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992; Shalley, Zhou, & Oldham, 2004). Positive and supportive contexts enhance creativity and the production of new ideas (Amabile, et al., 2005). If camps wish to maintain a creative environment, increasing the level of support for autonomy and instructional choice for counselors may be critical to produce new ideas and to stay relevant (Amabile et al., 2005; Hill & Sibthorp, 2006).

Features to consider in an autonomy supportive summer camp include: instructional style used by leaders, which can be either camper, or leader centered, characteristics of program areas which may include differences in type of activity such as sports, games, athletics, and the arts, gender differences, and overall cultural attitudes of the specific camp (competitive or noncompetitive) (Henderson 2007; Hill & Sibthorp, 2006; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008; Sheldon, William, & Joiner, 2003). Oftentimes, camps may become ‘stuck’ in adhering to rigid traditions and the status quo which may hinder creativity and idea generation. Ultimately, camps which are more flexible in their approach to training (i.e. counselor choice and activity offerings), may be more effective in supporting and delivering creative programming.

The Present Study

The purpose of the current study was to explore differences in workplace creativity among first year and returning camp counselors from the beginning to end of one season of camp employment.

- 1) What are the differences in workplace creativity among first year and return staff from beginning to end of employment?
- 2) What are the differences in workplace creativity between first year and returning camp counselors at the beginning and end of employment?

3) What are barriers to workplace creativity among camp counselors?

Methodology

Research Procedures

Data were collected at one traditional rural co-ed residential summer camp in the U.S. northeast. All participants completed a paper and pencil survey in the camp dining hall two times throughout the summer. Each survey took around 20 minutes to complete and the first author administered both surveys in person. The first iteration occurred on the final day of staff training, as this is characteristically when counselors know what to expect from the job. The second iteration was conducted on the last day of camp, after campers had left. To remain consistent, the same instructions and survey items were used for both the pre and post-test. All participants were 18 years or older and informed consent was successfully received from every participant prior to commencement of data collection. All participants were paid employees at the camp. Additionally, the first author's institutional review board approved this research study prior to data collection.

Quantitative Analysis

A multi-method design using quantitative and qualitative analysis was used for the current study. All quantitative data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0. Baseline (i.e. pre-test) items pertaining to creativity were compared to post-test items using paired samples t-tests. Three instruments were adopted based on prior organizational behavior and job satisfaction studies related to creativity (Tierney & Farmer, 2011; 2002). The instruments included: role identity as a creative employee scale (RICE) (Callero, 1985; Callero, Howard, & Piliavin, 1987), the sufficiency of originality subscale of the Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory, which measured coworker expectations for creativity (PCEC) (Kirton, 1976), and the perception of organizational value of creativity

scale (POVC) (Amabile et al., 1996). The scales were slightly modified by the researchers based on the features of summer camp. For example, the word ‘work’ was replaced with the word ‘camp’ on all items. Furthermore, the word ‘employee’ was replaced with ‘camp counselor’.

A reliability analysis was performed for the modified creativity instruments to test for internal consistency. A Cronbach’s alpha score was recorded for each sub-domain as well as the recalculated alpha scores if each sub-item was removed. Each sub-domain for creativity received acceptable Cronbach’s alpha scores, with the lowest being Perceived Coworker Expectation for Creativity (PCEC) ($\alpha \leq .66$) but was still considered to be an acceptable value in survey statistics. The next lowest sub-domain was Role Identity as a Creative Employee (RICE) ($\alpha \leq 0.70$), which is considered a moderate value. The remaining sub-domain of Perceived Organizational Valuing Creativity (POVC) had a high Cronbach Alpha score ($\alpha \leq .83$).

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data originated from one open ended question at the end of the survey: ‘Is there anything that keeps you from being as creative as you would like at camp __X__? Please explain.’ Data from the open-ended question were systematically coded using the open coding method and content analysis in which specific statements were analyzed and broken down into categories (Creswell, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). To establish trustworthiness, the researchers discussed and agreed upon the codes and each code was then placed into relevant overarching categories (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). This process was conducted to develop a total of 3 general categories and 4 related sub-categories which represented 46 independent counselor statements within the data. To help explain barriers to creativity, counselor comments were categorized into the categories of inter/intra personal barriers (20.5%), structural barriers (11.5%), and camp traditions barriers (8.5%) (Table 5). Perceived barriers to

creativity were one focus of the current study. Therefore, negative affect responses were consolidated and categorized to develop succinct categories and sub-categories which represented general sentiment pertaining to barriers to creativity at work (Grbich, 2013).

Results

Quantitative Results

A total of 114 staff (Mean age = 20.5, SD=2.07) participated in both the pre-test (last day of staff training) and post-test (end of employment). There were 44 counselors in their first year of employment and 69 who indicated they were returning staff members. The sample comprised of 71 (62%) counselors who identified themselves as female, and 41 (36%) who identified themselves as male, and 2 (1.8%) that identified themselves as other (Table 1). The sample consisted of mainly college students (70%) who majored in a variety of subjects (e.g., engineering, elementary education, business). Approximately 25% of counselors listed ‘other’ under education to indicate graduate school or another type of employment in the offseason. All participants were seasonal employees at the 8-week sleepaway summer camp. All counselors also attended a mandatory seven-day training orientation prior to the beginning of camp, followed by working at summer camp for a varied amount of time.

Table 1 Sample Characteristics

| Variable | % or M (SD) | N |
|-------------|---------------|-----|
| Age (years) | M=20.5 (2.07) | 114 |
| 19-20 | 39.5% | 45 |
| 21-22 | 31.6% | 36 |
| 23-24 | 21.9% | 25 |
| 25-28 | 6.1% | 7 |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 36.0% | 41 |
| Female | 62.3% | 71 |
| Other | 1.8% | 2 |
| Schooling | | |
| High school | 1.8% | 2 |
| College | 70.2% | 80 |
| Other* | 25.4% | 29 |

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----|
| Years as camper | M= 5.36 (SD= 3.69) | 114 |
| 0 | 28.1% | 32 |
| 1-5 | 11.5% | 13 |
| 6-8 | 37.7% | 43 |
| 9-11 | 22.8% | 26 |
| Years as staff | M= 2.46 (1.62) | 114 |

*Includes: college graduate, gap year, did not attend college

Paired t-tests were used to assess the difference in workplace creativity among first year and return staff from beginning to end of employment (Research Question 1). Based on experience (first year/return), statistically significant decreases from pre to post were found among in POVC among both first year ($p < .001$, $t = 4.50$) and returning staff ($p < .001$, $t = 3.79$) cohorts (Table 2). RICE was relatively stable among first year staff ($p = .807$, $t = .245$). However, RICE significantly decreased among returning staff members ($p < .05$, $t = 2.27$) (Table 2). PCEC stayed roughly the same and had no significant changes from pre to post.

Table 2: Changes in creativity across camp season by counselor type

| First year counselors ($n = 45$) | Pre (SD) | Post (SD) | <i>T</i> | <i>P</i> |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| Perceived Coworker Expectation | 3.95 (.759) | 4.07 (.607) | -1.243 | .221 |
| Perceived Organizational Value | 5.33 (.755) | 4.94 (.843) | 4.50 | <.001*** |
| Role Identity Creative Employee | 4.31 (1.17) | 4.28 (.876) | .246 | .807 |
| Return counselors ($n = 69$) | | | | |
| Perceived Coworker Expectation | 4.31 (.671) | 4.28 (.870) | .354 | .724 |
| Perceived Organizational Value | 5.36 (.556) | 5.05 (.737) | 3.79 | <.001*** |
| Role Identity Creative Employee | 4.53 (.895) | 4.29 (1.16) | 2.27 | .026* |

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

To assess the difference between first year and returning staff members creativity two one-way ANOVAs were performed—one for the pre-test (Table 4) and again for the post test (Table 3) with experience level (first year and return) as the grouping factor. Pre-test results indicated statistically significant differences between first year and return staff in Perceived Coworker Expectation for Creativity (PCEC) ($p < .05$). In other words, at the beginning of camp,

returning staff members had significantly higher expectations for creativity than new staff members. Post test results had no statistically significant differences between first year and return staff members pertaining to creativity (Table 4). Post test results indicated increased expectation for creativity among first year staff, while return staff creative expectations stayed remained similar to the beginning of camp.

Table 3: Pre-difference first year (n=44) and return counselors (n=69) creativity

| | First year (SD) | Return (SD) | F | Sig |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|------|-------|
| Perceived Coworker Expectation | 3.95 (.766) | 4.31 (.671) | 7.06 | .009* |
| Perceived Organizational Value | 5.33 (.764) | 5.36 (.556) | .046 | .831 |
| Role Identity Creative Employee | 4.29 (1.18) | 4.53 (.895) | 1.40 | .239 |

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Table 4: Post-difference first year (n=44) and return counselor (n=69) creativity

| | First year (SD) | Return (SD) | F | Sig |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|------|------|
| Perceived Coworker Expectation | 4.06 (.608) | 4.28 (.870) | 2.23 | .138 |
| Perceived Organizational Value | 4.93 (.852) | 5.05 (.737) | .589 | .444 |
| Role Identity Creative Employee | 4.27 (.884) | 4.29 (1.16) | .011 | .915 |

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Note: No significant differences

Qualitative Results

The quantitative analyses demonstrated differences between first year and returning camp counselors expectations for creativity at the beginning of camp. However, at the end of camp there were no significant differences between new and returning counselors. Due to the lack of significant difference on post scores, the qualitative data were aggregated to understand themes related to barriers to creativity among all counselors. The open-ended question was worded to understand barriers to creativity within the camp environment. Therefore, subsequent qualitative analyses analyzed and combined responses pertaining to barriers to creativity (n=46). There were no systematic differences among non-respondents to the open-ended question. Counselor comments were categorized into the themes of inter/intra personal barriers (20.5%), structural

barriers (11.5%), and camp traditions barriers (8.5%) (Table 5). Overall, counselors noted specific creativity barriers as, “Not having enough time [for creativity]”, “Personal ability to be creative”, and “Fear of failure[to be creative]”, counselors also noted larger scale camp community barriers such as, “Stigmas or judgement at camp which prevent revolutionary ideas” another counselor noted, “Sometimes camp talks a lot about letting quiet people talk and I’m very loud so I feel shut down”. Barriers associated with creativity and their interpretation, are discussed in further detail in the ensuing sections.

Table 5: Frequency of categories of barriers and creativity (n=46)

| Theme | N | Valid % |
|---|-----------|----------------|
| <i>Inter/Intra Personal Barriers</i> | 24 | 20.5 |
| Intimidation | 14 | 12.0 |
| Inexperience | 10 | 8.5 |
| <i>Structural Barriers</i> | 13 | 11.5 |
| Safety/Guidelines | 6 | 5.0 |
| Time/Money | 7 | 6.0 |
| <i>Camp Traditions Barriers</i> | 9 | 8.0 |
| <i>No Barriers</i> | 10 | 11.2 |

Note: Pre and post frequencies were combined

Note: Percentages may not equal 100 because of rounding

The theme *inter/intra personal barriers* (n=24) to creativity received the most comments among camp counselors. The inter/intra personal barriers contained the sub-themes of intimidation (n=14) and inexperience (n=10). Respondents frequently suggested that the numerous inter/intra personal barriers to creativity involved “stigma” in their work environment related to feeling intimidated and inexperienced when introducing new or creative ideas. For example, one respondent stated: “Slight judgement [from coworkers], slight lack of support, apprehension due to fear of failure”. Several respondents suggested that “judgement,” “inexperience,” and “strong views” associated with new and creative ideas were substantial barriers to having a “voice” related to creativity. For example, one respondent explained, “There are many strong personalities at camp and [it’s] sometimes difficult to not have your own ideas

overshadowed by theirs.” Counselors also noted impacts associated with inexperience and personal skill stemming from “fear” and “personal ability” related to creativity. One respondent observed, “Fear of failure [related to creativity]” and “The only thing that keeps me from being creative is my own personal ability.”

The theme of *structural barriers* (n=13) to creativity received a moderate amount of responses among counselors. Structural barriers included two sub-themes pertaining to safety and guidelines (n = 6) and time and money (n=7). Safety and guideline barrier sentiment were highlighted as creativity being inhibited due to “excessive camper safety”, “strictness”, and “sticking to a schedule.” Another counselor wrote, “Often as [camp] counselors, even in our free time, we cannot go down to certain activity areas due to supervision.” Counselors also indicated barriers to creativity associated with time and money in the form of “not enough planning time” and “availability of material.” One counselor wrote, “Camp restrictions include budget and time constraints as well as a need to offer diverse programming. For example: Not everyone can teach canoeing.” Counselors desire to teach a variety of activities, instead of only “canoeing”, may relate to organizational structure and how programmatic logistics influence creativity. Another counselor wrote, “There are so many things to plan during staff orientation that I don't put as much creative thought into something as I would like.”

The theme of *camp traditions barriers* (n= 9) received the least amount of responses associated with barriers among camp counselors. Camp traditions barriers related to overall personal beliefs surrounding how camp oftentimes gets stuck in monotonous activities and procedures which inhibit creativity. For instance, counselors noted traditions barriers of creativity related to adhering to the “status quo” or “doing things because they have always been done that way.” For example, one participant explained, “Often, people here prefer that we do

things the way they've always been done. If we want to do things our own way, it's not always encouraged." Another counselor noted, "...staff members being too comfortable with the way things are, even though they can be improved upon." Another participant noted, "Upper leaders being intimidating, and traditions can often hide creativity". One counselor noted barriers based on traditional values and expectations: "I want to teach singing and acting but boys don't want to take those activities, so they don't run." Camp traditions barriers may relate to camps catering their programming only to activities which 'sell' rather than providing counselors with options to create new activities.

Qualitative results indicated distinct groups related to inter/intra personal, structural, and camp traditions barriers to creativity. Some counselors also provided positive comments ($n=10$) worth noting which included sentiment that camp allows for "expression", "opportunities", and is very "helpful" in relation to creativity. One counselor wrote, "Here at camp, creativity is the name of the game. Sometimes, the more wild and crazy the idea, the better it will run." Another counselor felt strong support for creativity and wrote, "I feel like my most creative self here at camp." While the majority of comments ($n= 46$) related to barriers to creativity at camp, positive comments ($n=10$) indicated creativity can provide a supportive impact for summer camp.

Discussion

Creativity is a vital skill for a positive and productive workplace (Plucker et. al., 2015). How a person views their own confidence in creativity is due in part to self-efficacy beliefs, expectations, and prior experience (Bandura, 1977). The current study found significant decreases among both first year and returning counselors related to perceptions of organizational valuing creativity from the start to end of seasonal employment. This decrease may be due in part to counselors having less organizational support or resources for creativity throughout the

summer. Overall decreases in organizational valuing creativity could also relate to staff burnout and exhaustion throughout the summer in which counselors (and administration) are maintaining the status quo or underperforming, instead of producing new and fresh ideas (Bailey, Kang, Kuiper, 2012; Wahl-Alexander, Richards, & Washburn, 2017). Counselors may be continuously teaching the same activity and therefore not have opportunities to develop different skill sets.

Another notable finding were significant pre-test differences from first year and returning counselors related to co-worker's expectation for creativity. Interestingly, the pre-test differences related to expectations for creativity among first and returning staff diminished on the post test, which indicated first year staff had 'caught up' and were expected to be as creative as returning staff members by the end of the summer. This difference may be due to higher expectations at the beginning of the summer for creativity among returning staff as opposed to new staff who are not yet familiar with the culture or expectations in camp. Returning staff may want to emulate and set an example from prior summers and continue traditions and expectations related to creativity. The process of social continuation of creative expectations may be explained using the concept of reflexivity, in which social processes and personal actions are due in part by the environment as well as the individual (Soros, 2013).

While the perceived differences of organizational and coworker creativity among first year and returning camp counselors were notable, the deeper discussion revolved around the nuanced interpretation of the perceived barriers to creativity. Counselors identified barriers to creativity in their residential summer camp work context due various camp traditions, inter/intra personal, and structural factors. Camp counselors identified barriers to creativity which were personal and individualized as well as associated with larger traditions and camp culture. Responses from the open-ended comments indicated creativity may be inhibited from an

individual level due to creative self-efficacy and personal confidence as well as a structural and larger camp culture level due in part to expectations, rules, guidelines, time, traditions, and intimidation.

To maximize ideas and positive culture, it is important to understand camp counselor's expectations and perceptions of creativity. Returning and new counselors' views should be considered when incorporating new ideas and expectations related to creativity. Camp counselors have a reputation as being creative and fun, however, this stereotype falls into the myth of creativity as being individualized, instead of as a largely social and communal process (Plucker, Beghetto, Dow, 2004). Creativity myths should be addressed by camp directors in hopes of shifting the narrative of camp counselor expectations and getting input from less vocal or new counselors. Ultimately, to support creativity, summer camps should strive to achieve what Deci and Ryan (2002; 2012) describe as an 'autonomy supportive' setting, in which work conditions are present that support choice, freedom (within limits), and competence among counselors.

The results of this study indicate that more experienced staff had significantly higher expectations for creativity at the beginning of the summer. The data suggests the new staff 'caught up' in their expectation for creativity perhaps due in part to their familiarity with the work involved with being a camp counselor. While increased expectation of creativity among new staff is beneficial, managers need to consider how to better support returning staff in their expectations for creativity. Differences in expectations for creativity among counselors may relate to the description of organizational work 'climate' for creativity or intentionality of programmatic features (Garst, & Gagnon, 2016; Ekvall, 1996). In addition, supporting creativity is linked to empowerment and motivation at work, which may help support timid or less experienced counselors (Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

Oftentimes, summer camps focus professional development and training on more technical skills such as lifeguard techniques, emergency procedures, and behavioral management strategies. However, camp directors should consider creativity as an additional skill needed and incorporated using in-service training throughout the summer. While technical skills are important, camps should use training time to focus on less tangible skill development; such as creativity. In service creativity workshops could focus on idea generation, activity theming, and ways to support choice and autonomy for counselors (Ellis, Jiang, Lacanienta, & Carroll, 2019). Ultimately, a value for creativity throughout the summer may aid in positioning camp as being autonomy supportive, which would may support staff through choice and a sense of freedom in the workplace.

Limitations

There were several limitations for the current study. First, the relatively small sample for provided a narrow age range which did not allow for examination of differences with age or gender. Second, the camp drew staff from a limited geographic region (mostly New England), as well as mostly college students (70%). A more diverse sample, which includes more geographic locations, age, and educational background may enhance the generalizability. A study with matched qualitative responses, instead of aggregated responses, may further explain individual barriers from the beginning to end of employment associated with creativity. The non-responses on the open-ended question could be mitigated with a larger sample size or added participation incentive. Additionally, understanding specific support for traditions in camp would help further explain barriers to creativity. For example, instead of saying ‘traditions’ as a barrier to creativity counselors should be more specific.

Conclusion

The results of this multi-method study suggested that first year and returning camp counselors expectations and support for creativity varied at the beginning and end of employment. Camp counselors identified differences in organizational and coworker expectation for creativity as well as general work barriers to creativity. These findings suggest that camp counselors view creativity in their work context from both a subjective and holistic view which related to prior experience and general camp organization. Creativity continues to be a vital skill in the 21st century and therefore it is important to understand how creativity is perceived among counselors of various experience level. To better support creativity and new ideas, counselors should be involved in training, programming, and overall culture of camp. The need for creativity and critical thinking will be essential for the continued success of camp counselors. Previous research suggests supporting creativity helps with job satisfaction, production of new ideas, intrinsic motivation, and having a voice within an organization, but to date, no studies have specifically assessed this phenomenon amongst camp counselors. This study adds to previous organizational behavior and summer camp literature and highlighted the importance of considering expectations for creativity when planning, developing, supporting, and managing counselors.

REFERENCES

- American Camp Association (2015). *Business and Operations report*. Retrieved from: <https://www.acacamps.org/press-room/aca-facts-trends>
- American Camp Association. (2013). *Camp compensation and benefits report*. Retrieved from: <https://www.acacamps.org/press-room/aca-facts-trends>
- Amabile, T. M. (1997). Motivating creativity in organizations: On doing what you love and loving what you do. *California management review*, 40(1), 39-58.
- Amabile, T. M., Barsade, S. G., Mueller, J. S., & Staw, B. M. (2005). Affect and creativity at work. *Administrative science quarterly*, 50(3), 367-403.
- Amabile, T. M., Conti, R., Coon, H., Lazenby, J., & Herron, M. (1996). Assessing the work environment for creativity. *Academy of management journal*, 39(5), 1154-1184.
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American psychologist*, 55(5), 469.
- Atchley, R. A., Strayer, D. L., & Atchley, P. (2012). Creativity in the wild: Improving creative reasoning through immersion in natural settings. *PloS one*, 7(12), e51474.
- Bailey, A. W., Kang, H., & Kuiper, K. (2012). Personal, environmental, and social predictors of camp staff burnout. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership*, 4(3), 157-171. <https://doi.org/10.7768/1948-5123.1134>
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W.H. Freeman and Company, New York.
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1991). *Reframing organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Broeck, A., Vansteenkiste, M., Witte, H., Soenens, B., & Lens, W. (2010). Capturing autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work: Construction and initial validation of the Work-related Basic Need Satisfaction scale. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83(4), 981-1002.
- Callero, P. L. (1985). Role-identity salience. *Social psychology quarterly*, 203-215.
- Callero, P. L., Howard, J. A., & Piliavin, J. A. (1987). Helping behavior as role behavior: Disclosing social structure and history in the analysis of prosocial action. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 247-256.
- Creswell, J. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2012). Motivation, personality, and development within embedded social contexts: An overview of self-determination theory. In R. M. Ryan (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of human motivation* (pp. 85-107). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195399820.001.0001
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2002). Overview of self-determination theory: An organismic dialectical perspective. *Handbook of self-determination research*, 3-33.
- DeGraaf, D., & Glover, J. (2003). Long-Term Impacts of Working at an Organized Camp for Seasonal Staff. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 21(1).
- Duerden, M. D., Witt, P., Garst, B., Bialeschki, D., Schwarzlose, T., & Norton, K. (2014). The Impact of Camp Employment on the Workforce Development of Emerging Adults. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 32(1).
- Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual review of psychology*, 53(1), 109-132.
- Eisenberger, R., & Shanock, L. (2003). Rewards, intrinsic motivation, and creativity: A case study of conceptual and methodological isolation. *Creativity Research Journal*, 15(2-3), 121-130.
- Ekvall, G. (1996). Organizational climate for creativity and innovation. *European journal of work and organizational psychology*, 5(1), 105-123.
- Ellis, G. D., Jiang, J., Lacanienta, A., & Carroll, M. (2019). Theming, Co-Creation, and Quality of Structured Experiences at Camp. *Journal of Youth Development*, 14(1), 230-242.
- Farmer, S. M., Tierney, P., & Kung-Mcintyre, K. (2003). Employee creativity in Taiwan: An application of role identity theory. *Academy of Management Journal*, 46(5), 618-630.
- Gagné, M., & Deci, E. L. (2005). Self-determination theory and work motivation. *Journal of Organizational behavior*, 26(4), 331-362.
- Garst, B. A., & Gagnon, R. J. (2016). A Structural Model of Camp Director Practices and Outcomes: Does Intention Toward Program Outcomes Matter? *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 34(4).
- Goor, A., & Rapoport, T. (1977). Enhancing creativity in an informal educational framework. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 69(5), 636-643. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.69.5.636
- Grbich, C. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An introduction* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Grube, J. A., & Piliavin, J. A. (2000). Role identity, organizational experiences, and volunteer performance. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26(9), 1108-1119.

- Henderson, K. A. (2007). Components of camp experiences for positive youth development. *Journal of Youth Development, 1*(3), 15-26.
- Hill, E., & Sibthorp, J. (2006). Autonomy support at diabetes camp: a self-determination theory approach to therapeutic recreation. *Therapeutic recreation journal, 40*(2), 107.
- Kasser, T., Davey, J., & Ryan, R. M. (1992). Motivation and employee-supervisor discrepancies in a psychiatric vocational rehabilitation setting. *Rehabilitation Psychology, 37*(3), 175.
- Kim, K. H. (2011). The creativity crisis: The decrease in creative thinking scores on the Torrance tests of creative thinking. *Creativity Research Journal, 23*, 285-295. doi:10.1080/10400419.2011.627805.
- Kirton, M. (1976). Adaptors and innovators: A description and measure. *Journal of applied psychology, 61*(5), 622.
- Ko, S., & Butler, J. E. (2007). Creativity: A key link to entrepreneurial behavior. *Business Horizons, 50*(5), 365-372.
- Louv, R. (2008). *Last child in the woods: Saving our children from nature-deficit disorder*. Algonquin books, Chapel Hill, N.C.
- Lynch, M. L., Hegarty, C. B., Trauntvein, N., & Plucker, J. (2018). Summer camp as a force for 21st century learning: Exploring divergent thinking and activity selection in a residential camp setting. *Journal of Youth Development, 13*(1-2), 286-305. doi:10.5195/jyd.2018.544
- McCole, D., Jacobs, J., Lindley, B., & McAvoy, L. (2012). The relationship between seasonal employee retention and sense of community: The case of summer camp employment. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 30*(2).
- McCrae, R. R. (1987). Creativity, divergent thinking, and openness to experience. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 52*(6), 1258-1265. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.52.6.1258
- Montuori, A., & Purser, R. E. (1995). Deconstructing the lone genius myth: Toward a contextual view of creativity. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 35*(3), 69-112.
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16*(1), 1609406917733847.
- Oldham, G. R., & Cummings, A. (1996). Employee creativity: Personal and contextual factors at work. *Academy of management journal, 39*(3), 607-634.

- Plucker, J. A., Beghetto, R. A., & Dow, G. T. (2004). Why Isn't Creativity More Important to Educational Psychologists? Potentials, Pitfalls, and Future Directions in Creativity Research. *Educational Psychologist*, 39(2), 83-96.
- Plucker, J. A., Kaufman, J. C., & Beghetto, R. A. (2015). *What we know about creativity*. Washington, DC: Partnership for 21st Century Skills. Retrieved from <http://www.p21.org/our-work/4cs-research-series/creativity>
- Ramsing, R., & Sibthorp, J. (2008). The Role of Autonomy Support in Summer Camp Programs: Preparing Youth for Productive Behaviors. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 26, p. 61-77.
- Runco, M. A. (2015). Meta-creativity: being creative about creativity. *Creativity Research Journal*, 27(3), 295-298.
- Russ, S. W. (2014). *Pretend play in childhood: Foundation of adult creativity*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Russ, S.W., Robins, A.L., & Christiano, B.A. (1999). Pretend play: Longitudinal prediction of creativity and affect in fantasy in children. *Creativity Research Journal*, 12(2), 129-139.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist*, 55(1), 68.
- Shalley, C. E., Zhou, J., & Oldham, G. R. (2004). The effects of personal and contextual characteristics on creativity: Where should we go from here? *Journal of management*, 30(6), 933-958.
- Sheldon, K. M., Williams, G. C., & Joiner, T. (2003). *Self-determination theory in the clinic: Motivating physical and mental health*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Smith, C. A., Organ, D. W., & Near, J. P. (1983). Organizational citizenship behavior: Its nature and antecedents. *Journal of applied psychology*, 68(4), 653.
- Soros, G. (2013). Fallibility, reflexivity, and the human uncertainty principle. *Journal of Economic Methodology*, 20(4), 309-329.
- Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Tierney, P., & Farmer, S. M. (2002). Creative self-efficacy: Its potential antecedents and relationship to creative performance. *Academy of Management journal*, 45(6), 1137-1148.
- Tierney, P., & Farmer, S. M. (2011). Creative self-efficacy development and creative performance over time. *of Applied Psychology*, 96(2), 277.

- Wahl-Alexander, Z., Richards, K. A., & Washburn, N. (2017). Changes in Perceived Burnout Among Camp Staff Across the Summer Camp Season. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 35*(2).
- Whittington, A. & Garst, B. (2018). The role of camp in shaping college readiness and building a pathway to the future for camp alumni. *Journal of Youth Development, 13*(1-2), 105-125. doi:10.5195/jyd.2018.519
- Wilson, C., & Sibthorp, J. (2018). Examining the role of summer camps in developing academic and workplace readiness. *Journal of Youth Development, 13*(1-2), 83-104. doi:10.5195/jyd.2018.563
- Woodman, R. W., Sawyer, J. E., & Griffin, R. W. (1993). Toward a theory of organizational creativity. *Academy of management review, 18*(2), 293-321.
- Zhang, X., & Bartol, K. M. (2010). Linking empowering leadership and employee creativity: The influence of psychological empowerment, intrinsic motivation, and creative process engagement. *Academy of management journal, 53*(1), 107-128.
- Zhou, J., & George, J. M. (2001). When job dissatisfaction leads to creativity: Encouraging the expression of voice. *Academy of Management journal, 44*(4), 682-696

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. IRB APPROVAL LETTER AND APPLICATION

University of New Hampshire

Research Integrity Services, Service Building 51 College Road, Durham, NH 03824-3585 Fax:
603-862-3564

09-May-2017
RMP, Hewitt Hall
71 Henry Law Ave
Dover, NH 03820

IRB #: 6683

Study: Staff Perceptions of Motivation in the Workplace

Approval Date: 09-May-2017

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (IRB) has reviewed and approved the protocol for your study as Exempt as described in Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 46, Subsection 101(b). Approval is granted to conduct your study as described in your protocol.

Researchers who conduct studies involving human subjects have responsibilities as outlined in the attached document, Responsibilities of Directors of Research Studies Involving Human Subjects. (This document is also available at <http://unh.edu/research/irb-application-resources>.) Please read this document carefully before commencing your work involving human subjects.

Note: IRB approval is separate from UNH Purchasing approval of any proposed methods of paying study participants. Before making any payments to study participants, researchers should consult with their BSC or UNH Purchasing to ensure they are complying with institutional requirements. If such institutional requirements are not consistent with the confidentiality or anonymity assurances in the IRB-approved protocol and consent documents, the researcher may need to request a modification from the IRB.

Upon completion of your study, please complete the enclosed Exempt Study Final Report form and return it to this office along with a report of your findings.

If you have questions or concerns about your study or this approval, please feel free to contact Melissa McGee at 603-862-2005 or melissa.mcgee@unh.edu. Please refer to the IRB # above in all correspondence related to this study. The IRB wishes you success with your research.

For the IRB,
Julie F. Simpson Director



cc: File
Trauntvein, Nathan

IRB APPLICATION (cont.)

Section I: Introduction:

Residential summer camp provides experiences to more than 14 million youth and adults each year (ACA Camp Compensation and Benefits Report, 2013). Within the past decade, a number of research studies have reported that summer camp produced positive social outcomes for youth. These outcomes include, but are not limited to, developing friendship skills, improved positive identity, increased self-esteem, and the ability to connect with others (American Camp Association, 2005; Henderson et. al., 2007; Garst & Bruce, 2003; Dworken, 2001). Many camp studies focus primarily on youth outcomes, rather than the influence camp may have on motivations for staff members. This is problematic because more than 1.5 million young adults in the United States are employed by summer camps yet little research has focused primarily on staff outcomes (ACA Camp Compensation and Benefits Report, 2013). Camp is a very strenuous, time intensive, and complex job that does not yield a high salary for staff members. These factors create a challenging environment for staff and in other industries these features may pose problems for retention. However, getting a job as a residential counselor can be competitive, because there are limited spots and high demand. Camp staff work as in ‘loco parentis’ (in place of the parent) and need to be flexible in the ways they resolve conflict and teach activities.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posits that humans need three basic innate psychological needs of autonomy (feeling a sense of volition), competence (feeling effective), and relatedness (feeling loved and cared for) that must be satisfied in order for optimal and healthy functioning in society (Broeck, Vansteenkiste, Witte, Soenens, & Lens, 2010; Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Additionally, autonomy at work has been linked with increased creative performance (Oldham & Cummings, 1996). Having opportunities to take risks and be creative during activities may be an essential component of feeling connected with an organization or in a social setting.

Currently there are no empirical studies exploring how perceptions of staff autonomy, competence, relatedness, and creativity influence motivation for residential summer camp staff.

In order to understand staff perceptions of workplace motivation and creativity in a camp setting, further research is needed. The significance of this study may potentially report insight and best practices on how camps serve the professional needs for young adults as well as how change in employment responsibility impact perceptions of motivation. Understanding what motivates staff may have implications for: organizing professional development, staff recruitment, staff training, and creating work environments that foster creativity and autonomy.

Section II: Specific Aims:

The specific aim of this study is to understand staff motivation and perceptions of creativity in a residential camp setting over the course of a 9-week program (1 week is staff training). The objective of this study is to answer the following research questions:

Question 1: Is there a relationship between workplace motivation (autonomy, competence, relatedness), perceived creativity, staff retention?

Question 2: Is there a relationship between staff perceptions of creativity and employment conditions of activities taught?

Question 3: Do staff perceptions of workplace motivation and creativity change over time? How does change in employment duties (activity taught) relate to staff motivation and perception of creativity?

Section III: Research Protocol:

a) Setting:

This study will take place at YMCA Camp Takodah located in Richmond, New Hampshire. Camp Takodah offers four successive 2-week residential programs for boys and girls ages 8 to 15 years old. Approximately 100-125 staff members are expected to participate in this study. All staff members will be recruited by the researcher during staff training week at the beginning of camp. All staff members will be over the age of 18. As incentive, staff who complete all of the surveys, will be entered into a random drawing of gift cards valued between \$5-\$20. A total of 10 gift cards will be randomly drawn at the conclusion of the final survey.

b) Protocols:

The protocols for research involve using an in person survey which will be administered 5 times throughout the summer to consenting staff members. In order to better ensure participant comfortability in participation or non-participation, surveys will be administered by the researcher after staff meetings have been dismissed, staff members can choose to (or not) come back to take the survey. All surveys will be administered by the researcher in person using paper and pencil. The surveys will be collected and stored, and upon completion of the study participant names will be stripped from T1-T5 and labeled as Staff Member 1, Staff Member 2, etc. To further ensure the protection of participants, the demographic identifier question of race will not be included. The first administration of the survey will take place during staff week and the others during the successive 2-week sessions. Once processed, all data will be stored on a password protected UNH Box account owned by the researcher. The instruments being used are the Work Basic Needs Satisfaction Scale (Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004) and modified survey

questions that pertain to perceptions of creativity in the workplace. Sample instruments are attached.

c) Consent:

In obtaining consent, forms for staff members will be available as the first page of the survey. The consent form will state that staff members can decide not to take the survey at any time and for any reason without fear of any kind of penalty or job loss. Staff members who do not wish to participate do not have to attend this portion of the staff meeting. This was mutually agreed upon by the researcher and camp director. Copy of consent form is attached.

d) Study Personnel:

Myles Lynch, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Education, will be the primary researcher conducting all parts of this proposed research. Myles earned his bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and his master's degree in Recreation Management from the University of New Hampshire, and has been involved as a summer camp professional for over 12 years serving notably as a Camp Director for 4 years.

Dr. Nate Trauntvein is a faculty member in the UNH RMP department and will be the chair advisor for this research project. Dr. Trauntvein's support letter is attached.

Section 4: Data:

Quantitative methods utilizing a quasi-experimental approach will be used for this study. The results from all participants will be aggregated in order to explore correlations within survey responses. This information will help describe perceptions of motivation and creativity for staff members in a residential camp setting. The data will be stored on the researcher's UNH Box

account and only the researcher and Dr. Trauntvein will have access to the data. The data will be published as part of the researcher's dissertation. Presentations of the data will be included as part of the researcher's defense, as well as in potential journal publications.

Section 5: Risks:

Although very unlikely, a potential risk of this study is that some staff members may provide information that is sensitive in nature while filling out the survey. Therefore, the researcher will explain at the beginning of each survey that any staff member may refuse to answer any question and they may choose to stop participating at any time. In addition, the researcher will explain that participants may refuse to answer any question for any reason without fear of job loss or differential treatment.

Section 6: Benefits:

There will be no benefit to staff members who participate in this study other than a potential of winning a randomly drawn gift card. The findings of this study present potential benefits in understanding staff motivation and creativity in a residential camp setting. More specifically, potential findings may report insights and best practices for supporting how camp practitioners understand staff motivation and creativity. The findings from this study may provide important implications for future research in terms of understanding the dynamics between seasonal employees, changes in job characteristics, and length of employment.

REFERENCES

- American Camp Association, (2013). *Camp Compensation and Benefits Report*. Retrieved from: <http://www.acacamps.org/press-room/aca-facts-trends>
- Baard, P. P., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2004). Intrinsic Need Satisfaction: A Motivational Basis of Performance and Well-Being in Two Work Settings. *Journal of applied social psychology*, 34(10), 2045-2068.
- Broeck, A., Vansteenkiste, M., Witte, H., Soenens, B., & Lens, W. (2010). Capturing autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work: Construction and initial validation of the Work-related Basic Need Satisfaction scale. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83(4), 981-1002.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The " what " and " why " of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological inquiry*, 11(4), 227-268.
- Dworken, B. S. (2001). Research Reveals the Assets of Camp. *Camping Magazine*, 74 (5). Retrieved from: <http://www.acacamps.org/members/knowledge/participant/cm/019research>
- Garst, B.A., & Bruce, F.A. (2003). Identifying 4-H Camping Outcomes Using a Standardized Evaluation Process across Multiple 4-H Educational Centers. *Journal of Extension*, 41.
- Henderson, K. A., Whitaker, L.S., Bialeschki, M.D., Scanlin, M. M., & Thurber C. (2007). Summer Camp Experiences: Parental Perceptions of Youth Development Outcomes. *Journal of Family Issues*, 28(5), 97-101.
- Oldham, G. R., & Cummings, A. (1996). Employee creativity: Personal and contextual factors at work. *Academy of management journal*, 39(3), 607-634.

**APPENDIX B. WORK BASIC NEED SATISFACTION SCALE AND STAFF
CREATIVITY SURVEY**

Please answer each question about yourself. Print clearly.

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Please select your gender. (Circle one)

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Transgender
- d. Other: _____

How old are you? _____

Are you currently in : (Circle one) High School College Other

If you are attending college, what is your year & major? _____

What is your job title at Camp Takodah: _____

How many years have you been a paid employee for Camp Takodah? (Circle one)

- a) This is my first year
- b) 2 years
- c) 3 years
- d) 4 years
- e) 5 years
- f) 6 or more years

List all of your current certifications: _____

Were you ever a camper at Takodah? YES NO (Circle One)

What is your home country/where are you from? _____

Instructions: The following questions concern your feelings the entire time you have been at your job. Please indicate how true each of the following statement are for you given your experience on this job. Remember that your boss will never know how you responded to the questions and you may choose to not answer any question for any reason at any time.

Please use the following scale in responding to the items.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at all true somewhat true Very true

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I feel like I can make a lot of inputs to deciding how my job gets done | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2 | I really like the people I work with | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3 | I do not feel very competent when I am at work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4 | People at work tell me I am good at what I do | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5 | I feel pressured at work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6 | I get along with people at work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7 | I pretty much keep to myself when I am at work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | I am free to express my ideas and opinions on the job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9 | I consider the people I work with to be my friends | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10 | I have been able to learn interesting new skills on my job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11 | When I at work, I have to do what I am told. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12 | Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment from working. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13 | My feelings are taken into consideration at work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14 | On my job I do not get much of a chance to show how capable I am | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15 | People at work care about me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 16 | There are not many people at work that I am close to. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 17 | I feel like I can pretty much be myself at work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 18 | The people I work with do not seem to like me much. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 19 | When I am working I often do not feel very capable. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 20 | There is not much opportunity for me to decide for myself how to go about my work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 21 | People at work are pretty friendly towards me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Instructions: The following questions concern your feelings the entire time you have been at your job. Please indicate how true each of the following statement are for you given your experience on this job. Remember that your boss will never know how you responded to the questions and you may choose to not answer any question for any reason at any time.

Please use the following scale in responding to the items.

1 2 3 4 5 6
Not at all true somewhat true Very true

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22 | My coworkers think of me as a creative employee. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 23 | My coworkers think that creativity is important to me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 24 | It really wouldn't matter to my coworkers if I was not creative | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 25 | Many other employees expect me to be creative. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 26 | No one would be surprised if I was not creative | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 27 | Many employees would probably be disappointed in me if I was not creative | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 28 | Camp management is very supportive of creative work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 29 | I feel creativity is supported and encouraged. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 30 | In my job, new ideas or concepts are fostered. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 31 | Camp values creative work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 32 | I can do creative or innovative work without feeling threatened by others | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 33 | At camp, new ideas are encouraged. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 34 | I often think about being creative | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 35 | I do not have any clear concept of myself as a creative employee | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 36 | To be a creative employee is an important part of my identity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 37 | If your direct supervisor had to rate your personal creativity, do you think they would say you are creative? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Please use the following scale in responding to the items.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 No Unsure Yes

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 38 | I plan to work at Camp Takodah next summer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 39 | I am allowed to choose the activities I teach | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 40 | The activities I teach change frequently between sessions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 41 | I teach the activities that I want to teach | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 42 | At camp, I am able to create new activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 43 | Staff week helped me create new ideas for camp | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

What activities did you teach at camp this session? (Print Clearly)

1. _____ (Activity 1)
2. _____ (Activity 2)
3. _____ (Activity 3)
4. _____ (Activity 4)

Please use the following scale in responding to the items.

1 2 3 4 5 6
 No choice somewhat My choice

For each activity you taught this session (listed above), rate how much choice you had in teaching each that activity.

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 44 | Choice for activity 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 45 | Choice for activity 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 46 | Choice for activity 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 47 | Choice for activity 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Is there anything that keeps you from being as creative as you would like to be, at Camp Takodah? Please explain:

APPENDIX C. INVITATION AND CONSENT LETTERS



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Camp Takodah
Director Permission Form
55 Fitzwilliam Road
Richmond NH, 03470
Director: RYAN REED

I Ryan Reed (Director of Camp Takodah) agree to allow Myles Lynch (University of New Hampshire Researcher) to administer an assessment to campers and staff who agree to participate. Myles will come to Camp Takodah four times during the summer. Once at the beginning of the session and once at the end of the session for 25 minutes each time a total time of 50 minutes. Myles is responsible for collecting and administering all of the assessments during staff training and the first session and will only give the assessments to campers and parents who agree for their child to participate. If any child or staff member does not want to participate at any time and for any reason then this will be permitted at no loss to them in any way.

Signed: _____

Date: September 29, 2016

Contact: 603-352-0447 / ryan@cheshireymca.org

CAMP TAKODAH

55 Fitzwilliam Road
North Swanzey, NH 03431
603-352-0447
www.camptakodah.org

Informed Consent Letter

May 3rd, 2017

Dear participant,

My name is Myles Lynch and I am a graduate student pursuing my Ph.D. in Education at the University of New Hampshire. I am conducting a research study to better understand staff motivation and creativity in the workplace. I am writing to invite you to participate in this study.

You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. It is anticipated that between 100-125 staff members will participate in this study. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in 5 surveys throughout the summer. A survey will be given every two weeks beginning with staff training week, the surveys should only take around 15 minutes of your time. You will be asked to provide responses to questions that help understand perceptions of motivation and creativity in the workplace. These surveys will take place after bi-weekly staff meetings, and you can decide if you want to come back and the survey or not. You will not miss any scheduled program activities. If you complete all of the surveys you will be entered into a random drawing of 10 gift cards that range in value from \$5-\$20.

During the scheduled surveys I will be working in my roles as a researcher. While you take the survey please feel free to ask me any questions.

You will not receive any direct benefit by taking the survey. The benefit of the knowledge gained from this research are expected to be insights of how staff motivations change over time due to a number of factors. This knowledge may provide important information for the camp industry in order to evaluate staff training technique, arranging schedules, and changes in job responsibility.

The potential risks of participating in this study are anticipated to be minimal. However, I understand that some of you may provide information that is sensitive in nature while participating. Therefore, I will be explaining at the beginning of each survey that you may refuse to answer any question and that you may choose to stop participating at any time.

Participation is strictly voluntary; your refusal to participate will involve no prejudice, penalty, or loss of benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled. You may refuse to answer any question at any time and for any reason. If you do not participate in all 5 of the surveys, you will not be entered into the drawing to win a gift card.

I seek to maintain the confidentiality of all data and records associated with your participation in this research. You also should understand that I am required by law to report certain information to government and/or law enforcement officials (e.g., child abuse, threatened violence against self or others, communicable diseases). While I plan to maintain confidentiality of responses, other participants may repeat responses outside the survey setting. I will keep all data on my UNH Box account that is secure and password protected; only myself and my project advisor, Dr. Nate Trauntvein, will have access to the data.

All data will be de-identified and your name will not be used in reports about research. The results of my research will be used in reports, presentations, and potential journal publications.

If you have any questions about this research project or would like more information before, during, or after the study, you may contact me Myles Lynch at myles.lynch@unh.edu or my cell: (617) 460-6777. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact Dr. Julie Simpson in UNH Research Integrity Services at (603) 862-2003 or Julie.Simpson@unh.edu to discuss them.

Please sign below and indicate if you consent or do not consent to participate in this study.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Myles L. Lynch

Myles Lynch
Ph.D. Student
University of New Hampshire
Department of Education

Yes, I, _____ consent to participate in this research project.

No, I, _____ do not consent to participate in this research project.

Signature of staff member

Date