

JOB DISSATISFACTION AMONG THERAPEUTIC  
RECREATION SPECIALISTS

A DISSERTATION  
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## DEDICATION

The following study is dedicated to all therapeutic recreation specialists. This profession provides an extraordinary service, giving choice and returning dignity to persons in needy and sometimes desperate situations. I have been privileged to work with several excellent therapists and know others. My respect for their work and the critical role that therapeutic recreation plays in restoring healthy human beings was the impetus for this research. My hope is that this investigation will add to the body of knowledge that helps make therapeutic recreation a viable and rewarding profession.

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COMPLETED RESEARCH IN THERAPEUTIC RECREATION. THE TEXAS  
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The purpose of this study was to analyze identified factors causing job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation specialists. The study further attempted to determine whether selected demographic variables influenced the rankings of dissatisfaction factors.

Therapeutic recreation specialists from Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas and Louisiana, male ( $\underline{n}$  = 31) and female ( $\underline{n}$  = 171), completed a mailed survey. The first section of the survey requested demographic information from the subject, and asked specific questions about his or her intentions to stay in or leave the profession. The second section was a paired comparison instrument which forced each subject to identify the greatest causes of dissatisfaction by choosing between all possible pairings

from a list of 9 factors.

The study indicated that therapeutic recreation specialists experience job dissatisfaction from factors in the following ranked order: interpersonal relationships with administrators and supervisors, company policies and administration, working conditions on the job, salary, technical supervision, job security, benefits, interpersonal relationships with peers, and interpersonal relationships with subordinates. The only significant differences found using chi-square analyses were males' higher than expected ranking of job security and persons in the late career stage's lower than expected ranking of job security.

The conclusion drawn from this study is that therapeutic recreation specialists in the Southwest experience job dissatisfaction primarily due to a perceived lack of respect and credibility as professionals. This perception is one that should be addressed by university training programs, professional organizations, and program administrators in order to maintain a stable and productive workforce. Several recommendations were given for continued research in the areas of job dissatisfaction, the concept of professional credibility, and the development of key skills for therapeutic recreation professionals.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Employers in the United States are becoming increasingly aware of the critical role that a stable and productive work force plays in the success of any type of business. The current trend toward programs of continuous quality improvement has managers actively asking employees what they like and do not like about the way their job is structured and what changes could make it better (Townsend, 1990). Involving employees in creating more satisfactory jobs and work environments is no longer seen as an added benefit, but is considered critical to customer satisfaction and business success in a competitive market. Because of the comparative ease of measuring the effect of employee dissatisfaction on productivity in institutions that produce goods, historically manufacturers have more readily embraced these concepts than the service sector.

The relatively few studies of employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the human services field have focused primarily on essential jobs with high turnover rates. According to Atchison and Lefferts (1972), factors

identified in job dissatisfaction research are the ones best used to predict employee turnover. Many of the published studies in the closely related areas of occupational stress, burnout, and career change have investigated their impact on public school faculty, counselors and nurses, all three being professions frequently noted as having high annual turnover rates.

The field of therapeutic recreation is a relatively young profession, having begun to gain acceptance only after the end of World War II (Reynolds & O'Morrow, 1985). The average age of the practicing professional is also quite young (Kelly, 1974; Navar, 1981; O'Morrow & Lanz-Stewart, 1989). The paucity of empirical studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of therapeutic recreation services has been noted as a significant weakness of the profession by Bullock, McGuire, and Barch (1984), Compton (1990), and Kinney (1991). Even so, the number of studies related to personnel management in the therapeutic recreation field is considerably less than the published research on program effectiveness.

Sufficient evidence exists that longevity in this field should be a major concern to both professional organizations and training institutions. Wade-Campbell (1986) concluded from her study of burnout among therapeutic recreation specialists,

It is obvious that Therapeutic Recreation Specialists are leaving the field. This should be of paramount concern to professionals in the field, for these are tomorrow's leaders. If we do not find or generate the wherewithall within our profession to recognize and remedy this exodus of young Therapeutic Recreation Specialists, where will we go to find it? (p. 205)

#### Statement of the Problem

In response to that recommendation, this investigation was an attempt to identify the most significant factors related to job dissatisfaction for therapeutic recreation professionals in the states of Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arkansas. The problem was to compare rankings of an established list of job dissatisfaction factors according to various demographic variables and stated intention to stay in or leave the profession.

Subjects were 320 therapeutic recreation specialists from the targeted five states. All professional members of the National Therapeutic Recreation Society and the American Therapeutic Recreation Association in those states were mailed a survey form in January of 1992. The percentage of return was 73%. Although considerable descriptive data were requested in the survey, only the data applicable to the hypotheses were subjected to

statistical treatment. The list of variables included gender, age range, degree status, intention to stay in or leave the profession, and job responsibilities.

The purpose of this study was to analyze identified factors causing job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation specialists. The study further attempted to determine whether selected demographic variables influenced the rankings of dissatisfaction factors.

This investigation used a survey instrument to ascertain both demographic features of the subjects and their rankings of dissatisfaction factors. Dissatisfaction factors were ranked by means of a paired comparison instrument.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study was subject to the following limitations:

1. The extent to which subjects represented persons practicing in the therapeutic recreation field with a minimal return rate of 50% established;
2. The extent to which the selected job dissatisfaction factors accurately described the range of perceptions of the subjects;
3. The use of a mailed survey questionnaire;
4. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire;
5. The extent to which subjects were willing to

report their true feelings and beliefs.

#### Definitions and Explanations of Terms

For the purpose of clarification, the following definitions and explanations of terms were established for use throughout the study:

Burnout. A syndrome of physical and emotional exhaustion involving the development of negative self-concept, negative job attitudes, and loss of concern and feeling for clients (Maslach & Pines, 1977).

Intent to leave. Intention to leave a position was defined for this study as two positive ("Yes") responses to questions in the survey that asked if the subject had "seriously considered finding a job outside of the Therapeutic Recreation field," "actively searched for a job outside of Therapeutic Recreation," or had plans to "participate in an active job search outside of Therapeutic Recreation;" or one positive answer on one of those questions and a negative ("No") response on the question that asked if the subject "will be working in five years, (saw themselves) employed in the therapeutic recreation field."

Job dissatisfaction. Negative emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience (Locke, 1976).

Job satisfaction. Positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience (Locke, 1976).

Occupational stress. Disruptions in psychological or physiological homeostasis of an individual that forces him (or her) to deviate from normal functioning in interactions with the job and the environment (Allen, Hitt, & Green, 1982).

Paired comparison is "a method in which the subject is presented with a list of items . . . and is asked to judge each item in turn with every other item in terms of which he prefers. The judgments of the subjects can be manipulated so that each activity can be assigned a scale value" (Van Dalen, 1973, p. 344). The instrument used in this study forced choices between all possible pairings of the nine factors identified by Herzberg (1959) as related to job dissatisfaction: salary, working conditions, company policies and administration, interpersonal relations with peers, supervisors, and subordinates, supervision, benefits, and job security. All of the factors were ranked according to the number of times the subjects chose them, and the results were analyzed for significant statistical differences between the demographic groupings.

Turnover. Voluntary termination of a job.

## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between males and females on the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors;
2. There is no significant difference between age ranges on the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors;
3. There is no significant difference between persons with bachelor's and master's degrees on the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors;
4. There is no significant difference between persons who intend to stay in the profession and those who intend to leave the profession on the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors.

Chapter II presents a review of literature pertinent to this study.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A review of literature reveals that relatively little research describes job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation personnel in the United States. No studies have been published specifically on the populations in the targeted five-state region. This review of literature, therefore, focuses on the most closely related areas of study and is organized under the following headings:

1. Factors related to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction;
2. Occupational stress, the phenomenon known as "burnout," turnover, and career change; and
3. Personnel issues within the field of therapeutic recreation.

#### Factors Related to Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

Considerable study has been focused on the areas of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The high costs to employers of absenteeism, turnover, and decreased productivity have created a vested interest in diagnosing and remediating job factors that stimulate dissatisfaction,

while identifying and enhancing those factors that increase job satisfaction. The earliest studies on job satisfaction were published by Taylor (1911) and later in the 1930s with Hoppock's monograph (1935). Roethlisberger and Dickson reported on the now famous Hawthorne studies in 1939. The Hawthorne studies were designed by Elton Mayo and his research team to determine the relationship between the physical environment (ventilation, lighting, etc.) and productivity. Several years of Mayo's experimentation at Western Electric's Chicago, Illinois plant began to demonstrate the critical effects of morale and motivation, thereby identifying the factor known as the "Hawthorne effect." Hersey and Blanchard (1988) cited this investigation as the beginning of the "human relations" mode of personnel management. The principal assumptions behind the "human relations" orientation were that "management concern for the worker would lead to increased satisfaction which would, in turn, result in increased performance" (Santos, 1990, p. 60).

One of the studies and the resulting model that has received considerable attention and use in the research on job satisfaction and dissatisfaction is that outlined by Herzberg (1959). Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory was created out of his review of Taylor's theory of job satisfaction, the human relations orientation described

above, and Herzberg's own research on 200 engineers and accountants in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Taylor had theorized earlier that job satisfaction was created primarily by good wages and physical working conditions on the job site. The 200 Pittsburgh subjects were asked by Herzberg to recall "critical incidences" on their job when they felt especially satisfied or dissatisfied. From those descriptions, Herzberg and his associates categorized the events according to whether they generated positive or negative feelings, and then each of those groups was divided according to the central factors that seem to stimulate that feeling. There seemed to be, from Herzberg's perspective, distinct differences between the factors given that were mentioned as job satisfiers and those that were mentioned as job dissatisfiers. Those factors that were most often mentioned as job satisfiers seemed to be intrinsic to the job itself and were subsequently titled "motivators." Factors named as motivators included achievement, appreciation, recognition, the value of the work itself, personal growth, responsibility, and promotion. Those factors most often mentioned in relating dissatisfying incidences were seen as extrinsic conditions of the job and were called "hygienes." Herzberg hypothesized that, when hygienes are not present, or are present but not in a sufficient amount, the

condition of job dissatisfaction is more likely to occur among workers. The first identified hygienes included salary, supervision, tactful discipline, interpersonal relations, and working conditions.

Considerable study and some criticism has been given to the Two-Factor Theory. Locke (1976), while granting the importance of Herzberg's work, was critical of the research techniques and assumptions used, and expressed doubt about the claimed outcomes. Specifically he noted the following weaknesses in Herzberg's concept and research design:

1. The assumption that a mind-body dichotomy exists;
2. The belief that needs operate in a unidirectional mode;
3. The lack of a stated parallel between persons' needs and the motivating and hygiene factors;
4. The use (and possible misuse) of an incident classification system;
5. The failure to account for "defensiveness" in the subjects' accounts of satisfying and dissatisfying incidents;
6. The use of frequency data rather than a measure of strength or impact data; and
7. The assumed denial of individual differences within the resulting theory.

Locke's study of job satisfiers incorporated most of the factors listed by Herzberg as either motivators or hygienes. No significant differences were found in the citing of motivators as satisfying or of hygienes as dissatisfying.

Ewen (1964) also criticized Herzberg's theory based on the research techniques used in testing the model. Issues listed as barriers to being able to generalize from the study included the limited scope of subjects and the failure to establish reliability and validity prior to the study. Others who have questioned the Two-Factor dichotomy include Jacoby (1976), Campbell and Pritchard (1976), Macarov (1972), and White and Maguire (1973).

White and Maguire interviewed 34 nursing supervisors for stories relating feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their job, attempting to validate the Two-Factor Theory. Only three of the Herzberg's motivators were listed significantly more ( $p < .03$ ) in relation to satisfiers (work itself, possibility for growth, and recognition). Only one hygiene (Supervision) showed up significantly more often ( $p < .03$ ) in the stories of dissatisfaction. All other listed factors were equally represented in both stories of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Although this study like others was able to validate only portions of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory,

it should be noted that almost all of the authors who have criticized Herzberg's work recommend it as a starting place for a researcher in the areas of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Campbell & Pritchard, 1976; Jacoby, 1976; Locke, 1976; Maguire & White, 1973).

Closely related to the current study is a master's thesis by Chen (1980) at the Texas Woman's University. Chen began a study of the employment status and job satisfaction of occupational therapists in Texas after discovering that the median age of practicing occupational therapists nationwide had dropped 3 years and 9 months in a 7 year span. Ninety-nine mailed questionnaires resulted in 61 responses, a 62% return rate. Data were collected using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Davis, England, & Lofquist, 1967) and a personal data sheet for obtaining demographic information. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire provides measures in three areas: extrinsic satisfaction, intrinsic satisfaction, and general satisfaction. The results of the collected data were used to compare parttime to fulltime, experienced to inexperienced, and currently employed to unemployed therapists. Using the Mann-Whitney U test, no significant differences were found on any of the factors. Use of the point biserial Spearman rho correlation test, however, resulted in several significant differences at the .05

level of confidence. Parttime therapists had higher levels of intrinsic and general satisfaction ( $p < .012$  for both) than therapists who were working fulltime. Therapists who were currently employed had lower intrinsic and general satisfaction, and higher extrinsic satisfaction than unemployed therapists (all three  $p < .05$ ). Job dissatisfaction was cited by 21.4% of the unemployed therapists as the reason for currently not being employed. Experienced therapists (more than 2 years experience) had significantly higher satisfaction in all three areas than the inexperienced occupational therapists. Using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation test, Chen found a significantly positive relation between intrinsic and extrinsic factors ( $p < .001$ ). Implications from the study indicate that intrinsic and extrinsic factors need to be carefully examined to increase the retention rate of therapists and that continuing education and professional support are needed especially for young, inexperienced therapists to facilitate growth of the profession. Chen recommended further study of intrinsic and extrinsic factors and inclusion of questions more specific to the occupational therapy practice in order to analyze the relationship between career mobility and drop-out rate.

Lowther, Gill, and Coppard (1985) investigated the job satisfaction of 182 teachers at various ages. A face-to-

face interview technique was used originally to collect data in three national studies of employment (1969, 1973, and 1977) by The University of Michigan's Institute of Social Research. The secondary analysis was conducted on samples drawn from the initial subjects. The researchers compared job satisfaction (measured by answers to five questions), job values (various benefits ascribed to the job measured by 34 questions), and job rewards (same areas as job values only measured by questions worded to distinguish reward as opposed to the value or importance of a benefit). Resulting data indicated that job satisfaction increased with age, job values did not change across ages, and that job reward (and the importance of those rewards) increased with age. The authors concluded,

Future research is needed about the characteristics of human service occupations, the work place, and professionals that contribute to a shift of satisfaction determinants from the intrinsic to the extrinsic. We investigated teaching believing that intrinsic values and rewards would constitute the major determinants among older teachers. In doing so we assumed a paucity of extrinsic rewards such as promotional opportunities or substantial salary increases, but we may have underestimated either the magnitude or importance of such outcomes for teachers. As teachers become older and more experienced, the pragmatic factors of the occupation- salary, benefits, prestige, stability, and companionship- may acquire higher saliency than idealistic or altruistic concerns. Perhaps this is an outcome for workers in early plateau occupations where basic proficiencies are acquired rapidly and only small changes occur after the beginning years. (p. 524)



Lee and Wilbur (1985) reported on their study of job satisfaction based on 1707 public employees. Subjects were divided according to age. Those younger than 30 years old were assumed to be in the "early career" stage. Subjects between the ages of 30 and 49 were deemed to be in the "middle career," and those older than 50 were in their "late career" stage. Using a variation of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, subjects rated 25 specific aspects of their job on a five-point Likert scale (from very satisfied to very dissatisfied). The principal components of the 25 aspects identified with a varimax rotation were (a) intrinsic characteristics of the job, (b) working conditions, (c) supervision, (d) compensation, and (e) promotion. Using a multivariate analysis of covariance, job satisfaction was found to be significantly related to age at the  $p < .001$  level, meaning that job satisfaction increased as the worker's age increased. Even when adjusting for salary, educational level attained, or job tenure, job satisfaction was significantly higher ( $p < .001$ ) for older employees. The researchers suggested several possible explanations for their finding: the older workers' adjusted expectations of actual job returns, higher esteem by virtue of job tenure, and a greater importance placed on the moral value of work by the older generation of workers.

Bennett-Simmons (1987) studied 233 hospital employees to determine if a relationship exists between job satisfaction and negative performance indicators. Using a survey instrument that included satisfaction and dissatisfaction factors from Herzberg, this study compared negative performance indicators according to reporting assignments with levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Employees who had higher satisfaction scores showed a significantly ( $p < .05$ ) lower number of negative events as measured by the customary hospital incident reports.

Adler (1988) examined job satisfaction levels among educators using Herzberg's theory. The study of 121 college faculty and public school teachers in Denton, Texas, investigated factors influencing job satisfaction. Using the paired comparison technique, the educators rated various job aspects as to their importance. Aspects compared included good wages, job security, interesting work, tactful discipline, in on things, working conditions, management loyalty, appreciation, promotion, and sympathetic understanding. According to the theory, intrinsic factors would be stronger predictors of job satisfaction than would extrinsic items. A measure of self-esteem was included to explore the relationship, if any, between self-esteem and job satisfaction. Intrinsic factors were chosen as the top two most important

conditions. The descriptor interesting work was selected by all subjects as the highest factor in job satisfaction, with appreciation listed as second. Beyond that finding, the only statistically significant results of any of the relationships examined was a small negative relationship between self-esteem and interesting work ( $\bar{r} = -.18, p < .03$ ) and between self-esteem and tactful disciplining ( $\bar{r} = -.16, p < .04$ ). One of the author's conclusions is that different professions may have different rankings due to the nature of the jobs themselves.

A recent investigation by Santos (1990) also used the paired comparison technique and examined job satisfaction among 199 faculty at the University of Guam. Comparisons were made between the University administrators' perceptions and those of the teaching faculty. The same job satisfaction factors used in the Adler study were repeated by Santos. Job preference factors of advancement, benefits, company, co-workers, hours, pay, security, supervision, type of work, and working conditions were also compared. The collected data revealed significant disagreement between administrators' perceptions and teaching faculty's perceptions of both job preference factors and job satisfaction factors. Teaching faculty selected type of work, pay, and then advancement as the top factors influencing job preference. Administrators

believed that pay, advancement, and type of work would be the top three. In the job satisfaction area, teaching faculty chose interesting work, good wages, and promotion, whereas the administrators' rankings were good wages, promotion, and job security/interesting work (tie).

Although Santos concluded that the discrepancy would likely be solved by administrative attention to the real needs of teaching faculty, that conclusion may be open to the same areas of questioning that Locke presented in relation to the original Herzberg study. The teaching faculty may report the highest ranking factor as one that is seen as more socially acceptable, but in fact interact with the administrators primarily on issues of salary and promotion. Secondly, the concerns of an already hired faculty may be somewhat different than those individuals who are applying for a position.

In summary, the literature on job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction reveals several factors that appear salient across professions and time. The listing of elements identified by Herzberg has considerable merit as evidenced by the number of researchers who have based their studies upon comparisons of the factors.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory has received both criticism and praise. Research has been cited that both supports and refutes the theory, with different intervening

variables making comparisons difficult. In general there seems to be some factors that are more frequently associated with job dissatisfaction and some that are more frequently named in association with job satisfaction. Among those factors are elements of dissatisfaction that may have a more significant effect than others.

In addition, the implication that workers in any individual job may feel significant impact (or dissatisfaction) from factors inherent to the nature of the job has been noted repeatedly. Both occupation and demographic characteristics (i.e., age, tenure in position, salary level, etc.) may play an important role in determining the factors that will be selected as having the most impact.

#### Occupational Stress, Burnout, Turnover and Career Change

Researchers have studied numerous factors that have significant impact on an individual's professional commitment and work performance. Among those most noted in this review of literature were the terms occupational stress, burnout, turnover, and career change. This section will review those studies that relate to the major topic of job dissatisfaction.

Teachers have been one of the most studied occupations

in regard to stress. Riggat's 1985 annotated bibliography included 230 articles and monographs on stress. The highest number of citations were studies of social workers and counselors (32), with teachers (24) next. In all, 103 of the studies related specifically to stress in human services providers (law enforcement, nurses, rehabilitation personnel, doctors, etc.).

Falck and Kilcoyne (1985) studied 178 early childhood teachers in Texas to identify sources of stress. The single most frequently reported reason for considering leaving the teaching profession was financial, with almost one-third (30%) citing that reason. Other reasons noted by the teachers included "no upward mobility" and "boredom."

Fimian, Fastenau, and Thomas (1988) studied stress in the nursing field and concomitant intentions of leaving the profession. A Nurse Stress Inventory having 66 items related to occupational stress areas was developed by the investigators and administered to a nationwide sample. Nurses were asked if they intended to stay in the profession or leave. Significantly higher scores ( $p < .01$ ), representing increased stress from all sources, were reported by the "leavers." This same group noted significantly more manifestations of stress (personal time disruptions, fatigue, and emotional/behavioral/physiological manifestations) than noted by the "stayers."

The authors did not attempt to discern whether stress causes desire to leave or if desire to leave increases stress but noted the vital importance for managers to identify and alleviate working conditions that create stress for the employee.

That finding was reinforced by a 1989 study of burnout among 68 psychotherapists in Texas by Raquepaw and Miller. Using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), the researchers surveyed therapists who worked in private practice or for agencies. As burnout scores increased in both situations, the stated intent to leave the profession in the next 5 years increased. After recognizing that several unstudied factors might have considerable impact on the outcome, the authors concluded that "future researchers need to consider more specific information about the extent of staff member training, educational level and time in current position," in order to better understand the phenomenon.

Other researchers have used the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Deckard and Present (1989) and Edwards and Mittenberger (1991), studied burnout in human service providers. Deckard and Present looked at the impact of role stress for occupational therapists. Edwards and Mittenberger compared burnout levels of supervisory and direct care staff at residential facilities for persons

with mental retardation. Both studies noted the negative effect that stress has on job tenure.

Hoppe (1990) recently completed a review of research on work stressors, with a particular emphasis on that accomplished in Texas. The author's reference pages included 79 citations since 1980. According to Hoppe, "From an applied perspective, job satisfaction is a pressing problem for organizations and professions, especially those with high turnover or attrition" (p. 3).

A related area of inquiry focuses on commitment to the profession and career change. Jamal (1984) studied job stress and job performance of 440 nurses, comparing role ambiguity, role overload, role conflict, and resource inadequacy measures with indicators of commitment to their agency and the nursing profession. One conclusion was cited as clear, that the higher the job stress, the higher the employees' absenteeism, anticipated turnover, and turnover.

Grady (1989) used a different avenue to study the commitment of 148 vocational education teachers in public schools. A questionnaire that collected data on job expectancy, personal characteristics, job choice factors, experienced responsibility, and experienced meaningfulness of teaching was distributed to the subjects. Teachers responded that they perceived less upward mobility



possibilities in the teaching profession than in other professional fields. Also asked was a question about intention to stay or leave the profession, and follow up data were collected on those who actually left teaching. Stated intent to leave the profession was found to be a significant predictor of those who actually left.

In a study of 1076 state employees by Noe, Steffy, and Barber (1988) information was collected on job and career satisfaction, willingness to accept mobility options, barriers to mobility, and extent of participation in development activities. The subjects were technicians, 69% of whom held 4 year college or advanced degrees. The two key conditions identified that reinforced staying in a position were (a) age range of 31 to 45 years (termed the "maintenance stage" of one's career) and (b) community tenure.

Hinsz and Nelson's (1990) study of models of turnover behavior using 216 university faculty further defined the relationship: "intentions to search and intentions to resign are largely the result of an individual's comparative evaluation of the outcomes associated with aspects of their current job and the outcomes associated with aspects of an alternative job" (p. 69). In a study with a different design, Cleek (1986) held extensive interviews with 12 former school district superintendents

who had changed careers about their reasons for leaving their job. Although only 2 specifically mentioned burnout, Cleek stated that it could be extrapolated as a condition in all 12 of the subjects. Nine of the twelve in the stratified sample had planned careers in education prior to beginning college, indicating a sincere interest and commitment to the profession. Eight of the subjects had unfavorable opinions of the adequacy and appropriateness of their college training.

In this section several studies that identified sources of stress, the outcomes of varying levels of stress, and the link between job dissatisfaction and career change have been reviewed. Although there is evidence that stressors may be felt differently in particular professions or jobs, the list of stressors across professions is remarkably similar. Studies of the phenomenon known as burnout may show varying levels according to different job parameters, but ultimately burnout leads to intentions to leave the profession. A clear link has been established between those who state an intention to leave a profession and those who actually leave.

#### Personnel Issues in Therapeutic Recreation

Reynolds and O'Morrow (1985) traced the historical

development of the therapeutic recreation profession. The authors' opening comments attest to the relatively recent development of the profession and to the impact of the emerging professional and manpower issues.

As one of the youngest and most rapidly developing of the helping professions, the field of therapeutic recreation stands at a critical stage of development. Scarcely four decades after its beginning, its members are currently facing some of the greatest challenges which may ever confront our profession. Indeed, the decisions concerning the discipline's professional direction made during the next five years will impact on the working lives of its members far into the next century. (p. 1)

Significant milestones noted by Reynolds and O'Morrow in the development of the therapeutic recreation profession include the introduction of recreation activities at institutions for the mentally ill in the nineteenth century, the provision of recreation services to rehabilitating military personnel during World War I, and the initiation of services to persons with mental retardation. After World War II, the increased demand for comprehensive health care resulted in a rapid growth in the type and focus of medical facilities. The profession began to gain wide acceptance in 1948 and the following two decades as prominent physicians and organizations issued statements supporting recreation's contribution to health care efforts.

By 1963 the first organized traineeship program for

recreation for persons who were ill and handicapped was organized under the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Numerous well known legislative initiatives in the 1960s and 1970s added attention to social services, thereby stimulating additional growth in training opportunities.

Professional organizations representing the therapeutic recreation practice evolved as the field grew. The Hospital Recreation Services of the American Recreation Society was established in 1949. In 1952 and 1953 the Recreation Therapy Section of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation and the National Association of Recreation Therapists, respectively, were formed. The year 1966 saw the development of the National Therapeutic Recreation Society (NTRS) as a branch of the National Park and Recreation Association and as the central organization for personnel working in therapeutic recreation. In 1983, the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA) was formed as an alternative to membership in NTRS. Evidence of the growth of the field and its push for professional practice is seen in the establishment in 1981 of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification, the first attempt at a credentialing body independent of the professional associations.

The published literature related to personnel management in therapeutic recreation is extremely limited. The topic "personnel" has generally been a subsection of an article's major theme. Topics studied are more likely to be education and training of personnel (i.e., Henderson, 1981; Mobily, MacNeil, & Teague, 1984; Stumbo, 1986), professional roles in therapeutic recreation's progress as a profession (i.e., Fain, 1985; Meyer, 1978; Whitman & Shank, 1987) or staffing in the process of program development (i.e., Caldwell, Adolph, & Gilbert, 1989; DeSalvatore, 1989; Weiss, 1989).

Burnout among therapeutic recreation personnel has been a journal topic for Vessel (1980), Teague and Vessel (1982), Shank (1983), and Rosenthal, Teague, Retish, West, and Vessel (1983), although research in the area is almost nonexistent. Vessel described the costs incurred by the agency, clients, and the individual when a staff member experiences burnout. Shank's article identified antecedent and resultant conditions when burnout occurs. Rosenthal et al. (1983) studied burnout among park and recreation professionals and identified causes within the work environment that contribute to burnout.

Howe (1981), Conway (1985), and Keller (1985) have published articles on methods of personnel management in therapeutic recreation settings, all citing the lack of

relevant management information. Howe discussed the potential implementation of various management models, concluding that the primary goal of a manager is to create a work environment where the staff member can be successful. Conway's article described an employee appraisal system implemented at the Rehabilitation Institute in Detroit, Michigan, and noted that the growing emphasis on accountability will include the provision of therapeutic recreation services. Keller's article explored the complex nature of management in therapeutic recreation and offered strategies for improving communication and maintaining a positive work environment. No research studies comparing management styles or best management practices in therapeutic recreation could be identified in the literature review.

Much of the impetus for this study comes from various status reports on therapeutic recreation employees. Kelly (1974) surveyed personnel in the state of Illinois and found 38% of the respondents were under 31 years old. Over 65% had less than 4 years experience in the field. Subjects in Navar's (1981) study of therapeutic recreation personnel in Michigan were quite similar, with over 77% having less than 5 years experience in therapeutic recreation. Both of these findings translate to a young and relatively inexperienced staff representing a majority

of the practicing personnel.

Bentley (1981) developed a profile of the therapeutic recreation professional in Texas. All members of the Therapeutic Branch of the Texas Recreation and Parks Society and all NTRS members living in Texas were mailed a survey. One-half of the 188 responded. Bentley's findings reflected the Illinois and Michigan trends previously noted. Almost 48% of the subjects were in the 20-29 year age range, with an average of 33.8 years for men and 31.5 years for women. The subjects were fairly new to the field, with 61% having 5 years of experience or less. Only 23% had been at their jobs 6 to 10 years, and only 7% had been at their job more than 11 years.

O'Morrow and Lanz-Stewart (1989) attempted to develop a national profile of employed therapeutic recreation specialists and to collect information about their job satisfaction. Again, the researchers noted the lack of information about these two critical areas as the motive for initiating the study.

The past decade has witnessed a rapid growth in the employment of therapeutic recreation specialists in a variety of settings providing services to the ill, disabled and handicapped. However no information regarding matters and conditions associated with nationwide employment and job satisfaction of therapeutic recreation specialists are available within the literature or can be provided by the National Therapeutic Recreation Society (NTRS). The lack of such information prompted this study. (p. 1)

A total of 2235 questionnaires were mailed and 49% (1106) were returned. Age ranges and tenure in current position data were similar to the earlier studies. Almost 36% were in the 20-29 year range and another 28% were 30-34 years old. In regard to tenure, 21% had been in their job for less than 1 year, 35% had held that position for 2 to 3 years, and 15% had only a 4 to 5 year tenure. Combining those figures, it can be said that a large majority of respondents (71%) had been there less than 5 years. In a related area that should elicit professional concern, 28% of the subjects were considering a change in employment while over 12% more were actively searching for a new job. Only 51% stated that they were not currently seeking new employment because they were satisfied. Nine percent stated they were not currently involved in a job search because of personal reasons.

The authors concluded that a primary reason behind the desire for new employment may be related to salary level. Subjects who were "very satisfied" (37%) with their job had an average salary of \$26,671, as opposed to those who were "not very satisfied" (11%), who had an average salary of \$24,367.

Two studies evaluated the "leisure satisfaction" of therapeutic recreation specialists. Cunningham and Bartuska (1989) studied the impact that stress had on



leisure satisfaction of therapeutic recreation personnel.

Predictably, subjects with higher reported levels of stress had lower reported satisfaction with their leisure.

Sanchez (1984) completed a more closely related study, describing the interrelationships of leisure satisfaction, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction among therapeutic recreation specialists. The Leisure Satisfaction Scale and the Life in General Scale were devised by Beard and Ragheb (1980). The Leisure Satisfaction Scale provides a measure of the extent to which an individual perceives that certain needs are met or satisfied through leisure activities. The Life in General Scale is a semantic differential to measure one's overall satisfaction. The Job Satisfaction Scale (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951) provides a global measure of job satisfaction inferred from stated attitudes toward work.

A mailed survey was sent to 500 subjects randomly selected from the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification's list of Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists. A 52% (262) return rate provided similar demographic figures to the other state and national studies. A large majority of the subjects were young, with 10% under 25 years old and 62% in the 25-34 age range. Over 42% had worked in their current position for less than 5 years and almost 28% had only been there for 5 to 8 years. Significant positive correlations were found

between life satisfaction and leisure satisfaction, ( $r = .274, p < .001$ ), and between life satisfaction and job satisfaction ( $r = .182, p < .002$ ). No significant correlation was found between job satisfaction and leisure satisfaction. Interestingly, only two demographics accounted for a significant variance in job satisfaction. Those persons in the study who were not members of the National Therapeutic Recreation Society ( $n = 59$ ) had significantly greater job satisfaction, while subjects whose job entailed working with persons with autism ( $n = 23$ ) had lowered job satisfaction scores.

Wade-Campbell (1985) expressed concern about the effects of burnout on therapeutic recreation personnel, stating,

...when burnout is experienced by staff members, the quality of services declines and is generally accompanied by staff turnover and absenteeism. (p. 4)

The very concern and commitment that led many human service workers to their chosen fields becomes lost, and many times does not return. This has resulted in an exodus from the human services. (p. 3)

It is imperative that the recreation profession develop a viable means of attracting and maintaining highly skilled professionals. (p. 8)

Wade-Campbell began her study of therapeutic recreation personnel in the Veteran's Administration (VA) settings with the assumption that high caseloads, large organization, organizational climate, lack of

administrative support, resource inadequacy, role conflict, and lack of autonomy are all contributing factors to the occurrence of burnout. A model which describes the relationship between demographic, job, and professional-related variables and perceived levels of burnout was proposed. Data collected included time spent in professional training, years worked in therapeutic recreation settings, intent to remain in the field, highest degree attained, curriculum of highest degree, professional organization membership/attendance, certification by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification, involvement in VA inservice training, and involvement in continuing education external to the VA system.

Subjects included 511 therapeutic recreation personnel who worked primarily with long term psychiatric patients in large (50 or more psychiatric beds) VA hospitals. The return rate for the mailed questionnaire was 56% (287 total returned). The questionnaire included demographic information as well as the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Work Environment Scale which rates how employees perceive their current job. Subjects were young (77% under 40 years old), had few years experience in the field (60% less than 10 years), and most had a brief tenure in their current position (55% less than 5 years, 22.4 between 6 and 10 years). When asked about their intent to remain in the

field for the next 5 years, 15% answered "no," and another 31% were "uncertain". Primary reasons stated for intending to leave the profession included higher salaries, advancement opportunities, educational assistance as a benefit, and steady hours.

Compared to national normative data on the Maslach Burnout Inventory, the subjects experienced low levels of emotional exhaustion, moderate levels of depersonalization, and low levels of personal accomplishment. High burnout would be categorized by high levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization with low feelings of personal accomplishment. All three factors were significantly related ( $p < .05$ ) to age, the individual's perceived mental health, and marital status. Higher burnout scores were seen among those who were married, under 41 years of age, and those who rated themselves as having poor mental health. In a finding that reinforces earlier studies, those who were under 40 years felt a greater sense of personal accomplishment even though this is the group who experienced elevated burnout scores on the other two measures.

The subjects who spent 60% or more of their time with clients reported less emotional exhaustion, lower depersonalization, and higher feelings of personal accomplishment. The highest score on personal

accomplishment was for those who had worked less than 5 years. Second highest was subjects who had worked over 16 years.

The questions about intention to remain in the field also provided interesting results. Subjects who were unsure about their future ("undecided") had higher levels of burnout in all three areas than respondents who answered "yes" or "no."

In terms of training, persons with undergraduate or graduate degrees experienced higher levels of burnout than did those who had high school or AA degrees only. Over 53% of the college-trained subjects stated that their internship prepared them for their current job. That group experienced less burnout than the 38% who did not believe that their internship was "realistic."

In conclusion, Wade-Campbell discussed the complexity of the burnout phenomenon and the continuum that may be experienced. It is,

best explained by studying the combinations of factor relating to the personal and professional characteristics of therapeutic recreation personnel as well as characteristics specific to the work environment. (p. 209)

In summary, this section has reviewed the limited literature related to personnel management in therapeutic recreation settings. As a young profession, there are critical directions that the field will have to take to

successfully manage the growth opportunities. Personnel management is an area that has received scant attention in the literature.

Several surveys have shown that the practicing professionals are primarily young persons who do not have extensive experience. Many are seriously considering an active job search. At least one group of researchers have noted that salary may be a significant cause of that intent. Some evidence has been given that job satisfaction is positively related to life satisfaction.

Therapeutic recreation personnel are susceptible to burnout. Demographic characteristics such as age, education, and caseload may significantly influence the amount of burnout felt by an individual. Recruiting and retaining qualified personnel are critical to providing good health care services and will be instrumental in securing a wealth of experience and wisdom to move the profession forward.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

This study was designed to identify and analyze factors causing job dissatisfaction among Therapeutic Recreation Specialists. The procedures followed in the investigation are described in this chapter under the following headings: Population and Sample of Subjects, Development and Description of the Instruments, Collection of Data, Tabulation of Data and Organization for Computer Input, and Treatment of Data.

#### Population and Sample of Subjects

The population surveyed consisted of therapeutic recreation specialists from five states who are members of the National Therapeutic Recreation Society ( $n = 210$ ) or the American Therapeutic Recreation Association ( $n = 138$ ). Some subjects were listed as members of both organizations so that a total, unduplicated count of subjects was 320. These figures represent approximately 8% of the total members of the National Therapeutic Recreation Society and approximately 6% of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association membership, respectively. The sample included

all members in the population who live in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas, or Louisiana. The lists and addresses of subjects were obtained from the two professional organizations.

This study was exempt from the Human Subjects Review Committee at the Texas Woman's University because all subjects were adults and no data were linked to any individual subject in the published manuscript. Confidentiality of all information submitted was maintained throughout the study as promised to the subjects in the cover letter accompanying the survey.

#### Development and Description of the Instruments

The two instruments used to collect data were incorporated into a single, mailed questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire is included as Appendix A. Section I of this survey requested demographic data about the subject and his or her current position and asked a series of questions about his or her intention to leave or stay in the profession. Demographic questions included job title, gender, age, college degree, years in therapeutic recreation, years in current position, membership in professional organizations, agency size, caseload size, primary orientation of the agency (clinical intervention vs community recreation), and job functions of the subject.



Questions about intention to leave or stay in the profession included asking if "serious considerations" to change, active job search, or job search plans had occurred and what future job placement the subjects expected for themselves. In order to assist with the validation of job dissatisfaction factors for Section II and to allow other common factors to be identified, the subjects were asked to give their opinion of the two greatest causes of job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation specialists.

Section II of the questionnaire was devised to obtain rankings of factors causing job dissatisfaction. The paired comparison technique was selected because it is a well accepted measurement device (Adler, 1988; Kerlinger, 1967, 1986; Lowry, 1972; Santos, 1990; Van Dalen, 1979) and because of its high reliability coefficients (Edwards, 1957; Guilford, 1931). Although designed originally to measure directly observable data, the technique was noted by both Thurstone (1928) and Nunnally (1970) as applicable to studying phenomena not directly observable. A detailed evolution and the value of the paired comparison instrument have been described by Santos (1990). Appropriate criteria for using the paired comparison to collect data were included with the historical review. Huettig (1982) has also described these conditions and verified the technique's viability for measuring attitudes.

A paired comparison instrument allows a series of items (in this case, factors causing job dissatisfaction) to be rank ordered by forcing a choice between items in every possible pairing. Guilford (1928) indicated that the simplest method for ranking is to count the total number of times that any one item was picked over the item(s) with which it was paired. Specifically in this study, subjects were asked to circle the factor in the pair that caused them the most job dissatisfaction. Each item was compared with every other item resulting in 36 pairs.

The factors chosen to use in this paired comparison were the nine "hygienes" or factors causing job dissatisfaction identified by Herzberg. Each factor (working conditions, company policy and administration, salary, relations with peers, supervisors and subordinates, supervision, benefits, and job security) was compared with every other factor. Using a round robin technique, the investigator insured a random order that separated pairs from having factors repeated next to each other. Factors were equally dispersed between being placed first or last as a member of a pairing. Care was taken that no pattern of factors existed that might influence a subject's response.

The reliability of the paired comparison instrument has been well documented, with Guilford's 1931 samples

having correlations ranging from .843 to .991. To insure validity job dissatisfaction factors were selected that have been studied extensively as a part of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. The questionnaire was reviewed by 2 recreation therapists outside of the five state area and pilot tested on 5 employees at the researcher's employment site. Recommendations from the 7 were incorporated into the design of the instrument to make it easier to complete and return.

#### Collection of the Data

Each member of the sample was mailed a questionnaire. A cover letter was included (see Appendix B) that gave instructions on how to complete the questionnaire and explained the value of this study to the field of therapeutic recreation. The back of the questionnaire was stamped and addressed so that the subject could fold and mail it upon completion. A small, unobtrusive numerical code was added to each form so a follow up notice could be sent to subjects who had not responded by the designated time.

The initial mailing occurred on January 1, 1992, with a requested return date by January 21. All subjects who had not returned their questionnaire by January 24 were mailed a post card as a follow up. Two weeks later (February 7), a second questionnaire was sent with a letter

requesting the valued input of the subject and stressing the importance of the study to the profession. A second post card was sent on February 14 to anyone who had not responded within 7 days of receiving the second questionnaire and letter.

#### Tabulation of the Data and Organization for Computer Input

Scoring of the paired comparison data was accomplished by tabulating and counting. Section I (demographic information) and Section II (paired comparison) raw data were then coded for entry into a computer program. A copy of the coding format appears in Appendix C. Descriptive data expressed as percentages were placed into appropriate tables for inclusion in the following chapter. A table was prepared for each of the demographic variables to describe as completely as possible the subjects in the study.

#### Treatment of the Data

The BMDP1D and BMDP2D computer programs (Dixon, 1990) allowed all demographic variables to be analyzed in relation to the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors. A multisample chi-square was used to test for significant differences between the various groupings. A difference equal to or greater than a level of .05 was considered sufficient to reject the null hypotheses. A description of the findings is presented in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The results of the statistical analyses of the data collected are presented in Chapter IV. The purposes of the study were (a) to analyze identified factors causing job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation specialists and (b) to determine whether selected demographic characteristics influenced significant differences in the rankings of dissatisfaction factors.

The tabulated data presented and analyzed in this chapter were divided into three areas: (a) description of population, (b) comparisons of rankings of job dissatisfaction factors, and (c) statistical testing of the hypotheses. The descriptive data were analyzed using simple percentages. A multisample chi-square was used to test for significant differences among the rankings by population subgroups specified in the hypotheses.

#### Description of Population

From the membership roles of the National Therapeutic Recreation Society and the American Therapeutic Recreation Association, 320 therapeutic recreation professionals were identified in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas, and

Louisiana. The survey was returned by 235 respondents; this was 73% of the sample. The resulting percentage, therefore, was 71%. Thirty of the surveys were deemed not usable for the study because of incomplete information, the subject was retired, or the subject had a membership but was not trained or practicing in the therapeutic recreation field. \*Information about the subjects who responded but were not included in the compiled data is available in Appendix D.

The subjects included in the study are shown by age and gender in Table 1. Three respondents did not report sex or age.

Table 1

Number, Gender, and Ages of Subjects

Age in Years	Male		Female		Total	
	(n = 31)		(n = 171)		(n = 205)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
21-30	6	2.9	66	32.2	72	35.1
31-40	17	8.3	83	40.4	100	48.7
41-50	7	3.4	16	7.8	23	11.2
51-60	0	0	3	1.5	3	1.5
61 or older	1	.5	3	1.5	4	2.0
Missing data	-	-	-	-	3	1.5
Total	31	15.1	171	83.4	205	100

A total of 31 males and 171 females participated in the study and accounted for approximately 15% and 83% of the population, respectively. The ages of participants were similar to those found in other research on therapeutic recreation personnel by Kelly (1974), Navar (1980), and Bentley (1981) cited in the review of literature. In this study 35.1% of the respondents were 30 years old or younger and approximately half (48.7%) of those participating in the study were between 31 and 40 years. Only 3.5% were 51 years or older.

Table 2 provides additional information about the subjects. In a few instances individuals did not complete every item on the survey form and a smaller total is therefore reported.

Table 2

Description of Subjects in Study

Demographic Information	Responses	
	f	%
<b>Job title</b>		
Therapeutic Recreation Specialist	106	51.7
Recreation Therapist	20	9.8
Director of TR, RT, AT	41	20.0
College/University faculty	10	4.9
Other	27	13.6
Total	204	100
<b>College Degree</b>		
No degree	3	1.5
Bachelor's	119	58.9
Master's	66	32.7
Doctorate	14	6.9
Total	202	100



Table 2 continued

## Degree Area

Therapeutic Recreation	149	76.4
Other	46	23.6
Total	195	100

## Annual salary

Under \$12,000	9	4.4
\$12,001-18,000	9	4.4
\$18,001-24,000	34	16.6
\$24,001-30,000	80	39.0
\$30,001-36,000	46	22.4
\$36,001 or more	27	13.2
Total	205	100

## Years in TR

Under 5	61	29.7
6-10	68	33.2
11-15	51	24.9
16-20	16	7.8
21-25	5	2.4
26 or more	4	2.0
Total	205	100

Table 2 continued

## Tenure in position

Under 5	153	75.4
6-10	33	16.3
11-15	12	5.8
16-20	1	.5
21-25	1	.5
26 or more	3	1.5
Total	203	100

## Professional membership

NTRS	82	40.0
ATRA	54	26.3
Both	53	25.9
Neither	16	7.8
Total	205	100

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Less than 10% of the respondents listed their current job title as Recreation Therapist while a majority (51.7%) reported their title as Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. The other reported job titles were Director (20%), College/University Faculty (4.9%), and Other (13.6%).

Only a small number (1.5%) of the persons answering the survey did not have a college degree. Almost 59% had been awarded bachelor's degrees, another one-third (32.7%) held master's degrees, and 6.9% had completed a doctoral

degree. In comparison, Sanchez found 66% with bachelor's degrees, 29% with master's degrees, and only 4% had doctorates in 1984. Slightly more than three-fourths (76.4%) of the degrees were in therapeutic recreation.

Annual salary ranges included 8.8% being paid less than \$18,000, 16.6% earning \$18,001 to \$24,000, and 39% receiving \$24,001 to \$30,000. Almost one out of every four respondents (22.4%) was paid between \$30,001 and \$36,000. Twenty-seven subjects were being paid above \$36,000 a year.

Slightly less than one-third (29.7%) of the subjects had been employed in the therapeutic recreation profession for less than 5 years in contrast to the data reported in earlier studies. Bentley's profile completed in 1981 showed 61% of the subjects had been in the profession for 5 years or less, while studies by both Navar (1980) and O'Morrow and Lanz-Stewart (1989) reported above 70% having been in the field for 5 years or less. In the current study, 33.2% of the subjects had been in the profession for 6 to 10 years, and 24.9% for 11 to 15 years. Only 12.2% reported having practiced in the field for 16 years or more.

In comparative congruence with the profiles reported by Bentley and O'Morrow and Lanz-Stewart, the average length of tenure in the subjects' current position was

fairly short. Three-fourths (75.4%) reported that they had held their current job for 1 to 5 years, while another 16.3% had a 6 to 10 year tenure. Only 8.3% of the total population studied had been in the same position for 11 years or more.

Subject names and addresses were obtained from the membership lists of the National Therapeutic Recreation Society and the American Therapeutic Recreation Association. Forty percent of the respondents reported being members of the National Therapeutic Recreation Society, whereas 26.3% were members of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association. In addition, 25.8% held memberships in both organizations, while 17 (7.8%) did not claim membership in either professional organization.

Table 3 describes the agencies and therapeutic recreation department sizes where the subjects were employed. Also included in this table is a comparison of the agencies' orientation toward clinical intervention or community recreation.

Table 3

Agency Size and Orientation

Agency Characteristic	<u>Responses</u>	
	f	%
<hr/>		
Agency Clients per Day		
25 or less	28	14.3
26-125	95	48.5
126-225	21	10.7
226 or more	52	26.5
Total	205	100
TR Clients per Day		
25 or less	58	29.9
26-125	102	52.6
126-225	23	11.8
226 or more	11	5.7
Total	194	100
Orientation		
Community Recreation	24	12.6
Clinical Intervention	137	72.1
Equally Split	29	15.3
Total	205	100
<hr/>		

indicates that the agency serves 26-125 total clients in all services on a "normal" day. Large agencies (those serving 226 clients or more per day) were the next most frequent employer with 26.5% of the responses.

Between 26 and 125 clients are served each day specifically by the therapeutic recreation staff in 52.6% of the agencies represented. Less than 25 clients per day were seen by the therapeutic recreation staff in another 58 (29.9%) agencies. A small minority (5.7%) of the respondents said that the therapeutic recreation personnel where the subject was employed provided services to more than 226 clients on a "normal" day.

Almost three fourths (72.1%) of the subjects worked in agencies that primarily provide clinical intervention. Among the remainder, 12.6% were more oriented toward community recreation for persons with disabilities and special needs, with 15.3% of the agencies being equally split in their orientation.

Appendix D gives the responses to a question concerning the total number of therapeutic recreation personnel employed by the respondent's agency. The average number of therapeutic recreation personnel reported was 7.36.

A question was also asked about caseload size per

therapist. The average reported ratio was 1 therapist to 21.93 clients, with a median of 15. Caseloads ranged from 0 to 125 per therapist. Complete information is included as Appendix E.

Several questions were asked about previous or future intentions to change professions or positions. Table 4 provides information about reported intentions and activities. Intent to leave the field was signified by 2 or more yes answers to the first 3 questions, or at least 1 yes answer to the first 3 and a no answer to the question about seeing oneself practicing therapeutic recreation in 5 years.

Table 4

Intentions to Change Positions

Question	Yes		No		Unsure	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Consider leaving TR	126	62.7	75	37.3	-	-
Active job search	86	42.0	119	58.0	-	-
Job search plans	49	24.1	154	75.9	-	-
TR in 5 years	72	35.8	44	21.9	85	42.3
TR in other agency	50	24.5	106	52.0	48	23.5

When asked "Have you seriously considered finding a job outside of the field of therapeutic recreation in the last 2 years?", 62.4% responded yes and 37.1% responded no. Answers to the question "Have you actively searched for a job outside of therapeutic recreation in the last 2 years?" included 86 yes (42%) answers and 115 no (58%) answers. A third question asked "Do you have plans to participate in an active job search outside of the therapeutic recreation field in the next 6 months?" and received 49 yes (24.1%) responses and 154 no (75.9%) answers.

Subjects were also asked if they would be working in 5 years, did they see themselves employed in the therapeutic recreation field. Over one-third (35.8%) did see themselves in the field, while 21.9% did not, and 42.3% were unsure. Although there is some evidence that many of the subjects were satisfied with their jobs (i.e., no intent to change professions), the individuals who intend to change and the ones who are unsure represent a high percentage (64.2%) of the profession who are having serious questions about their future. The last question asked the subjects if they intended to search for a therapeutic recreation position with a different agency in the near future. Fifty subjects (24.5%) responded yes while 52.0% answered no, and 23.5% were unsure if they would seek another job in therapeuticrecreation or not.



From the data reported above, 32.8% of the respondents met the criteria to be classified as leavers (expressing intent to leave therapeutic recreation). The remaining 67.2% were classified as stayers.

#### Comparison of Job Dissatisfaction Factors

The paired comparison technique allows one to compare all possible pairings from a selected list of factors. Table 5 shows the frequency or number of times each job dissatisfaction factor was chosen over the other factors. One may also assign ordinal rankings with the use of a score. Table 5 reflects the scores and rankings of factors by males and females, with the totals showing the combined scores and rankings for all subjects.

Table 5

Rankings of Factors by Males and Females

Factor	Males		Females		Total	
	(n = 31)		(n = 171)		(n = 202)	
	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank
Administration	172	1	880	1	1052	1
Policies	140	3	851	2	991	2
Conditions	127	5	808	3	935	3
Salary	149	2	712	4	861	4
Supervision	111	6	666	5	777	5
Security	134	4	522	7	656	6
Benefits	87	7.5	551	6	638	7
Peers	87	7.5	481	8	568	8
Subordinates	70	9	472	9	542	9

As shown in Table 5, administration (1), salary (2), and policies (3) were the factors chosen as the greatest causes of dissatisfaction by males in the therapeutic recreation field. Female subjects selected administration (1), policies (2), and conditions (3) as the greatest causes of job dissatisfaction. The least important cause of job dissatisfaction from the identified list was interrelationships with subordinates (9) for both males and

females. The reader is reminded that in this study "administration" was defined as interactions with and respect from supervisors and administration. The term "policies" was defined as agency organization, management or existing agency policies, and "conditions" reflects working conditions on the job.

This table also shows the rankings assigned by the scores for all subjects. Administration (1), policies (2) and conditions (3) were the three most frequently chosen causes of job dissatisfaction. As a means of comparison the following open ended question was asked as a part of the survey, "What do you believe are the two greatest causes of job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation specialists?" The answers to that question were relatively consistent, with lack of credibility and respect as a professional ( $n = 112$ ) and salary ( $n = 107$ ) being named many more times than any other answer. The answer having the next most responses (high caseloads/performance expectations) was cited 39 times. A complete list of all responses to the open ended question and their frequency is included in Appendix F.

Table 6 summarizes the job dissatisfaction factors as chosen by various age ranges. Ages are grouped according to the categories used by Lee and Wilbur (1985), with 18 to

30 years old signifying the "early career stage," 31 to 50 years representing as the "middle career stage," and 51 or older being the "late career stage."

Table 6

Rankings of Factors by Various Age Groups

Factors	Ages					
	18-30		31-50		51 +	
	(n = 72)		(n = 126)		(n = 7)	
	#	Rank	#	Rank	#	Rank
Administration	378	1	645	1	47	2
Policies	357	2	604	2	48	1
Conditions	321	3	598	3	29	4
Salary	304	4	529	4	37	3
Supervision	263	5	494	5	25	5
Security	245	6	427	6	8	9
Benefits	244	7	392	7	18	7
Peers	226	8	320	9	21	6
Subordinates	187	9	341	8	10	8

Table 6 shows differences in response patterns between the three age groups. Administration or interactions with supervisors and administrators was the most frequently

chosen dissatisfier (1) by subjects in both the early career stage and the middle career stage, with policies (2) as the next most frequent by both groups. Policies (1) were picked as the greatest cause of job dissatisfaction by individuals in the late career stage with administration (2) as the second most frequently chosen factor.

The factors considered least important in causing job dissatisfaction were also selected differently by the three age groups. The least chosen and the next to least chosen by the early career stage subjects were subordinates (9) and peers (8). The middle career stage therapists chose the same two in a reverse order. Job security (9) was the least important to those in the late career stage, with subordinates (8) being chosen slightly more times as a factor causing job dissatisfaction.

From Table 7 it can be observed that there are few differences in the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors between subjects who held undergraduate degrees and those who completed master's degrees.

Table 7

Rankings of Factors by College Degree Level

Total Factors	Bachelor's		Master's			
	(n = 119)		(n = 66)		(n = 185)	
	#	Rank	#	Rank	#	Rank
Administration	613	1	350	1	963	1
Policy	583	2	324	2	907	2
Conditions	549	3	314	3	863	3
Salary	517	4	269	4	786	4
Supervision	437	5	263	5	700	5
Security	391	6	215	6	606	6
Benefits	377	7	182	9	559	7
Peers	328	8	202	7	530	8
Subordinates	303	9	192	8	495	9

A total of 119 subjects reported having bachelor's degrees, whereas 66 subjects held master's degrees. Among both groups, administration (1) and policies (2) were selected as the highest causes of job dissatisfaction. Subordinates (9) and peers (8) were apparently the least frequent causes of job dissatisfaction for persons with bachelor's degrees. Individuals with master's degrees,

however, chose benefits (9) and subordinates (8) as the factors least likely to cause dissatisfaction.

Table 8 compares the job dissatisfaction rankings according to the area in which the degree is held. In this table, one can see that rankings by persons with therapeutic recreation and other degrees are fairly similar.

Table 8

Ranking of Factors by College Degree Area

Factors	TR degree		Other		Total	
	(n = 149)		(n = 44)		(n = 193)	
	#	Rank	#	Rank	#	Rank
Administration	772	1	222	2	994	1
Policy	722	2	228	1	950	2
Conditions	689	3	215	3	904	3
Salary	652	4	189	4	841	4
Supervision	575	5	148	5	723	5
Security	499	6	138	7	637	6
Benefits	478	7	134	8	612	7
Peers	411	8	124	9	535	8
Subordinates	371	9	141	6	512	9

Individuals with degrees other than therapeutic recreation chose dissatisfaction with subordinates more frequently than those with degrees in therapeutic recreation.

Table 9 describes the rankings of factors by individuals who intend to stay in the profession and those who intend to leave. Four questions asked subjects about serious consideration of leaving the field, previous job search activity, planned job search activity, and expected future vocational placement. Any two answers that would signify previous or planned activity was considered a subject who intended to change professions ("Leaver"). All others were "Stayers."



Table 9

Rankings of Factors by Stayers and Leavers

Factors	Stayers		Leavers		Total	
	(n = 137)		(n = 67)		(n = 204)	
	#	Rank	#	Rank	#	Rank
Administration	698	1	367	1	1065	1
Policy	689	2	313	2	1002	2
Conditions	646	3	302	4	948	3
Salary	552	4	308	3	860	4
Supervision	514	5	264	5	778	5
Security	449	7	225	6	674	6
Benefits	463	6	190	7	653	7
Peers	384	8	180	8	564	8
Subordinates	368	9	173	9	541	9

Few differences were evident from the raw data when grouped according to this variable. Both stayers and leavers rated administration (1) and policies (2) as their greatest causes of dissatisfaction. The only factor causing more dissatisfaction among leavers was salary, which was ranked 3 by the leavers and 4 by the stayers. Because of the literature that indicates stated intention to leave is closely correlated with actual job turnover,

the ranking of factors by these two groups may be one of the most important for review and analysis by policy makers in agencies and professional organizations.

### Statistical Testing of the Hypotheses

The data were analyzed using a multisample chi-square test to determine if significant differences existed between the treatment groups in each hypothesis. In accordance with the Dunn-Bonferroni correction factor for multiple comparisons (Dunn, 1974), the alpha level for significance of each comparison must be the product of the stated alpha level divided by the total number of comparisons. In this study an overall .05 level required  $p > .01$  to claim significant difference in the rankings of any one item by the variable groups. Tables 4 through 8 contain the data that were submitted to treatment using the BMDP1D program. Tables 10 through 14 in the Appendix detail the chi-square values found between each treatment group.

Hypothesis 1 regarding differences between males and females revealed only one significant difference among the 9 job dissatisfaction factors compared. Male subjects' ranking of job security was higher than expected and female subjects' ranking was lower than expected. With a required

$\chi^2$  equal to or greater than 6.64 for significance with two groups, the resulting  $\chi^2 = 12.66$ , df = 1, is significant at the .01 level of confidence.

For Hypothesis 2 (differences in age ranges), only one significant difference was found in the comparisons of rankings. There was a significant difference among the three groups on the ranking of job security as a job dissatisfaction factor. The required  $\chi^2$  for significant difference among three groups at the .01 alpha level must be equal to or greater than 9.21. The difference found between expected and observed values on the ranking of job security was  $\chi^2 = 10.35$ , with 8 df. In order to determine the treatment variable with a difference, a post hoc test consisting of a computerized chi-square analysis designed for this study (Hinson, 1992) was used. Although the early and middle career stage respondents did not differ from the expected values on job security, the late career stage subjects did.

Hypothesis 3 concerned differences between persons who have completed different levels of college degrees. No significant differences were found in the rankings by persons with bachelor's and master's degrees. To answer a closely related question about differences in persons with different degree areas, chi-square values were computed for the rankings by subjects who held therapeutic recreation

degrees and those who held degrees in other areas.

Although the ranking of subordinates as a dissatisfaction factor is notable, the difference does not meet the requirements to be significant at the .01 level.

Hypothesis 4 was related to the differences between persons intending to leave the therapeutic recreation profession and individuals who intend to stay in the profession. None of the differences in rankings of the factor resulted in a  $\chi^2$  large enough to be significant.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter V contains a summary of the study, a discussion of the findings, conclusion, and the implications that can be inferred from those findings. The investigator has presented recommendations for further research based on the implementation and results of this study.

#### Summary of the Study

The purposes for undertaking this research were (a) to analyze identified factors causing job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation personnel in a five state region and (b) to determine whether selected demographic variables influenced significant differences in the rankings of dissatisfaction factors. The investigator hoped that this information would be of great value to professional organizations, universities, and program administrators attempting to produce and maintain a stable and productive work force of therapeutic recreation professionals.

The first chapter provided an introduction to the study, including statements on the importance and relevance of this research to therapeutic recreation as a young and growing profession. Chapter . contained the statement of the problem, limitations of the study, the definitions and explanations of terms used throughout the study, and the four hypotheses to be analyzed for statistical significance.

Chapter II presented a review of literature relevant to the study. The three headings of (a) factors related to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, (b) occupational stress, burnout, turnover, and career change, and (c) personnel issues within the field of therapeutic recreation were used to categorize published findings relevant to the area under investigation. Some of the earliest studies on job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction were reviewed, with an emphasis on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory which differentiated between factors that increase motivation and those that create dissatisfaction. Stress and burnout were found to increase turnover rates and ultimately may lead to career change. Numerous studies on human service workers have reinforced that notion. No studies were found, specifically, identifying and ranking the factors that cause job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation personnel.

Chapter III outlined the procedures used in the design and implementation of this study. The method of research was described in the following areas: population and sample of subjects, development and description of the instruments, collection of the data, tabulation of the data and organization for computer input, and treatment of the data.

Chapter IV described the data collected and the results of the subsequent analyses. The subjects were identified from the membership lists of the National Therapeutic Recreation Society and the American Therapeutic Recreation Association. Each of the 320 subjects was mailed a survey questionnaire that included demographic information and a paired comparison instrument. The paired comparison technique resulted in a rank order listing of the nine job dissatisfaction factors for each subject.

The subjects were mailed a survey instrument and a letter requesting their participation on January 1, 1992. Three weeks later a post card reminder was sent to any who had not returned their survey. Two weeks following, a second letter and survey were sent to those who had still not responded. A final postcard reminder was mailed 1 week after the second survey mailing. Subjects were notified in the last postcard that February 21 was the final date for submitting their data and subsequently all

those that were received by February 24 were included. By the last day, two hundred and thirty-five subjects returned surveys for a return rate of 73%. Two hundred and five surveys (71%) were deemed usable for the research project.

Analysis of the data was accomplished using the BMDP 1D and 2D software programs. A specialized computer program was created for the post hoc analysis of the differences between the three age groups. The listings of factors by treatment groups were examined for significant differences by subjecting the data to a chi-square analysis.

### Discussion of the Findings

The findings presented were established from the demographic and paired comparison data collected on the 205 surveys. Job dissatisfaction factors were ranked as a result of a frequency count of times chosen and compared according to the variables specified in the hypotheses. The .05 level of significance (adjusted to .01 by the Dunn-Bonferroni protocol) was set to accept or reject the hypotheses.

The subjects participating in the study reported the following demographic characteristics:

1. Surveys ( $N = 320$ ) were distributed to potential subjects, of which 235 were returned and 205 qualified for



inclusion in the study.

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2. Of the 205 subjects in the study, 31 were males and 171 were females. This represented 15% and 83% of the sample.

3. About one-third (35.1%) were under 30 years old, 69.9% were 31-50 years old, and 3.5% were 51 years or older.

4. The job titles of respondents included Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (51.7%), Director (20%), Recreation Therapist (9.8%), College/University Faculty (4.9%), and Other (13.6%).

5. Almost all of the subjects held college degrees with 58.9% having bachelor's degrees, 32.7% having master's degrees, and 6.9% having doctoral degrees. Only 1.5% did not possess a college degree. Of those with degrees, 76.4% of the degrees were in therapeutic recreation.

6. Annual salary ranges included only 8.8% who earned less than \$18,000. Just over half (55.6%) were paid \$18,001 to \$24,000, and 35.6% received more than \$30,000 annually.

7. Although the reported number of years in the field increased over previous studies (33.2% in the field 6-10 years and 24.9% for 11-15 years), the tenure in current position still remains relatively low. Over three-fourths (75.4%) have been at their current position for less than 5

years.

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8. Forty percent of the subjects were members of NTRS, 26.3% were members of ATRA, 25.9% held memberships in both organizations, while 7.8% did not report being a member of either.

9. The most frequent (48.5%) size of agency where the subjects were employed provided services to 26-125 clients per day. The next most frequent (26.5%) were large agencies serving 226 or more clients per day. Therapeutic recreation staff in over half (52.6%) of the agencies worked with 26-125 clients per day.

10. Most (72.1%) of the agencies are oriented toward providing clinical intervention.

11. Answers to several questions about activities or plans for leaving the therapeutic recreation profession noted that 62.7% of the subjects had considered leaving the field in the last 2 years and 42% had actively searched for a position in a new field in the last 6 months. Although 35.8% did plan to be working in the field in 5 years, 21.9% did not, and another 42.3% were unsure of their future vocational choice.

12. Factors causing job dissatisfaction among all subjects were interaction with supervisors and management (1), company policies, organization, and administration (2), working conditions (3), salary (4), technical

supervision (5), job security (6), benefits (7), interrelationships with peers (8), and interrelationships with subordinates (9).

13. Confirmation of the rankings was also strengthened by the answers to the open ended survey question that asked, "What do you think are the two greatest causes of job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation specialist?". The answers lack of credibility and respect as a therapist and salary were given many more times than any other answer.

14. The only job dissatisfaction factors ranked significantly different by treatment groups were the males' higher than expected ranking of job security and the lower than expected ranking of job security by subjects in the 51 and older age range.

The findings regarding each of the hypotheses were as follows:

1. There is no significant difference between males and females on the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors.

Accepted with a significant departure noted on the single factor of job security.

2. There is no significant difference between age ranges on the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors. Accepted with a significant departure noted on the single factor of job security.

3. There is no significant difference between persons with bachelor's and master's degrees on the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors. Accepted

4. There is no significant difference between persons who intend to stay in the profession and those who intend to leave the profession on the rankings of job dissatisfaction factors. Accepted

### Conclusion

The major finding of this study showed that therapeutic recreation professionals in the Southwest region experience job dissatisfaction primarily due to a perceived lack of respect and credibility as professionals. The highest rated source of dissatisfaction across all demographic conditions was interactions with supervisors and administrators.

### Implications

This study allowed the investigator to identify and rank significant causes of job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation professionals. The profession should be concerned with the number of individuals leaving the field and the very short tenure in therapeutic recreation positions. Is it possible for professionals to orient and train a staff properly, much less operate a high quality program, when the turnover rate is so high and the

longevity on the job is 5 years or less for 75.4% of the therapeutic recreation professionals?

Reported salary levels in the Southwest in 1992 are as high as in any other study across the United States. As the number and quality of professional positions increase, the profession must develop competent administrators and master therapists who produce quality services. If not, we can expect existing therapeutic recreation positions to be converted to jobs for other professions, into additional, untrained aides or be phased out entirely in the constant search for efficiency and accountability?

Job factors causing the most dissatisfaction were interactions with supervisors and administrators, company policies and organization, working conditions, and salaries. Are not all four of these factors perceived by therapeutic recreation personnel as indicators of a lack of credibility and respect for the therapeutic recreation specialist as a professional? It is clear from the number of times that these factors were chosen that large numbers of therapeutic recreation staff experience that perception, and this perception was confirmed by responses to the open ended question on the survey.

Is it not incumbent upon professional organizations, university programs, and caring administrators to delve

further into the causes of job dissatisfaction for therapeutic recreation professionals and to seek remedies? Emphasis should be placed on identifying the critical skills and knowledges that will gain respect and credibility for therapeutic recreation staff in the clinical and community environments and to insist that interpersonal communication skills be a required qualification for both therapist and administrator positions. Unless we do so, is our professional future likely to ever overcome the difficulties of a field dominated by inexperienced specialists who struggle individually and as a group with critical professional issues without the guidance of more experienced professionals?

#### Recommendations

In light of the findings of this study, the investigator recommends the following actions:

1. Further analysis of the data from this study comparing job dissatisfaction factors of individuals who have primarily administrative positions to individuals who have primarily direct care positions;
2. Further analysis of the data from this study comparing the job dissatisfaction factors of individuals who work in agencies with different orientations;
3. Further analysis of the data from this study to

determine the relationship between individuals with a stated intention to leave the profession and other demographic variables;

4. Continued research into the causes of perceived lack of respect and credibility among therapeutic recreation personnel;

5. Development of training programs for therapeutic recreation administrators to increase their skills in personnel administration;

6. Development of aggressive research and subsequent curriculum modules on gaining credibility and respect from allied health fields for therapeutic recreation professionals; and

7. A future study of the interpersonal dynamics between therapeutic recreation professionals and supervisors.

8. A study of the impact of gender upon perceived lack of respect and credibility.

9. A study that examines credibility and respect at a conceptual level.

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE



## THERAPEUTIC RECREATION SURVEY

## Section I

Please place a check next to the correct answer or write the answer in the blank provided.

Title: ☐ Therapeutic Recreation Specialist  
☐ Recreation Therapist  
☐ Director of RT, TR, Activities Therapy, etc)  
☐ College/University Faculty  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Age: ☐ Under 20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ 61+

College Degree Area ☐ Therapeutic Recreation ☐ Other degree \_\_\_\_\_

College Degree Level: ☐ No degree ☐ Bachelors ☐ Masters ☐ Doctorate

Annual Salary: ☐ Less than 12,000 ☐ 12,001-18,000 ☐ 18,001-24,000 ☐ 24,001-30,000 ☐ 30,001-36,000 ☐ 36,001+

Number of Years in Therapeutic Recreation: ☐ Under 5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 26+

Number of Years at Your Current Position: ☐ Under 5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 26+

Are you currently a member of either or both of the following professional organizations? ☐ ATRA ☐ NTRS

Approximately how many clients are served by your overall organization/agency on a "normal" day?  
☐ Under 25 ☐ 26-125 ☐ 126-225 ☐ 226+

Approximately how many clients are served by Therapeutic Recreation services on a "normal" day?  
☐ Under 25 ☐ 26-125 ☐ 126-225 ☐ 226+

How many total Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (or other providers of therapeutic recreation services whether certified or not) work in your agency? \_\_\_\_\_

If possible, please give the typical active caseload of a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist at your agency.  
 One therapist to \_\_\_\_\_ active clients

Is your agency oriented more toward: ☐ Clinical intervention ☐ Community recreation ☐ Equally split

Using a total of 100%, approximately what percentage of your time is spent in the following activities?

- ☐ % Interaction with clients
- ☐ % Documentation/clerical work
- ☐ % Supervision of other staff
- ☐ % Treatment team planning
- ☐ % Administration, program planning
- ☐ % Inservice training
- ☐ % Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ % Other \_\_\_\_\_

100% TOTAL

Are you seriously considering finding a job outside of the Therapeutic Recreation field in the last two years?  
 Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you actively searched for a job outside of Therapeutic Recreation in the last two years (prepared or submitted a resume, called about possible openings, interviewed, etc)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have plans to participate in an active job search outside of Therapeutic Recreation in the next six months?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you will be working in five years, do you see yourself employed in the Therapeutic Recreation field?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Do you plan to look for another job in Therapeutic Recreation field at a different agency in the near future?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

What do you believe are the two greatest causes of dissatisfaction among Therapeutic Recreation Specialists?

#### DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

Below are the definitions of terms that will be used to interpret your choices in Section II. Also included are some examples unless the definition itself is obvious.

**Company policies and administration-** agency organization, management or existing agency policies.

Example: Chain of command, personnel policies

**Working conditions-** physical requirements of the job, the amount of work or the conditions of the facilities/equipment used.

Example: Client caseload, office or activity space

**Salary-** compensation paid as wages.

**Interpersonal relations with peers-** the quality of interactions with and respect from other therapists and professionals.

Example: Physical Therapists, Teachers

**Interpersonal relations with supervisors-** the quality of interactions with and respect from supervisors and administrators.

Example: Department Head, Administrative Directors

**Interpersonal relations with subordinates-** the quality of interactions with and respect from persons under your supervision.

Example: Aides, volunteers, other staff

**Supervision-technical-** competence and fairness of the direct supervisor.

Example: Clinical skills, impartiality in personnel evaluations or promotions

**Benefits-** additional compensation not paid as wages.

Ex: Paid holidays, health insurance, educational support

**Job security-** the probability that this job will continue to be available to you in the future.

Ex: Layoffs within the agency, supervisor tenure

## Section II

Listed below are nine factors that can cause employee dissatisfaction. In front of each statement, in CAPITAL letters, is the word which will be used throughout the questionnaire instead of the full statement.

POLICY.....Company policies and administration  
 CONDITIONS.....Working conditions  
 SALARY.....Salary  
 PEERS.....Interpersonal relations with peers  
 ADMIN.....Interpersonal relations with supervisors  
 SUBORDINATES.....Interpersonal relations with subordinates  
 SUPERVISION.....Supervision-technical  
 BENEFITS.....Benefits  
 SECURITY.....Job security

Please circle the factor, IN EACH PAIR, which causes you the most dissatisfaction with your job.

Conditions.....Salary	Security.....Benefits
Peers.....Admin	Policies.....Subordinates
Supervision.....Benefits	Conditions.....Admin
Security.....Subordinates	Peers.....Policies
Salary.....Admin	Supervision..Subordinates
Conditions.....Policies	Security.....Peers
Benefits.....Subordinates	Salary.....Policies
Supervision.....Peers	Conditions.....Security
Admin.....Policies	Benefits.....Peers
Salary.....Security	Supervision....Conditions
Subordinates.....Peers	Admin.....Security
Benefits.....Conditions	Salary.....Supervision
Policies.....Security	Subordinates...Conditions
Admin.....Supervision	Benefits.....Salary
Peers.....Conditions	policies.....Supervision
Subordinates.....Salary	Admin.....Benefits
Security.....Supervision	Peers.....Salary
Policies.....Benefits	Subordinates.....Admin



to: J. Randy Routon, Ex. Dir. / ~~1/10~~  
Collin County MHMR Center  
P.O. Box 828  
McKinney, Tx 75069

**APPENDIX B**  
**COVER LETTER AND REMINDERS**



**COLLIN COUNTY  
MENTAL HEALTH  
MENTAL RETARDATION  
CENTER**

P.O. Box 828  
McKinney, TX 75069  
Administration  
(214) 542-8737  
Plano Outpatient Clinic  
(214) 422-5939  
McKinney Outpatient Clinic  
(214) 542-0394

January 1, 1992

Dear Fellow Therapeutic Recreation Specialist:

I am writing to request assistance in completing a research study on the field of Therapeutic Recreation. Enclosed is a survey that should only take a few minutes, but will provide invaluable information for enhancing our profession. All information will remain confidential and no names will be linked to any data in the published manuscript.

There are two sections for you to complete:

Section I asks demographic information about you, your current job and time in the profession.

Section II asks you to compare job factors that cause job dissatisfaction.

I hope that you will find time to help me with this important study. All members of the Therapeutic Recreation work force may gain by the identification of critical factors causing job dissatisfaction. My doctoral committee at TWU (Dr. Bettye Myers, Dr. Jean Tague and Dr. Claudine Sherrill) and I thank you for your valuable time.

Please return the survey by January 21. You may fold it on the dotted lines and fasten with tape or a staple. The address and a stamp are already in place.

Happy New Year,

J. Randy Routon  
Executive Director

POSTCARD REMINDERS

94

January 24, 1992

Dear TR Friend,

HELP! HELP! Maybe it is already in the mail or you just haven't had time, but I have not received your survey as of today. It will only take a few minutes. Please HELP with this important research. If your copy got lost, call me at (214) 412-6777 and I'll send you another copy.

Thank you,

J. Randy Routon

February 14, 1992

LAST CHANCE for your input to be counted! The final cut off date for surveys to be included in the therapeutic recreation research project is February 21. Please take a few minutes to help our profession.

J. Randy Routon



COLLIN COUNTY  
MENTAL HEALTH  
MENTAL RETARDATION  
CENTER

P.O. Box 828  
McKinney, TX 75069

Administration  
(214) 542-8737

Plano Outpatient Clinic  
(214) 422-5939

McKinney Outpatient Clinic  
(214) 542-0394

February 7, 1992

Dear T.R. Friend,

In January I mailed you a survey on job dissatisfaction among Therapeutic Recreation professionals. As of today, I have not received your survey back and wanted to send another copy knowing how surveys can get lost in the mail or buried in the paperwork, and ask you to consider completing it.

Studies that have been done on our profession show that a majority of all therapists have less than five years experience and most are less than 30 years old. It is critical that we identify the reasons people are dissatisfied with the field so that professional organizations, training programs and individual administrators can begin to resolve those issues. I am committed to helping move this profession forward.

I have had a very good return rate already but without your input the data will not be as representative of the field as I would like. If you choose not to participate, would you please call and leave a message at my office (214) 542-8737 so I can be assured that you have received the mailings. No one will try to convince you to participate.

Thank you for your time in reading this letter. I hope to hear from you before February 14.

Sincerely,

  
J. Randy Routon



## APPENDIX C

### COMPUTERIZED CODING FORMAT

Data were coded for input into the computer in order to tally frequencies and analyze the data. Below is the format used.

F3.0, 16F1.0, 2F3.0, F1.0, 13F3.0, F1.0, 1X, 13F1.0

**APPENDIX D**  
**DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS NOT USED IN STUDY**

## SUMMARY OF 30 RESPONDENTS NOT USED IN STUDY

	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
<b>Job Title</b>		
Therapeutic Recreation Specialist	10	33
Recreation Therapist	6	20
Director	6	20
College/University Faculty	2	7
Other	6	20
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	11	37
Female	16	53
Missing data	3	10
<b>Age</b>		
21-30	7	23
31-50	21	70
51 and older	1	3
Missing data	1	3
<b>Degree level</b>		
Bachelor's	16	53
Master's	10	33
Doctorate	1	3
Missing data	3	10
<b>Degree area</b>		
Therapeutic recreation	16	59
Other	11	41

## Salary

18,000 or less	7	23
18,001-30,000	16	53
31,001 or more	5	17
Missing data	2	7

## Years in TR

5 or less	8	27
6-10	11	37
11-15	4	13
16-20	5	17
21-25	1	3
Missing data	1	3

## Tenure in current position

5 or less	18	60
6-10	7	23
11-15	2	7
16-20	0	0
21-25	1	3
Missing data	2	7

## Professional membership

NTRS	14	47
ATRA	4	13
Both	5	17
Missing data	7	23

Agency size/clients per day		100
-----------------------------	--	-----

25 or less	5	17
26-125	14	47
126-225	3	10
226 or more	3	10
Missing data	5	17

TR clients per day

25 or less	5	17
26-125	15	50
126-225	3	10
226 or more	2	7
Missing data	5	17

Agency orientation

Clinical intervention	17	57
Community/special needs	4	13
Equally split	3	10
Missing data	6	20

Answers to questions about plans or activities to change jobs

	Yes	No	Unsure
1. Serious consideration to leave	13	13	-
2. Recent job search out of TR	10	16	-
3. Plan to search out of TR	7	16	-
4. See self in TR in 5 years	13	3	10
5. Look for TR job in other agency	6	13	7

## APPENDIX E

## NUMBER OF TR STAFF IN SUBJECTS' AGENCIES

Subjects were asked, "How many total Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (or other providers of therapeutic recreation services whether certified or not) work in your agency?" Below are the responses.

<u>Number of Staff</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
0	8	4
1	33	17
2	31	16
3	24	12
4	15	8
5	16	8
6	14	7
7	10	5
8	13	7
9	4	2
10	6	3
11	3	2
12	4	2
13	1	1
15	4	2
16	2	1
18	2	1
20	2	1
22	1	1
24	1	1
25	1	1
26	1	1
40	1	1
144	1	1
262		

## APPENDIX F

## REPORTED CLIENT TO STAFF RATIOS

Subjects were asked, "If possible, please give the typical active caseload of a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist at your agency. One therapist to \_\_\_ active clients." Below are the responses.

<u>Number of Clients per Therapist</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
0	3	2
3	1	1
4	4	2
5	4	2
6	1	1
7	4	2
8	18	10
9	2	1
10	18	10
11	3	2
12	9	5
13	3	2
14	1	1
15	28	6
18	7	4
20	17	10
22	2	1
23	1	1
24	1	1
25	6	3
30	11	6
33	1	1
35	1	1
40	4	2
45	5	3
50	7	4
60	2	1
65	2	1
70	1	1
75	1	1
100	3	2
105	1	1
125	1	1

## APPENDIX G

LIST OF JOB DISSATISFACTION FACTORS IDENTIFIED  
BY SUBJECTS IN A FIVE STATE SURVEY

Subjects were asked "What do you think are the two greatest causes of job dissatisfaction among therapeutic recreation specialists?". Below is the list of answers with the number of times given.

<u>Response</u>	<u>f</u>
Credibility/respect as a professional	112
Salary	107
Administrative support/priorities	39
Professionalism/professional organizations	29
Caseloads/performance expectations	28
Advancement/job opportunities	26
Funding/supplies/support staff	17
Public/patient knowledge of value of TR	17
Third party reimbursement	14
Stress/burnout	12
Job security	8
University training	6
Documentation requirements	6
Certification issues	6
Work hours/days	4
Job benefits	4
Others doing TR work	3
Boredom	2
Private company ethics	2
Lack of flexibility	2
Difficult patients/families	1
Lack of standardized titles	1
Professionals priority of salary/prestige	1
over enjoyment of providing services	1
Lack of planning time	1
Lack of continuing education	1



**APPENDIX H**  
**CHI-SQUARE ANALYSES FOR HYPOTHESES**

Table 10

Chi-square Analysis for Rankings by Males and Females

Factor	Males		Females		$\chi^2$
	( <u>n</u> = 31)		( <u>n</u> = 171)		
	o	e	o	e	
Administration	172	161	880	891	0.69
Policies	140	152	851	839	1.04
Conditions	127	144	808	791	2.11
Salary	149	132	712	729	2.45
Supervision	111	119	666	658	0.59
Security	134	101	522	555	12.66*
Benefits	87	98	551	540	1.27
Peers	87	87	481	481	0.00
Subordinates	70	83	472	459	2.26

\*Significant at the .01 level

Note. o refers to observed, and e refers to expected;  
df was 1

Table 11

Chi-square Analysis for Rankings by Age Groups

Factor	Age in Years						$\chi^2$
	18-30		31-50		51 +		
	( <u>n</u> = 72)		( <u>n</u> = 126)		( <u>n</u> = 7)		
	o	e	o	e	o	e	
Admin.	378	376	645	658	47	36	3.23
Policies	357	355	604	620	48	34	5.81
Conditions	321	333	598	583	29	32	1.20
Salary	304	305	529	535	37	30	1.87
Superv.	263	274	494	481	25	27	0.99
Security	245	239	427	418	8	23	10.35*
Benefits	244	230	392	402	18	22	2.00
Peers	226	199	320	349	21	19	6.12
Subord.	187	189	341	331	10	18	4.16

\*Significant at the .01 level

Note. o refers to observed, and e refers to expected;  
df was 2.

Table 12

Chi-square Analysis for Rankings by Degree Level

Factor	Bachelor's		Master's		$\chi^2$
	( <u>n</u> = 72)		( <u>n</u> = 126)		
	o	e	o	e	
Administration	613	619	350	344	0.16
Policies	583	583	324	324	0.00
Conditions	549	555	314	308	0.14
Salary	517	505	269	281	0.62
Supervision	437	450	263	250	1.00
Security	391	390	215	216	0.00
Benefits	377	360	182	199	2.23
Peers	328	341	202	189	1.23
Subordinates	303	318	192	177	1.92

Note. o refers to observed, and e refers to expected;  
df was 1.

Table 13

Chi-square Analysis for Rankings by Degree Area

Factor	TR degree		Other		$\chi^2$
	(n = 149)		(n = 44)		
	o	e	o	e	
Administration	772	767	222	227	0.01
Policies	722	734	228	216	0.68
Conditions	689	698	215	206	0.42
Salary	652	649	189	192	0.03
Supervision	575	558	148	165	2.14
Security	499	492	138	145	0.39
Benefits	478	473	134	139	0.26
Peers	411	413	124	122	0.00
Subordinates	371	395	141	117	6.19

Note. o refers to observed, and e refers to expected;  
df was 1.

Table 14

Chi-square Analysis for Rankings by Stayers and Leavers

Factor	Stayers		Leavers		$\chi^2$
	(n = 149)		(n = 44)		
	o	e	o	e	
Administration	698	715	367	350	1.24
Policies	689	673	313	329	1.12
Conditions	646	637	302	311	0.38
Salary	552	577	308	283	3.33
Supervision	514	522	264	256	0.38
Security	449	453	225	221	0.01
Benefits	463	438	190	215	3.93
Peers	384	379	180	185	0.16
Subordinates	368	363	173	178	0.17

Note. o refers to observed, and e refers to expected;  
df was 1.