Perceptions of Workplace Equity of Therapeutic Recreation Professionals

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Abstract:
Previous research in the area of leisure services has found that gender inequity is a significant problem. The purpose of this study was to examine equity issues within therapeutic recreation, specifically perceptions of workplace equity and workplace attitudes and behaviors including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and intent to leave. The study was based on the Equity Theory and the construct of Equity Sensitivity. A mail survey was sent to 1000 CTRSs in North America. Results indicated that primary differences between men and women were in areas of job satisfaction and OCB. Differences were also found among categories of equity sensitivity with regard to organizational commitment, OCB, and intent to leave. Recommendations for practitioners and researchers are noted.
KEY WORDS: Therapeutic Recreation, Gender, Equity, Work Attitudes

Article:

While a few studies in the field of therapeutic recreation (TR) have addressed professional issues such as burnout, personality types, salaries, and inequities between TR and other health care disciplines (Bedini, Williams, & Thompson, 1995; Bongguk & Austin, 2000; Skalko & Smith, 1989; Smith, Perry, Neumayer, Potter, & Smeal, 1992), only tangential research (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1995) has examined the issue of equity between men and women in the field of therapeutic recreation. The field of therapeutic recreation is dominated by women. In fact, 86% of professionals in the field are female (O'Morrow, 2000). Past research indicates that professions dominated by women tend to be lower paid, devalued, and perhaps provide less job satisfaction than professions traditionally filled by men (Anker, 1997; Loscocco & Spitze, 1991; Steinberg, 1990). Often these findings can be attributed to the fact that men simply do not perceive female-dominated professions to be "true" professions (Anker; Loscocco & Spitze; Steinberg).

The purpose of this study was to conduct a national examination of equity issues within therapeutic recreation to examine if differences exist as a result of the predominance of women in the profession. Specifically, this study sought to explore perceptions of workplace equity and levels of equity sensitivity between men and women working in therapeutic recreation contexts, as well as perceptions of workplace behaviors and attitudes. The behaviors and attitudes studied included organizational commitment, organizational citizenship, job satisfaction, and intent to leave.

The Role of Women in the Workforce

The question of equity in the workplace is not unique to therapeutic recreation. While over 75% of women ages 25-54 are in the workforce (Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.), women's advancement in the workplace continues to be somewhat disheartening. For example, the percentage of women in executive positions in corporate America grew only slightly from 8.7% in 1995 to 12.5% in 2000 and the percentage of minority women has not budged from 1.3% since 1995 (Scott, 2000). In fact, only 4.1% of top earners in the United States are women. Similarly, less than 5% of senior managers at the level of Vice President and above in Fortune 1000 companies are women (Thompson, 1999).

Past research into the area of leisure services has found that gender inequity is a significant problem (Allison, 1999; Arnold & Shinew, 1997; Frisby, 1992; Frisby & Brown, 1991; Henderson, 1992; Henderson & Bialeschki, 1995). For example, in their study of gender equity in Illinois public recreation agencies, Shinew, Anderson, and Arnold (2000) found that while 54% of middle managers were women, only 11% of executive level professionals were women. Although this percentage is higher than many other industries, it is still disconcerting. Shinew et al. found continuing evidence that women were experiencing inequity and discrimination within their agencies. For instance, women reported fewer promotion opportunities and felt that the profession was not doing enough to promote women. In addition, the women reported salary inequities and perceptions of a glass ceiling within the workplace. Interestingly, these findings were consistent among all levels of management-entry, middle, and executive.

Henderson (1992) utilized the complementary-contribution model in her research on the role of women in the workplace. This model asserts that women are different than men in terms of what they value in work and what they contribute to the workforce. In this model, different does not imply less, but suggests that women offer their organization something unique. While women may not bring the exact same contributions as men do to the workplace, that does not mean that those contributions are any less valuable. In Henderson's review of the literature concerning the role of women in the leisure profession, she found that women in leisure services faced discrimination in the form of a "glass ceiling." A glass ceiling can be defined as an invisible barrier that women run into in their progress up the career ladder, characterized by issues such as sexual harassment and gender discrimination (Scott, 2000). Henderson also found that women often combined their career with taking care of a family and spouse, and for that reason they had distinct areas of concern in their career development process. Henderson concluded that balancing personal and professional lives is often more of an issue for women than it is for men.

Research has shown that women in different areas of leisure services continue to experience inequities on the job. From lack of promotion opportunities to lower salaries, these inequities shed a negative light on the field of parks and recreation regarding career opportunities.

Women in Therapeutic Recreation

Although there has not been a great deal of research in the area of leisure service provision, even fewer studies have examined women's role and status in therapeutic recreation. However, Henderson and Bialeschki (1995) examined differences in female professionals in the areas of recreation programming and management, therapeutic recreation, and park resources. Utilizing Frisby's (1992) Model of Women's Career Development in Leisure Services, they focused on differences in the women's current position, professional associations, background factors, socio-economic factors, legislative factors, organizational factors, individual factors, and family factors to examine each group's career development. For therapeutic recreation specifically, Henderson and Bialeschki found that fewer female professionals were in administrative levels of management when compared to the professionals in other areas of recreation programming/management and park resource.

However, this could be attributed to the organizational structure that most therapeutic recreation professionals work within (e.g., hospitals, extended care facilities) where therapeutic recreation professionals simply would rarely be found in administrative positions. In addition, the therapeutic recreation professionals also supervised fewer employees and had control over the smallest budgets. While therapeutic recreation professionals had similar educational backgrounds, they had worked fewer years in the field and had experienced fewer promotions. In addition, those women working in therapeutic recreation earned the smallest incomes but they also reported working the least amount of overtime hours. Also, women in therapeutic recreation were less likely to report that their job kept them away from family and friends too much. Those in recreation programming/management and therapeutic recreation belonged to more professional associations than those in parks resources. Finally, those working in therapeutic recreation, perhaps because it is a female dominated profession, were less likely to have experienced sexual harassment and less likely to agree that unconscious discrimination occurs in their workplace.

The most recent analysis of therapeutic recreation practitioners (O'Morrow, 2000) supports Shinew et al.'s (2000) findings of salary disparity in the leisure delivery system albeit specific to therapeutic recreation. In a 1999 survey of Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists, O'Morrow found that among therapeutic recreation practitioners, men on average were earning $38,175 compared to $34,869 for the female professionals. In other words, female professionals were earning 91 cents for every dollar earned by the men.

It is apparent that while researchers have found evidence of inequities in some areas of parks and recreation, research focusing on the therapeutic recreation professional has been extremely limited. Beyond Henderson and Bialeschki's (1995) study and O'Morrow's (2000) work on examining specific job variables such as salary, very little has been done examining the workplace environment of therapeutic recreation practitioners. Therefore, this study was designed to address the inadequacies in this body of knowledge.

Theoretical Base
Equity Theory
This study was guided by Equity Theory (Adams, 1965). Equity Theory is based on the concept that whenever there is an exchange between two people there is the possibility that one side will see the exchange as inequitable. Two things are taken into consideration when an employee determines if an exchange is equitable or not. The first is the referent other. That is, an employee will make comparisons between her or his own situation and that of another employee in a similar situation to determine if she/he is being treated equitably.

The second consideration is the input/outcome ratio that is utilized by employees to determine if, in comparison to their referent others, they feel that they are being treated equitably or inequitably. People will compare what they are bringing to the job (e.g., education, experience) with what they are getting from the job (e.g., salary, benefits). If this ratio is not equal to that of the referent others', the employee will likely become angry if the input side outweighs the outcomes. On the other hand, if the outcomes outweigh the inputs in relationship to that of the referent others, they may experience a sense of guilt.

The two parts of the equity ratio, inputs and outcomes, have their own unique set of characteristics. Inputs are considered in the ratio only if they are recognized by the person as an input and are seen as relevant (Adams, 1963). Additionally, outcomes are seen as outcomes only if the person perceives them as such. Because inputs and outcomes are imperfectly correlated, situations of inequity arise (Adams, 1963; Weick, 1966). If inputs and outcomes were always perfectly correlated, inequity would not exist. The relationship between the two is almost completely psychological and therefore, feelings of inequity are not necessarily logical (Adams, 1963). Through socialization, people usually have a fairly clear understanding of what types of outcomes are appropriate for different situations.

While there are a number of ways to reduce perceived inequity, some ways are more feasible than others. For example, some inputs, such as sex and ethnicity, cannot be altered. However, inputs such as amount of work completed can be altered. Adams (1972) reported that people are more likely to adjust their inputs when they feel under-rewarded as opposed to over-rewarded. Additionally, the person may alter outcomes. These types of actions can be difficult to control, as they may include pay raises or promotions. Other options include leaving the job or psychologically distorting inputs or outcomes, making them higher or lower. A final option would be to change the referent other. This can also be difficult if the relationship is long-standing, as the person would have to make him or herself non-comparable to the other (Adams, 1963; Lawler & O'Gara, 1967; Patrick & Jackson, 1991; Weick, 1966).

Equity has been tied to retention, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational citizenship (Fok, Harman, Villere, & Freibert, 1996; Wall & Nolan, 1986). Therefore, the perceptions of equity that employees have in relation to their input/ outcome ratio can be key to the success of an organization. An organization that is known for treating its employees equitably is in a better position to attract top employees. Additionally, equitable treatment can help minimize conflict between co-workers as well as between subordinates and supervisors (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978).

Equity Sensitivity

Tied to Equity Theory, the construct of equity sensitivity (Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1985) is central to the theoretical basis of this current study. The Equity Sensitivity Construct suggests that perceptions of the input/outcome ratio can and will differ from person to person dependent upon personality traits. Huseman et al.'s sensitivity to equity continuum uses categories of sensitivity which are anchored by "Benevolents" and "Entitleds" with "Equity Sensitives" falling at the mid-point. According to Huseman et al. (1985), Benevolents are those people who are generally happier in situations where their inputs are higher than their level of outcomes. On the other end of the continuum, the Entitleds are those who are more satisfied with a situation where their outcomes exceed their inputs. The third category, Equity Sensitives, are most satisfied with a situation where inputs equal outcomes.

Although the Equity Sensitivity Construct was developed as a response to Equity Theory to illustrate how feelings of equity can differ from person to person, Huseman et al. (1985) also found the Expectancy Theory (Nadler & Lawler, 1977) useful in describing differences in perceptions of equity. Expectancy Theory states that people do things based on their expectancy that something in particular will occur as a result of their efforts. Equity Sensitives supported the Equity Theory in that the Equity Sensitives were most comfortable when inputs and outcomes were equal. The Benevolents and Entitleds, however, were more in line with Expectancy Theory because there was a positive relationship between the level of reward and job satisfaction. The Equity Sensitivity Construct allows for an explanation of the fact that while all people desire equity they define it in different ways, a fact not taken into consideration by Equity Theory alone. Specifically, some people's perceptions can be predicted by Expectancy Theory (Benevolents and Entitleds), others by Equity Theory (Equity Sensitives).

Entitlement to Equity

Of particular relevance to this study is that equity sensitivity plays a role in the differences between males and females in the workplace. Often female employees do not conform to the equity construct; they tend to be more benevolent than male workers. In fact, Major, Bylsma, and Cozzarelli (1989) found that significantly more female professionals than male professionals fall into the Benevolent category. Conversely, more men than women tend to be classified as Entitled.

The issue of entitlement is certainly an aspect of the Equity Sensitivity Construct. Major (1987) offered a number of reasons why men and women might differ in their sense of entitlement. First, the difference may be a consequence of past wage discrimination giving women a lower pay referent. Second, restricted social comparisons may also play a role. Often employees compare their situation primarily with same-sex/same-job others who would probably earn a similar salary-for women, often less than men. Third, society sees jobs held by women as less valuable and easier. Finally, women judge themselves harder in absence of feedback, are less likely to take credit for their success, and more likely to accept responsibility for failure.

Other possible ways of explaining differences in entitlement relate to the ethic of care first suggested by Gilligan (1982). She presented a distinction between an ethic of care (more "female") and an ethic of justice (more "male"). According to this concept, the ethic of care is concerned with relating to others and identifying others' needs. The ethic of care also supports a sense of responsibility for caring. The ethic of justice, on the other hand, focuses more on the application of rules and one's rights regarding them. Similarly, Jost (1997) suggested that women may value material rewards (i.e., pay) less than men, preferring "contextual" rewards (i.e., environmental). Therefore, women who are more likely aligned with an ethic of care might not be as concerned with issues of equity as are men.

Wage discrimination, restricted social comparisons, and an ethic of care may add to a feeling of lower entitlement to equity for women. Unfortunately, if communicated to an employer, these feelings of lower entitlement can result in less pay compared to those with identical qualifications (Jackson, Sullivan, & Gardner, 1992). Also, socially sanctioned gender role expectations for women in the workplace encourage women to be supportive and compassionate. Women have been judged negatively if they stray from these expectations

(Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992). In addition, women who are underpaid do not necessarily see their situation as unjust (Major, 1989).

In summary, the Equity Sensitivity Construct, as it takes into consideration both Equity and Expectancy Theories. It provides a solid starting point for addressing workplace issues, particularly in the framework of examining gender differences. Because Equity Theory does not explain differences in how individuals react to inequity, the Equity Sensitivity Construct makes up for this deficiency by focusing on the important differences between individuals regarding how they perceive and react to a situation of inequity. The equity sensitivity continuum, particularly as measured by Huseman et al. (1985), provides a more precise measurement of perceptions of inequity and work issues than is available from other theories (e.g. Equity, Expectancy). While the literature does not take into consideration the question of to what extent an employee will remain in their equity sensitivity category in varying extreme situations of inequity, the Equity Sensitivity Construct provides a solid basis for this current investigation.

Key Variables

The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of workplace equity, including levels of equity sensitivity, among men and women in therapeutic recreation. Perceptions of workplace behaviors and attitudes as related to equity sensitivity were also explored. The behaviors and attitudes examined were: organizational commitment, organizational citizenship, job satisfaction, and intent to leave. Each of these variables are described below.

Organizational Commitment

According to Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979), organizational commitment can be characterized by three elements. First, the worker must have a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values. Second, the employee must possess the willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization. Finally, the employee must have a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. As might be expected, a positive relationship has been found between perceptions of equity and levels of organizational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Organizational commitment is vital to the health of an organization. It has been used to predict absenteeism, performance, and turnover, among other things. It has also been credited for reducing negative behaviors and increasing the amount of work that employees perform (Mathieu & Zajac). Aven, Parker, and McEvoy (1993) found that committed workers contributed innovation and creativity to the organization and were more likely to remain with the organization.

Organizational Citizenship

Organizational citizenship is characterized by discretionary, extra-role behavior exhibited by an employee (Pond, Nacoste, Mohr, & Rodriguez, 1997). The three characteristics of this behavior are that it is discretionary, it is not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and it promotes the effective functioning of the organization (Pond et al.). Examples of organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) include helping another employee with his or her productivity when he or she falls behind, attending social events, or volunteering for assignments that are not required. Organizational citizenship, while not required of an employee, is essential to the well-being of any organization; it breeds innovation, creativity, and cooperation (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Folger, 1993).

Organizational citizenship has been examined as a resolution tool for inequity. For example, if an employee perceives negative inequity, she/he may limit OCB. This can be an effective tool because these behaviors are not required, and thus failure to perform them does not typically lead to sanctions against the employee. Conversely, if an employee perceives that she/he is on the receiving end of positive inequity, guilt may drive the employee to increase her/his OCB (Schnake, 1991).

Interestingly, in public sector leisure services, more women than men display negative OCB (Anderson, 2000). Initial interpretation of these findings focused on the specific negative behaviors that female professionals are engaging in, specifically spending more time on personal phone conversations and arriving to work on time less often than male coworkers. It is conceivable that this difference can be attributed to the "second shift" that

women work. The "second shift" is the non-paid housework that women complete once they have already completed a full day of paid work (Hochschild & Machung, 1989). Activities performed during this shift, including childrearing and household chores, may be indicative of the fact that women need work time to make family-related calls and that family responsibilities may delay women's arrival to work. It is interesting to note that Anderson found no difference in amount of time spent at work.

Job Satisfaction
Research suggests that job dissatisfaction is associated with perceived inequity. Miles, Hatfield, and Huseman (1989), in their work on how people react to inequity, found a number of relationships between reward levels (outcomes) and job satisfaction. They found that employees who were under-rewarded or over-rewarded were less satisfied than those who were equitably rewarded. Moreover, O'Neill and Mone (1998) found that equity correlated positively with job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and negatively with intent to leave. In Perry's (1993) national study of African American workers' general job satisfaction, she found that African American workers felt that they had the job skills for better pay, but that discrimination was preventing equity from occurring. Their perceived inputs were higher than their perceived outcomes and thus job satisfaction was low.

Intent to Leave
Turnover can be costly to an organization both in terms of monetary costs to replace employees and costs associated with reduced productivity. Often there are much higher costs associated with turnover in the upper echelons of an organization as executives can have a larger impact on an organization's financial success. In addition, executives are more expensive to replace and the loss of bright, high performing members of management means a loss of potential future leadership (Trevor, Gerhart, & Boudreau, 1997).

Sheehan (1993) stated that while an organization will save money by paying a new employee a lower salary and will gain new ideas as new employees come in, high turnover rates may lead to a decrease in effectiveness as well as innovation. He attributed these costs to the concept of inequity. When an employee leaves for a better job or derides the job that his coworkers are left with, those who stay with the organization may perceive that they are in a situation of inequity. Based on an experimental study of college students with which a feeling of inequity in a turnover situation was produced, Sheehan concluded that feelings of inequity did indeed lead to decreased productivity of the students who remained on the job. If a colleague leaves for a new job for reasons that have nothing to do with the job that the remaining employee keeps, then Equity Theory will not play a part in the situation.

Organizational commitment seems to be a good predictor of turnover. Deckter, Roznowski, and Harrison (1996) and Porter, Crampon, and Smith (1976) found that prior to an employee leaving an organization, he or she would show a significant decline in commitment. When an employee leaves an organization he or she is not necessarily leaving the type of job that he or she was engaged in, but is leaving the organization. Therefore, a lack of organizational commitment may be a more prevalent antecedent of turnover (Porter et al.).

Gender can also play a role in turnover. Misconceptions of women and their intentions to leave an organization can negatively affect their career path. Often managers view women as temporary workers, only working until they have a family. This misconception curtails managers from spending money on training women for advancement under the assumption that female employees will not be around in the future-women are not seen as long-term employees (Wentling, 1992). In reality, in the first six months on the job, Light and Ureta (1990) found that women were less likely to leave their job than were men (6.7% versus 10.3%). After five years on the job, the percentages drop to 3.1% for women and 4.9% for men. Light and Ureta did find, however, that women with a family will often choose to work at nine-to-five jobs that are close to home.

Research Questions
This study sought to explore perceptions of workplace equity between men and women working in therapeutic recreation contexts taking into consideration (a) equity sensitivity and (b) perceptions of workplace behaviors

and attitudes. Specifically, the behaviors and attitudes studied included: organizational commitment, organizational citizenship, job satisfaction, and intent to leave. Ultimately there were two primary research questions for this study. First, do men and women working in the context of therapeutic recreation have different perceptions of gender equity and if so, are there differences between men and women regarding workplace attitudes and behaviors as a result of different equity perceptions? Second, do men and women working in therapeutic recreation differ with regard to categories of equity sensitivity that they fall into and do these categories subsequently impact workplace attitudes and behaviors?

Methods
Sample
The sampling frame for the study was chosen from the National Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) membership list. There are approximately 16,000 members of NCTRC and the NCTRC membership is approximately 18% male and 82% female; the sample was chosen to serve as a representative sample of NCTRC members, allowing for variations in agency size and city populations. The sample was stratified by sex and was systematically drawn with a random starting point. A total of 1000 (200 men and 800 women) were drawn; all levels of management were included.

Questionnaire
A mail questionnaire was used to measure perceptions of equity and multiple work attitudes and behaviors among men and women employed in therapeutic recreation. Also included in the questionnaire were a number of demographic questions that were used as background information and to profile the study participants. The questionnaire was previously pilot tested in a similar study of public recreation personnel to assess its face validity and clarity. No changes were made to the questionnaire based on results from the pilot test.

Perceptions of equity were measured primarily through the use of a scale initially designed to examine the issue of equity in the field of architecture (Anthony, 1996). Shinew and Arnold (1998) had previously used the scale in the area of leisure services with a reliability coefficient of .76; the current study found an alpha of .80. Respondents were asked, "Indicate how you compare with members of the opposite sex in similar (work) positions. Comparisons may be made with individuals in your agency or at another organization that employs therapeutic recreation professionals." Respondents were given 10 statements for comparison; they were asked to respond according to a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "much less" to "much more." The items included opportunities for advancement, salary, amount of encouragement received from superiors, extent of participation in management decisions, amount of respect from clients, amount of respect from co-workers, amount of respect from subordinates, performance expectations, desirable work assignments, and employee benefits.

To measure equity in relation to promotion opportunities, respondents were asked to respond to three statements. The statements were "males are given fewer promotion opportunities than are females," "females are given fewer promotion opportunities than are males," and "there are adequate efforts made by the profession to promote women." Response options ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" on a 5-point Likert scale.

Organizational commitment was measured through the use of Mowday et al.'s (1979) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). The OCQ is comprised of 15 statements regarding feelings the respondent has about his or her organization. Statements included "I feel little loyalty to this organization," "I really care about the fate of this organization," and "I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help this organization be successful." Responses were based on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Mowday et al. found the instrument to have a Cronbach's alpha of .90, identical to the alpha of this study.

Brayfield and Rothe's (1951) Job Satisfaction Scale was also used in this study. This 19-item scale is a global measure of job satisfaction that assesses the degree to which respondents agree or disagree with a series of

evaluative statements including "I enjoy my work more than my leisure time," "I am disappointed that I ever took this job," There are some conditions concerning my job that could be improved," and "My job is like a hobby to me." A 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" was used for the evaluation of each statement. Reliability coefficients for this scale have ranged from .78-.99 (Brayfield & Rothe; Price & Mueller, 1986). This study had a reliability coefficient of .90.

Organizational citizenship was measured using an instrument developed by Smith, Organ, and Near (1983) and modified by Pond et al. (1997) that measures both aspects of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)-altruism and generalized compliance. The scale has 16 items that describe OCB behaviors. The items included "volunteer for things that are not required," "give advance notice if unable to come to work," and "assist your supervisor with his or her work." For each item the respondent was asked how often they engage in the behavior ranging from "always" to "never" on a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument measures both aspects of organizational citizenship-altruism and generalized compliance; the coefficient alpha reliabilities are .91 and .81 for each aspect. The overall alpha for this application of the instrument was .77.

Equity sensitivity was measured using Huseman et al.'s (1985) Equity Sensitivity Instrument (ESI). The ESI has five items, each with two parts, that examine an employee's preference for outcomes versus inputs. For each item the respondents were asked to show their agreement with each statement by distributing ten points between the two statements. For example, item one reads, "In any organization I might work for it would be more important for me to (a) get from the organization or (b) give to the organization." For each statement, one choice was designated as a "benevolent" statement while the other was an "entitled" statement. An employee classified as a benevolent employee would have allocated more points to the benevolent statements while an entitled employee would have allocated more points to the entitled statements. An employee classified as equity sensitive would have allocated more equal numbers of points to each statement. With a total of 50 possible points to allocate, those who assigned less than 27 points to the benevolent statements were classified as Entitled. Respondents who assigned more than 31 points to benevolent statements were classified as Benevolent. Finally, those who assigned 27 to 31 points to the benevolent statements were labeled Equity Sensitive. Miles et al. (1989), in a test-retest reliability measure, found an alpha of .80, again identical to that found for this study.

Intent to leave was measured using a one-- item scale measurement. Respondents were asked to "indicate how likely you are to leave your current position in the next 12 months." The respondent was asked to respond to a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "very likely" to "not likely at all."

Procedures
Questionnaires, cover letters, and self-addressed, stamped return envelopes were sent to each randomly selected NCTRC member. Addresses were purchased from the NCTRC. Follow-up reminder postcards were sent ten days after the initial questionnaire mailing.

Data Analysis
Four types of statistical analyses were used to examine the data. Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were used to determine if male and female professionals differed on perceptions of equity and measurements of workplace behaviors and attitudes as well as to determine if there were differences of perceptions of equity as well as workplace behaviors and attitudes between professionals who fell into the three equity sensitivity categories. Following significant multivariate effects, univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests and independent t-tests were used to determine the items that differed significantly in all analyses. Chi-square analyses were used for the questions that had a dichotomous nominal response format.

Results
Of the 1000 surveys mailed, 445 were returned; however, 28 were returned as undeliverable resulting in a response rate of 46% for this study, 82 men and 363 women. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the sample. It is evident that respondents were largely white (non-Hispanic) (90.5%). The second largest racial

group was African-American (4.7%). Personal income ranged from less than $9,999 to greater than $70,000 with almost 34% of all respondents indicated a personal income of $30,000-$39,999, followed closely by $20,000-$29,999 (26.5%). Data analysis found a significant difference in salary between men and women ($X^2 = 30.08$, p

The respondents appeared to be a well educated group. Almost 59% of all respondents had completed their Bachelor's degree while 26.5% had completed either their Master's degree or their Doctoral degree. Sixty-five percent of all respondents indicated that they were married compared to the 25.3% who stated that they were single. The largest percentage of respondents work in hospital settings (26.5%) followed by extended/long-term care facilities (22.4%) and "other" (18%) including residential treatment and drug rehabilitation facilities. Finally, regarding the level of management that respondents had attained, the entry level positions accounted for 24.9% of the sample, middle management for 64.2% of the sample, and executive level management accounted for 10.9% of the sample.

The study focused on determining if there were differences in perceptions of workplace equity among men and women in therapeutic recreation. Also, the study questioned whether there were differences in workplace behaviors and attitudes between sexes and equity sensitivity categories. Following are the results of these analyses.

Perceptions of Equity
The initial multivariate analysis of the overall perceptions of equity scale indicated that there was no significant difference between men and women with regard to perceptions of equity when comparisons to their referent others were made. Therefore, subsequent univariate analyses were not conducted.

Perceptions of Gender Discrimination
Independent t-tests were run to determine if there was a difference between men and women on the three statements concerning gender discrimination as related to promotion opportunities. There was no significant difference in men and women's responses to the statement, "males are given fewer promotion opportunities than are females." There were significant differences, however, on the two other items. Women more strongly agreed that "females are given fewer promotion opportunities than are males" ($t = 4.27$; $p = .000$). Conversely, men more strongly agreed that "there are adequate efforts made by the profession to promote women" ($t = 4.09$; p .000).

Job satisfaction. Initial multivariate analysis found that there was a significant difference between men's and women's levels of job satisfaction ($F = 1.85$; $p = .017$). Subsequent univariate analyses found differences on two items of the scale. Men more strongly agreed that their job is pretty uninteresting ($F = 5.16$; $p = .024$) while women more strongly agreed that they find real enjoyment in their work ($F = 6.34$; $p = .012$).

Organizational commitment. Multivariate analysis indicated that there was no significant difference in levels of organizational commitment between men and women. Therefore, subsequent univariate analyses were not conducted.

Organizational citizenship behaviors. Multivariate analysis found a significant difference between men and women with regard to their levels of OCB ($F = 2.36$; $p = .002$). Overall, women demonstrated a higher degree of organizational citizenship. Women were more likely to report that they help others who have been absent ($F = 7.34$; $p = .007$) and that they help others who have a heavy work load ($F = 10.87$; $p = .001$). Men were more likely to report taking undeserved breaks ($F = 10.44$; $p = .001$), coasting toward the end of the day ($F = 9.02$; $p = .003$), and taking extra breaks ($F = 6.71$; p .01).

Intent to leave. Multivariate analysis indicated no significant difference in men's and women's intentions to leave. Therefore, subsequent univariate analyses were not conducted.

Equity Sensitivity

Chi-square analysis indicated that there was no significant difference between men and women with regard to categories of equity sensitivity that each fell into. Almost 37% of the sample was classified as Entitled (Men = 31, Women = 126); 28.7% of the sample was classified as Equity Sensitive (Men = 23, Women = 100); and 34.7% of the sample was deemed Benevolent (Men = 23, Women = 126). Analysis was then conducted to determine if there were differences in work attitudes and behaviors based on categories of equity sensitivity. Job satisfaction. The initial multivariate analysis that looked for differences among the three equity sensitivity groups and their levels of job satisfaction found no significant differences. Therefore, subsequent univariate analyses were not conducted.

Organizational commitment. Initial multivariate analysis of equity sensitivity groups and their levels of organizational commitment found a significant difference among the groups (F = 2.29; p

Benevolents were more likely than Entitleds to talk up their organization as a good place to work, to agree that their values and the organization's values are similar, to feel proud to tell others they work for their organization, to feel that their organization inspires the best in them in the way of job performance, to care about the fate of the organization, and to deem their organization the best to work for. On the other hand, Entitleds more strongly agreed that deciding to work for their organization was a definite mistake on their part compared to Benevolents. Both Entitleds and Equity Sensitives had lower degrees of loyalty to their organizations than did Benevolents. Benevolents were more likely than Entitleds and Equity Sensitives to agree that they were glad they chose their organizations to work for over others they had considered. Finally, Entitleds and Equity Sensitives were more likely to find it difficult to agree with policies on matters related to employees than did Benevolents. Overall, the Benevolents scored the highest on the organizational commitment scale with a mean score of 77.18 out of 105 compared to 67.47 for Entitleds and 72.58 for Equity Sensitives.

Organizational citizenship behaviors. Initial multivariate analysis of equity sensitivity groups and their levels of organizational citizenship behaviors found that a significant difference existed among the groups (F = 2.08; p Differences in organizational citizenship behaviors were predominantly between those classified as Entitleds and those classified as Benevolents. Benevolents were more likely than Entitleds to make innovative suggestions to improve their department, to volunteer for things that were not required, to orient new people although it is not required, to attend functions that were not required but that help improve the image of the organization, and to help others with heavy workloads. On the other hand, Entitleds were more likely to take undeserved breaks, to coast toward the end of the day, and to take extra breaks. Benevolents were also more likely than Entitleds and Equity Sensitives to help others with a heavy workload. Finally, Equity Sensitives were more likely than Benevolents to take unnecessary time off work.

Results of the comparison of organizational citizenship behaviors of the three management levels (entry-level, mid-managers, and administration) indicated that there was a statistically significant difference overall among the degrees of OCB for each management level. Specifically, there was a significant difference between administrators and entry-level practitioners regarding "making innovative suggestions to improve the department" (p

Intent to leave. The initial multivariate analysis that looked for differences between the three equity sensitivity groups and their intention to leave found no significant differences. Therefore, subsequent univariate analyses were not conducted.

A multivariate analysis comparing levels of intent to leave with level of organizational commitment found a significant difference between employees who had strong intentions to leave and those who did not (F = 5.08; p An additional multivariate analysis comparing levels of intent to leave with level of job satisfaction found a significant difference between employees who had strong intentions to leave and those who did not (F = 3.64; p

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of workplace equity, including levels of equity sensitivity, among men and women in therapeutic recreation. Perceptions of workplace behaviors and attitudes as related to equity sensitivity were also explored. Specifically, perceptions of the workplace behaviors and attitudes of organizational citizenship, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and intent to leave were examined.

Gender Differences

Analysis of factors related to gender equity in therapeutic recreation practitioners indicated few significant differences between men and women. Specifically, the significant differences indicated that among the therapeutic recreation professionals surveyed, more men than women found their jobs uninteresting, as well as had lower organizational citizenship behaviors (e.g., not helping others who were absent or with heavy workloads, taking undeserved and extra breaks, and coasting toward the end of the day).

Men were also significantly more likely than women to believe that the agency made adequate efforts to promote women. Several possible explanations exist for these results. The fact that men were more likely to find their jobs uninteresting and found them less enjoyable than the women might be related to the fact that, as stated earlier, professions such as therapeutic recreation that are dominated by women tend to be both lower paying and devalued when compared to other professions. The fact that there were no significant differences between sexes in organizational commitment (which addresses relating to the organization's goals and values, effort given on behalf of the organization, and desire to maintain organizational membership) eliminates the possibility of men disagreeing with agency policies as a reason why they take undeserved and extra breaks, and coasting toward the end of the day.

Second, the significant difference between the sexes was in items of organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). The women in this study were more willing to help co-workers in need which aligns with Gilligan's (1982) theory of an ethic of care. Her theory suggests that women have a greater sense of obligation and responsibility to care for an entity (in this case the agency and its workers), whereas men are more concerned with the rules of an organization and their related rights. Additionally, Gilligan proposed that women put more emphasis on relationships than men do. While there is debate regarding whether these behaviors are biologically or sociologically determined, the behaviors of caring were more evident in female respondents than the male respondents in this study. One might also consider that therapeutic recreation is a predominately female profession that focuses on helping others.

Interestingly, in contrast to those working in the public sector of parks and recreation, therapeutic recreation professionals do not report perceptions of gender inequity. In relation to Equity Theory, perhaps fewer women in TR than in public parks and recreation feel inequity because of what Major (1987) suggested in terms of the referent other. Specifically, since the field of therapeutic recreation is over 80% female (and this sample 91 %), the referent other is most likely to be female, so there is little to compare to in terms of male professionals who traditionally, in other professions, have been promoted at a higher rate, make more money, and are given more respect (Loscocco & Spitze, 1991; Scott, 2000).

Finally, the suggestion that men are less socialized to be sensitive to the needs of others (Gilligan, 1982), in combination with the social perception that women's work is less valued (Major, 1987), might explain why the men in this study were less likely to perceive inequities in promotions between men and women. This explanation is supported by the results that the males in this study were less likely to invest as organizational "citizens," thus having concern for the promotions of others would not be expected.

Equity Theory is grounded in the utilization of a referent other to determine one's status in the workplace. At this point, both the absence of gender inequity in therapeutic recreation as well as differences in levels of OCB in therapeutic recreation may be explained by the presence of a consistently female referent other. The women in the study were generally comparing themselves to other women, thus gender inequity seemed to be a non-issue. The idea of the referent other could have also made an impact on the different levels of OCB. As

indicated by Anker (1997), if a profession is predominantly female, men may be unhappy working in the profession. Undoubtedly, the referent other in therapeutic recreation will typically be a female professional, thus potentially impacting the amount of OCB displayed by the male professionals.

Differences in Equity Sensitivity

Several differences existed among the respondents who fell in different categories of equity sensitivity (Benevolents, Equity Sensitives, and Entitleds). Not surprisingly, Entitleds had the lowest scores on organizational commitment, while Benevolents had the highest. Entitleds demonstrated less loyalty to their organizations with less willingness to put in extra effort to help the organization be successful, to demonstrate pride for the organization, and to conduct activities that would be representative of a "team player." In some ways, this result is intuitive in that typically Benevolents would be happiest with higher inputs than outcomes and Entitleds would demonstrate the opposite. Similarly, Entitleds were more likely to say it was a bad idea to work at their place of employment, demonstrated less loyalty, and found it "difficult to agree with agency policies."

Of particular concern, however, is that the results also indicated a statistical significance with more Entitleds than Benevolents in administrative level positions ($X2 = 13.902$; $p = .008$). This result suggests that the negative responses of the Entitleds may also represent those of the administrators. As noted, while there were no statistically significant differences in levels of administration and organizational commitment items, there were differences among administrative level and OCB. Similar to the results of the Entitleds, those in administration were least likely to suggest innovative improvements, volunteer for things not required, and attend functions not required.

These results raise the question, which came first? Assuming a relationship between entitlement and administrative level, does one become entitled after reaching a particular administrative level or does one reach the level of administration because she perceives herself to be entitled? Since there were no significant differences among the equity sensitivity groups regarding job satisfaction or sex, other reasons need to be sought. If these individuals are in administration of a therapeutic recreation department or agency and they do not find organizational citizenship behaviors important, then what does that say regarding leadership in the therapeutic recreation profession? While these differences were found in only a few categories, this is an area that warrants further investigation.

Results also indicated a somewhat "altruistic" nature among Benevolents. They were more likely than the Entitleds to talk up their organization, care about the fate of the organization, be more involved in department functions and development, and to help others with extra work. Again, since there were no significant differences regarding job satisfaction, other explanations should be considered. Since the majority of the sample were women, and despite the fact that there were no significant differences in sex of the subjects regarding administrative level, the application of Gilligan's (1982) ethic of care again has merit. Additionally, it seems that the women in this study demonstrated a sense of "ownership" regarding the success of their agency. Undoubtedly, the results of the comparisons among equity sensitivity groups support the Equity Sensitivity Construct. Guided by the Expectancy Theory, the Equity Sensitivity Construct does a good job of predicting how different categories of professionals will demonstrate different levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship based on what they expect to get in return.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Several limitations exist for this study. First, depth of analysis is limited by the sole use of quantitative measurement. Second, only certified therapeutic recreation professionals were surveyed; CTRSs make up less than 50% of TR professionals. Third, the response by fewer than 100 men may limit the generalizability of the results. Finally, data were limited to perceptions of equity.

Several recommendations are warranted from this study for both therapeutic recreation practitioners and researchers. First, supervisors in positions of authority should examine issues of equity, not only regarding

salaries, but also for other opportunities to reduce inequities. Results indicated a perception among women in therapeutic recreation that they are given fewer promotions. However, as the literature suggests, women are less likely to express discontent. This possibility is something that therapeutic recreation supervisors should know and address when applicable before turnover becomes their primary concern. Also, especially since the results show that men do not perceive the inequity, administrative supervisors should evaluate current efforts to promote women within their agencies.

Similarly, practitioners in positions of authority need to be mindful of job satisfaction for men in therapeutic recreation as the results indicated that they are less satisfied with their jobs than women. Seeking to understand the sources of the men's dissatisfaction could prove beneficial not only to individual departments, but also the agency within which the department in located. Also, although women appear relatively satisfied with their jobs, it would behoove administrators to continuously try to build on this satisfaction, especially in light of the fact that this study found job satisfaction to be strongly tied to intent to leave.

A final suggestion relates to differences found in organizational citizenship behaviors engaged in by different levels of management (entry, middle, and administrative). There were significant differences among these levels with those in the top level of management exhibiting the least amount of OCB. This is disturbing as one would hope and expect that these therapeutic recreation professionals would be role models for these behaviors. Perhaps if employees were held more accountable for these types of behaviors and recognized how the behaviors can benefit the organization and ultimately themselves, they may be more willing to engage in them.

Further research is also warranted. First, research using qualitative methods should be considered. Interviews and case studies could be very useful in understanding perspectives of job satisfaction, commitment, and feelings of inequity for both men and women in the field of therapeutic recreation. Second, issues of burnout in all three levels of administration as well as between sexes to identify factors and patterns regarding job satisfaction should be examined. Finally, research should be done that can determine if a directional relationship exists between individuals who test as Entitleds and practitioners who are in administration. Identifying which, indeed, came first, the entitlement or the level of administration, could give insight into how to address some of the issues of OCB.

Equity Theory seems to be a valid theoretical base for examining workplace attitudes and behaviors of therapeutic recreation professionals if Expectancy Theory, and the Equity Sensitivity Construct, are also taken into consideration. One limitation of Equity Theory is that it does not reflect differences in people's reactions to situations of inequity. Guided by the principles of both Equity Theory and Expectancy Theory, the Equity Sensitivity Construct allows for professionals to be categorized into three different levels of equity sensitivity. It is this classification system that allows us to obtain a clearer understanding of how professionals differ in their reactions to workplace issues, including equity issues.

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