

Parental Motivation Toward Youth Residential Summer Camp

Enrollment

By

Marcus A. Nack

A Thesis in partial fulfillment of the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

IN

NATURAL RESOURCES (ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION)

College of Natural Resources
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Stevens Point, Wisconsin

May 2018

APPROVED BY THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE OF:

Dr. Kendra Liddicoat, Committee Chair
Assistant Professor of Environmental Education, College of Natural Resources

Dr. Rebecca L. Franzen
Assistant Professor of Environmental Education, College of Natural Resources

Dr. Catherine Scheder
Assistant to the Dean for Program Management, College of Professional Studies

Mr. Jordan King
Program Manager, Central Wisconsin Environmental Station

ABSTRACT

Residential youth summer camps offer a plethora of activities and experiences that can positively affect children's lives. Children may want to attend summer camp for a variety of reasons, but ultimately the decision to enroll a child in summer camp is made by parents. Parental motivations toward youth residential summer camp enrollment are not fully understood, and this research seeks a better understanding of enrollment motivations by surveying parents during drop off procedures on the first day of summer camp. It is important for summer camps to understand why parents feel the need to enroll their children. With this information, summer camps can strategize approaches to give parents and children the best possible experiences. The objectives of this research were to 1) investigate parent motivations for enrolling children in summer camps, 2) better understand the expected outcomes parents have for their children at camps, 3) enable camps to adapt to meet the needs and expectations of parents, and 4) provide camps with information about their target audiences. Information was gathered from parents that enrolled their children at two residential youth summer camps in July and August 2017. This information revealed similar responses at both surveyed locations. Surveys also indicated that parents enrolled their children in summer camp because of the factors of time spent outside, camp activities, and child growth and development. These three enrollment factors had the strongest agreement responses, and tradition, cost, and childcare had the lowest agreement responses. Parents indicated that they had high intrinsic motivation (value-based motivation) and low extrinsic motivation (reward-based motivation) toward summer camp enrollment. Summer camps could use this information for strategic planning, summer camp marketing, and summer camp programming. From

this research, recommendations were made about ways to appeal to parents and ultimately get more parents to enroll their children in summer camps.

Acknowledgement

My experiences through the masters program have been challenging and rewarding. I am truly grateful for the efforts given by my peers, colleagues, and family to support me through my experience.

Kendra Liddicoat has helped me through the process of becoming a successful graduate assistant, and has supported me through the various challenges along the way. Without Kendra's guidance and support this project would not be possible.

The Central Wisconsin Environmental Station has opened my eyes to the world of environmental education. Through the years working in various positions, and titles, I have grown into the educator and person I am today. Tom Quinn has given me many opportunities at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station that I hold very dearly. In my time as an environmental educator Jordan King has been there to give valuable insight and suggestion. I consider Jordan a wise old soul, a guiding voice, and a great friend.

Rebecca Franzen played a major role in this research by her positive attitude, knowledge, and support. Rebecca has taught me what it is to be an environmental educator, and has shared some laughs along the way.

Cathy Scheder is very passionate about camps, and the processes that follow. Cathy has expressed her excitement about this research, and its real life applications. I am grateful for Cathy's useful insight and encouragement through the development of my research.

Throughout my graduate experience I have been lucky to have such amazing peers to bounce ideas off of, and to challenge me. Sam, Brent, and Caroline are the future

leaders of environmental education, and I value their time and work spent towards bettering our planet.

I have spent countless hours working towards my masters degree, and my fiancé Katelyn Gee has supported me along the way. Katelyn is caring, understanding, and pushes me every day to be the best version of myself.

Table of Contents

I.	Chapter 1: Introduction	1
	A. Statement of the Problem	1
	B. Research Objectives	1
	C. Benefits of Summer Camp	2
	1. Growth and Development	2
	2. Time Spent Outdoors	3
	3. Camp Activities	4
	4. Tradition	4
	5. Childcare	5
	6. Cost	5
	E. Definitions	6
	F. Assumptions	7
	G. Limitations	7
II.	Chapter 2: Literature Review	8
	A. Motivation	9
	1. Extrinsic Motivation	14
	2. Intrinsic Motivation	15
	B. Camp Factors	
	1. Growth and Development	17
	2. Time Spent Outdoors	18
	3. Camp Activities	20
	4. Tradition	21
	5. Childcare and Cost	22
	6. Summary	22
III.	Chapter 3: Methods	25
	A. Methodology and Study design	25
	B. Sample	26
	C. Instrumentation	28
	D. Data Collection	30
	E. Data Analysis	30

IV.	Chapter 4: Results	32
	A. Demographics	32
	B. Camp Enrollment Decision	34
	C. Camp Enrollment Factors	35
	D. Motivation factors	38
V.	Chapter 5: Discussion	43
	A. Explanation of Results	43
	B. Limitations	43
	C. Recommendations	46
	1. For Camp Administrators	46
	2. Research Recommendations	48
	D. Conclusion	49
VI.	References	51
	Appendix: Survey	54

List of Tables and Figures

Table 4.1: Camp Enrollment Factor Agreement	36
Table 4.2: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation Agreement	40
Figure 2.1: Organismic Integration Theory Continuum	13
Figure 4.1: Number of Years Children had Previously Attended Summer Camp	34
Figure 4.2: Camp Enrollment Factor Agreement	36
Figure 4.3: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations	41

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Children spend their summers doing an assortment of planned and unplanned activities. Some children spend time involved in residential summer camps while others do not. Summer camp programming offers youth a plethora of unique opportunities for social and physical development. An increase in positive identity, social skills, positive values and spirituality from summer camp experiences were indicated by Bialeschki, Henderson, and James (2007). Although the outcomes of summer camps have demonstrated positive development for children in many ways, it is still not fully understood what motivates parents to give their children a residential camp experience in the first place. With a better understanding of parental motivations toward youth enrollment, camps can adhere to parental needs while delivering beneficial programming. Considering this important possibility, this study seeks to understand the factors that motivate parents to enroll their children in residential summer camps.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to (1) investigate parent motivations for enrolling children in summer camps, (2) better understand the expected outcomes parents have for their children at camps, (3) enable camps to adapt to meet the needs and expectations of parents, and (4) provide camps with background information about their target audiences.

This study investigates the parental motivations toward enrolling children in residential summer camps. Although children may have personal reasons why they want

to attend camp, it is up to parents to fill out the mandatory paper work and complete the steps necessary for camp attendance. Parents play a major role in enrolling children in summer camps, and with this research we can better understand the motivations behind the enrollment decision. Children may also influence the enrollment decision by indicating interest in camp to their parents, or by pressuring parents to enroll them. With this understanding, camps will be better able to effectively target consumers through their promotional materials and marketing actions, while planning camps to meet customer needs and demands.

Benefits of Summer Camp

Enrolling a child in residential summer camp has many benefits. Through this research, child growth and development, time spent outdoors, camp activities, tradition, childcare, and cost will be examined for their benefits and their role in enrollment motivation. These themes have been chosen because of their frequent presence in camp settings, and for their appearance in camp-related research. These highlighted themes may have an influence on the motivation toward summer camp enrollment, and camps can benefit from further knowledge in these areas.

Growth and Development

Camp is a place of positive youth development by promoting challenging experiences guided by a supportive community as suggested by Garst, Browne, and Bialeschki (2011). With support and supervision children can take the opportunity to form a positive identity, social skills, independence, and peer relationships in a camp

setting (Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007). Without pressure from parents or guardians, campers are free to make choices for themselves and others. Decision-making, and critical thinking are developmental skills necessary for children to gradually transform into adults. Participation in summer camp nurtures these skills through a community setting and stimulating activities.

Another aspect of growth and development that campers receive from a summer camp is the ability to build relationships with peers. Friendships and peer relationships enable campers to strive for goals, and are considered extremely important for healthy youth development (Sibthorp, Bialeschki, Morgan, & Browne, 2013). Building relationships with peers improves social development through empathy and pressures to succeed (Wentzel & Pressley, 1999). With such desirable and valued camper outcomes, adults may find themselves motivated to enroll their children in residential summer camps.

Time Spent Outdoors

In a 2011 National Kids Survey it was indicated that nearly two thirds of children were spending at least two hours each day outdoors (Larson, Green, & Cordell, 2011). Parents that want to introduce more time spent outdoors to their children can use the opportunity of summer camp to begin. Spending time outdoors can allow campers to think critically, and learn problem-solving skills in favorable outdoor settings (Basile & White, 2000). Camps often value time spent outside as a place for children to learn and grow. With such major impacts, parents may find themselves motivated to provide their children with positive outdoor experiences.

Camp Activities

Summer camps are the grounds for new challenging activities. New experiences partnered with time spent with friends leads to memorable experiences, and experiential learning (Bialeschki, Henderson, & James, 2007). Camp activities engage children looking for outdoor adventure, artistic expression, team work, and communication. Research by Dipeolu et al. (2016) demonstrated that camp activities contribute to skill building and strengthen family dynamics. This can be done through camp activities during a week at a residential summer camp.

Promoted camp activities may be the difference between enrolling in one camp or another. Loewenstein (1994) mentions that using non-typical activities give children a sense of curiosity that may draw them toward an available camp. Sibthorp, Bialeschki, Morgan, and Browne (2013) mention the importance of curiosity, exploration, and experience on children's development. Curiosity and exploration can both be present when using an exploration method to examine new things. Parents whose children have attended camp before may feel motivated to enroll their child because their children enjoyed camp activities previously. Camp activities provide these experiences, and may be a major determinant of an individual's camp enrollment.

Tradition

Campers attend summer camp for multiple years at different times in their lives. Children that attend camp for multiple years practice camp traditions, and create traditions of their own. Swindle (2010) discusses the evolution of camp traditions, and

describes traditions as evolving and enduring. While some traditions are fond memories by alumni, others are new and evolving (Swindle, 2010). Traditions are present in summer camps through the annual attendance, the family tradition of summer camp attendance as youth, and through unique camp activities. A common topic promoted in summer camp marketing is tradition. Traditions are practiced in different ways, and may motivate parents to enroll their children into summer camp. An aura of camp tradition may be appealing to both parents and children, being particularly strong as youth create memories at camp and seek to return year after year.

Childcare

With the high cost of childcare, parents cannot always afford the care that their children require. Rachidi (2016) suggests that all parents are in need of childcare support. Commonly, parents work various hours during the day, and without available childcare, parents tend to rely on family to provide childcare (Burstein & Layzer, 2007). With the lack of childcare options, residential summer camps may be presented as alternate forms of childcare. Residential summer camps provide sleeping arrangements, three meals per day, and the opportunity to try new things with new and old friends. Summer camp is a temporary option for relief of parental duties, while providing life experiences for the child.

Cost

Not all families are able to afford the financial cost of summer camps. Summer camps offer scholarships and discounts to applicants that need financial support.

Scholarships help campers and their families to lessen the financial burden, and, on occasion, cover the complete cost of camp. According to the 2015 American Camp Association Business Operations Study of Overnight Camps, 81% of scholarships offered to children are from the camps themselves. The financial incentive of scholarships may play a part in enrollment motivation. With financial assistance offered to families, children who may not typically attend camp have new opportunities. With the high demands of full-time parenting, financial assistance may be a motivation that enables enrollment and rewards parents with relief from typical parental duties.

Definitions

Residential Summer Camps- A camp that assumes responsibility for campers 24 hours a day. (<https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/accreditation-standards/proposed-standards-review>)

The Central Wisconsin Environmental Station (CWES) - a field station of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point that provides a residential summer camp.

American Camp Association (ACA) - Is a community of camp professionals who, for over 100 years, have joined together to share knowledge and experiences that ensure the quality of camp programs (<https://www.acacamps.org/about/who-we-are/mission-and-vision>)

Intrinsic motivation- “the inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise one’s capacities, to explore, and to learn” (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 70).

Extrinsic motivation- “the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome” (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 71).

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) – “The SDT is an empirically based theory of human motivation development and wellness” (Deci, Ryan, & Hunsley, 2008, p. 182).

Organismic Integration Theory (OIT)- This theory describes the different types of extrinsic motivation and the factors that can promote or hinder internalization and integration of the regulation for these behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 1985)

Assumptions

Assumptions are information that is accepted but not proven. The following assumptions were made in this research based on knowledge of summer camp enrollment and survey data collection methods:

- There are factors that influence the choice of summer camp enrollment.
- Parents answer surveys honestly, and with integrity.
- Participants fully understand the instructions for the survey.

Limitations

Limitations refer to restrictions in this research that impeded on the research process. The following limitations restricted the number of possible participants in this research:

- The study was limited to two residential summer camps.
- Perspectives of parents who did not enroll their children in one of the selected camps were not included.
- Data collection only occurred in the Central Wisconsin region during summer 2017.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to understand the motivations parents have when enrolling their children in residential summer camp. Motivations were measured using a survey to reflect the decision making process that parents have for summer camp enrollment. Common summer camp outcomes are frequently measured at different sites. Camp enrollment factors of tradition, growth and development, camp activities, cost, spending time outdoors, and childcare are common in summer camps and contribute to enrollment motivation. Literature related to these factors is reviewed below with the quality of motivation in mind. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000a) explores the quality of motivation and when applied to these summer camp enrollment factors, provides a deeper view of factors motivating parents to enroll their children in camp.

Tradition, growth and development, camp activities, camp cost, time spent outdoors, and childcare are important because they are all factors that may sway the decision of enrollment with the interest of children and parents. Camp traditions are learned when parents or children previously attend summer camp. The tradition of summer camp is often the attendance of camp as youth, or due to effectively promoting long-standing traditions that define camp programming and identity. Traditions are passed down as families expand and the continuation of practice is ongoing. Growth and development occur in children at camp as they are submerged into both independent and community situations. The unique activities that camps offer promote valuable experiences and give children a chance to try new challenges. Affordability and cost are influential features that may motivate summer camp as a choice. Childcare often takes

place in the same space every week, and a change in environment and experience can lead to the choice of summer camp, where activities are done in a variety of settings.

Through review of prior research, this literature review examines motivation and each enrollment factor to highlight its importance in the enrollment decision. By understanding the importance of each factor, we can then examine their influences on enrollment specifically and gain a deeper understanding of parental motivation.

Motivation

According to Ryan and Deci (2000a), to be motivated means to be moved to do something. A person “who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated” (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 54). Parents have many motivations that influence choices they make for themselves and their children. Motivational values are based on factors and expected outcomes, as expressed in the Self-Determination Theory by Ryan and Deci (2000a). This theory recognizes that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are regulated in different ways, but influence choices and decision-making. Motivation to make choices or take actions, requires autonomy, competence, and relatedness as Ryan and Deci (2000a) mention. These three basic needs can be found in summer camp environments (Bean, Kendellen, and Forneris, 2016), and they can contribute to the action of summer camp enrollment, which this research aims to further understand.

The SDT is an empirically-based theory of human motivation development and wellness (Deci, Ryan, & Hunsley, 2008). This theory focuses on the quality of motivation instead of the quantity. Quantity of motivation would be the amount of motivation a person had before enrolling in summer camp, where quality of motivation examines the

type of motivation one has before summer camp enrollment. Measuring the quality of motivation gives us a deeper understanding of purpose of enrollment, where quantity would not. The quality of motivation is divided into autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. Autonomy and controlled motivation are defined through goals by Koestner, Otis, Powers, Pelletier, & Gagnon (2008, p. 1202) as, “Autonomous goals are defined as those that reflect personal interest and values, whereas controlled goals reflect something one feels compelled to do by external or internal pressures.” Autonomous motivation reflects intrinsic value, where controlled motivation reflects extrinsic pressure. Both autonomous and controlled motivations support the importance of choice, perspective, and limiting control to enable goal-oriented behaviors (Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). In other words, having motivation, whether it is autonomous or not, is essential for making choices. Motivation plays a major role in decision-making, and the decision of enrollment in summer camp is within this generalization.

The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be understood by Ryan and Deci’s definitions. “When intrinsically motivated, a person is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external prods, pressures or rewards” (Ryan & Deci., 2000a, 56). Intrinsic motivation is highly internalized, and based on the idea that intrinsically motivated people have personal values that promote an action. Intrinsic motivation is of personal interest or readiness to learn with no expectation of incentive or reward according to Deci and Ryan (2000a). In the case of summer camp, this can reflect an intangible experience a child leaves camp with. An example of this is if a child enjoys archery because it is a fun activity or because it is of interest to them.

In the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation Ryan and Deci (2000a, p. 60) describe extrinsic motivation as, “the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome and, thus, contrasts with intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself.” An example of extrinsic motivation may include a child doing archery because they want to say that they completed all camp activities. The external outcome is that they can say that they completed all activities. Another example is that a camper did archery because they felt pressure from their peers, where the external outcome is that they participated because of pressures and not because they inherently valued the activity. These example show motivation because of a separable outcome, and not because they value the activity for itself.

Summer camps offer many situations where extrinsic or intrinsic motivation are present. These situations may be the driving force behind summer camp enrollment decisions. Extrinsic motivations have tangible outcomes where intrinsic motivations are inherently valued. The summer camp enrollment decision is derived from motivation that is situational in different parents. Parents may encounter situations where they are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated for their children in the enrollment decision of summer camp. A parent might feel intrinsically motivated to send their child to camp because they know that they will spend time outside, an experience that parents may value for their child. Parents may feel that all of their peers are enrolling their children in summer camp, and feel pressure to do the same, resulting in an extrinsic motivation for summer camp enrollment.

In the sub-theory called the Organismic Integration Theory (OIT), Ryan and Deci (1985) express these two types of motivations (extrinsic and intrinsic), with the addition of amotivation, using a continuum. (See Figure 2.1). This theory defines different qualities of motivation ranging from highly extrinsic (low quality motivation) to intrinsic (high quality motivation). Ryan and Deci (1985) describe that a person may begin a behavior because of extrinsic value, but through the behavior find value and intrinsically motivated for the future. By applying the OIT continuum to this study, we can understand more specifically the types of motivation that motivated summer camp enrollment by parents. This information will tell summer camps the expectations parents have from programming, and why people are enrolling in their camp specifically. Understanding the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations will help camps view their own programs from the perspective of interested parents.

Figure 2.1- Organismic Integration Continuum

		<i>Non self-determined</i>				<i>Self-determined</i>	
		Amotivation	Extrinsic Motivation			Intrinsic Motivation	
Regulatory style:		Non-Regulation	External Regulation	Introjected Regulation	Identified Regulation	Integrated Regulation	Intrinsic Regulation
Source of motivation:		Impersonal	External	Somewhat external	Somewhat internal	Internal	Internal
Motivation regulators:		No intention Incompetence Lack of control	Compliance External rewards or punishments	Ego-involvement Approval from others	Valuing an activity Endorsement of goals	Congruence Synthesis with self	Interest Enjoyment Inherent satisfaction

Figure 2.1. OIT continuum adapted from “Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions,” by Ryan & Deci 2000a, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), p. 61. doi:10.1006/ceps.1999.1020

The OIT continuum (see Figure 2.1) separates motivation into amotivation, extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation but this research did not include amotivation. Amotivation is described as a state when one does not see an action as reliable, or actions are incompetent with lack of support (Ryan, 1995). Because amotivation represents a non-internalization process and absence of motivation, it is represented in its own column on the table (Ryan, 1995). Parents that are not motivated to enroll their children in camp will choose other summer activities for their children, and without the decision of enrollment, it was not necessary to assess amotivation in this study.

Extrinsic Motivations

The behaviors that are highly extrinsic are referred to as externally regulated. Such behaviors are performed to satisfy an external demand or reward contingency (Ryan & Deci, 2000). An example is that a parent is enrolling their child in summer camp because they want positive praise from their peers. Avoidance of a punishment also qualifies as an external regulation that parents may encounter during the summer camp enrollment decision process. An example would be that a parent is enrolling their child because if they do not, then something negative will happen such as peer disapproval. With extrinsically motivated parents participating in summer camp enrollment, camps can aim to satisfy external demands of gratitude and reward. With the indication of external regulation and the reward contingency, camps need to understand what rewards parents are seeking. From this camps can adapt to meet these extrinsic needs.

As we move further towards intrinsic motivation on the OIT continuum (see Figure 2.1), we find introjected regulation. Introjected regulation is a relatively controlled form of regulation in which behaviors are performed to avoid guilt or anxiety or to attain ego enhancements such as pride. Put differently, introjection represents regulation by contingent self-esteem (Deci & Ryan, 1995). This is represented when one's ego is present, and behavior is embraced or avoided (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Parents seeking extrinsic pride boosters from their children or peers, fit in this area of the continuum. This also includes parents that are attempting to avoid judgment and negative criticism from others.

Identification regulation is present when conscious valuing of behavior-based goals are evident (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In other words, a person who is assessed as an

identification regulation processor is motivated to take action because something is personally important. This motivation is strongly internally identified in the motivation continuum. Identified regulation is essentially recognizing that something is good, and giving it value because it's good. In application to summer camp enrollment, parents may feel that summer camp is good for their child, and that gives them enough motivation for enrollment. By identifying this form of motivation we can investigate what makes particular residential summer camps better for a particular child. The factors that may highlight one camp may not be the same factors that promote another. The unique qualities found at different camps could be presented within identified regulation, and hold both extrinsic and intrinsic values.

The most autonomous of the extrinsic motivation is integrated regulation (Ryan and Deci, 2000a). This motivation comes from a person accepting ownership and importance of a behavior. Although this motivation derives from a person's identity and values, it is still seeking an extrinsic outcome, classifying it under extrinsic motivation. In this case, parents enrolling their children in camps are doing so because of the alignment of values camp has with their own, yet they still seek an external outcome.

Intrinsic Motivation

Motivation that is of high quality is often derived from one's personal values and interests. High quality intrinsic motivations are connected to intangible outcomes. Guay. et al. (2000, p. 176) refer to intrinsic motivation as "performing an activity for itself, in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction inherent in the activity." Intrinsic motivation is fueled by the internal reward that summer camps often provide. Kuvaas, Buch, Weibel,

Dysvik, and Nerstad (2017) studied the response to intrinsic and extrinsic motivations on employee performance outcomes. Kuvaas et al. (2017) found trends of intrinsic motivation aligned with positive outcomes, where extrinsic motivation was consistently associated with poor performance and negative outcomes. In a summer camp context, this might mean that parents that are intrinsically motivated for summer camp enrollment may feel more satisfied with their enrollment decision. The experience of summer camp may be viewed as more positive for intrinsically motivated parents than those extrinsically motivated, and identifying these motivations will help camps to understand the internal relationships of parents with summer camp.

Intrinsic motivation is identified when the three basic human needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met (Flannery, 2017). Autonomy is the ability to make informed decisions according to Wrenn (2015). Parents become informed about summer camps through different sources, including websites, brochures, and contact with camps in specific. Parents enrolling their children in summer camp that are autonomous are informed about the different parts of summer camp.

Informed parents that have enrolled their children into camp may also have a sense of competence, or the ability to engage in behaviors successfully (Flannery, 2017). Engaging in camp enrollment successfully is an action done by the parents. Parents need to feel a sense that they can facilitate enrollment and the actions that go with it to feel competent. Through prior experiences, parents familiarize themselves with their child's ability to succeed in different ways. Parents that feel as though their child will be successful may feel a stronger sense competence and motivation towards summer camp enrollment. The feeling of competence during an action can enhance intrinsic motivation

for that action (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Parents may want to enroll their child in summer camp because they know that their child can perform an activity with success and may lead to their intrinsic or extrinsic motivation toward summer camp enrollment.

The third basic human need of intrinsic motivation is relatedness. Camps need to help parents relate to the experience that their children will have. Flannery (2007, p. 156) describes relatedness as “the need for close personal relationships and security.” This means that parents feel as though there is a sense of belonging in the summer camp experience. During summer camp enrollment this also translates to parents feeling as though their child will fit in socially with their peers and instructors, as shown when campers interact cohesively with others.

Intrinsic motivation is indicated by the presence of these three basic human needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the parents enrolling their children. Intrinsic motivation is a high quality motivation that camps want their participants to feel. Understanding the anatomy of this type of motivation helps to indicate its presence and importance during summer camp enrollment decisions. As camps look to promote parental motivation for summer camp enrollment, related research suggests that they target how to instill autonomy, competence, and relatedness in parents, while making clear the intangible outcomes the parent’s children would receive.

Growth and Development

During time at summer camp, children learn to approach challenges in different ways while solving problems. Learned and practiced problem solving skills are valuable in many ways, and are applied to life outside of camp. The growth observed and reported

at summer camps varies by individual and by camp in ways that are not understood fully; however, these outcomes point to an increase in positive identity, social skills, physical and thinking skills, positive values, and spirituality (Bialeschki, 2007). Similarly, Dworken (2001) identified positive growth in social competency, positive identity and values, and the growth of life long skills developed at camp. With such reoccurring themes, it is hard to deny positive youth growth and development from residential summer camp experiences.

With many summer camp outcomes, growth and development is an enrollment factor motivating residential summer camp enrollment decisions. Research by Henderson et al. (2007) found statistically significant growth and development in campers through adventure/exploration, independence, making friends, positive identity, and peer relationships from 2,300 parental perspectives. Results indicated parents' perception of change in their children from summer camps in the categories of self-confidence/esteem, and social skills while also improving parent to child relationships. These outcomes do not just happen, according to Garst, Browne, & Bialeschki (2011); these outcomes must be planned. Expected tangible and intangible outcomes are a driving force for enrollment motivation. The expected or valued social skill development throughout summer camp may extrinsically or intrinsically motivate parents to enroll their child in camp.

Time Spent Outdoors

The variety of positive outcomes from spending time outdoors is an attractive feature shared across many summer camp experiences. Firsthand outdoor experiences allow campers to think critically, gain respect for living things, and can help students

investigate their environment (Basile & White, 2000). Basile and White (2000) promote hands-on programming because it provides first-hand experience, and allows children to build what they know from that experience. Parents that recognize the value of time spent outdoors may feel motivated to enroll their child in summer camp because of the application of skills gained through outdoor experience to life outside of camp.

In Cullen and Mony's (2003) research, it was shown that positive outdoor programming improves student development multi-dimensionally. Cullen and Mony (2003) studied the response to non-formal education in outdoor settings, and found that students participating in hands-on outdoor activities maintained knowledge and content better than the students without the outdoor activities. More evidence of multi-dimensional growth in summer camp environments comes from a precamp-to-postcamp survey that indicated growth in social comfort, peer relationships, environmental awareness, and positive values & decision-making (Thurber et al., 2007). The exposure to the outdoors through a summer camp setting has positive implications, and is important to the development of children. Developing skills at summer camp from time spent outdoors may be an extrinsic reward to parents during their child's maturity that may motivate parents to enroll their children in summer camp.

Parents may have specific values that they have grown while spending time outdoors and want the same for their children. Influential outdoor experiences on parent's lives form their outdoor values, and may be projected on their children. The motivation for enrolling children into summer camp may come from these personal experiences, and the camp's intention to give children similar opportunities. The lessons taught and the process of learning about the environment may also be fascinating to parents, which

would expose an intrinsic value. Because of the benefits of spending time outdoors for campers, parents may be motivated to enroll their children in summer camp.

Camp Activities

Camp activities relate to time spent outdoors for the reason that they often take place in different outdoor spaces. The outdoor setting in combination with uniqueness of activities may motivate parents to enroll their children, but camp activities also play a role on their own. Camp activities have a uniqueness that separates camps from one another, and may be a deciding factor of camp enrollment. Parents and guardians that value specific camp activities or acknowledge their useful qualities use summer camp activities as motivation for enrollment.

Summer camps have schedules full of fun, education, and physical challenges for children to experience. Parents seeking adventure for their children can choose between available camps to find activities that they want their children to participate in. When parents decide which activities their child should experience, they may reflect upon their own experiences and values. Activities are represented in various forms of media that allows parents to imagine themselves as campers, and what they as campers would choose to experience. Henderson et al. (2007) indicated that parents found value in outdoor adventure, and camp activities that their child had never done before during summer camp. Camp professionals view outdoor adventure activities such as archery, spelunking, fishing, horseback riding, mountain biking, rock climbing, and ropes courses as the most important new experiences that campers can have (Ventura & Garst, 2013). Parents may view engaging activities for their children as important summer camp enrollment factors (Henderson et al., 2007).

Motivation for summer camp enrollment can come from a parent's desire for different activities. Intrinsically, this could mean that parents want their child to step

outside of their comfort zone or that they value available activities that camps offer. Extrinsically this could mean that parents are feeling pressure from their children or peers to give their child a particular experience. An example would be a child that really wants to go horseback riding, may create an external pressure for their parent to enroll them in a particular camp. The parent may not find inherent value in the activity of horseback riding, but with pressures from their child, feel extrinsically motivated for the enrollment decision.

Tradition

Families practice traditions in many different places, and in many different ways. These traditions are often passed on from generation to generation, an act of providing for the well-being of the next generation as a legacy of self, called generativity (Frensch, Pratt, & Norris, 2007). The attendance of summer camp can become a tradition in families shared generationally. When parents consider traditions as important, they may feel a sense of motivation to share traditions with their children.

Parents may want to influence values in their child's life by pushing them to practice certain traditions. Some parents may have experienced summer camp as youth, and learned valuable traditions that they want their children to experience, or have created the tradition of camp attendance on their own. Summer camp is a catalyst towards sharing these positive traditions and values between generations of family. Parents can use summer camp environments as venues for the practice of traditions and as a platform to instill values in children, providing a motivating factor for summer camp enrollment.

Child Care and Cost

As suggested by Rachidi (2016) the cost of childcare for a non-standard hour worker is a major factor. Single parents (Rachidi, 2016) and low-income families (Gory & Thomas, 2017) would benefit from financial support for childcare. With services similar to childcare, residential summer camp could be another viable option for parents.

Rachidi (2016) also mentions that parents working different hours do not have the option of childcare. Parents aren't able to work shifts later in the day because of childcare options. Children participating in residential summer camps are taken care of for long amounts of time, freeing up parent work availability. Typically to alleviate childcare challenges, parents choose to utilize family childcare options (Burstein & Layzer, 2007). Childcare can be represented as an extrinsic motivator towards camp enrollment with the service of childcare and camper outcomes in mind.

Camps are not always affordable for families who would like to have a summer camp experience. The range of summer camp costs is altered when scholarships and price reductions programs are available. A child may want to go to summer camp but cannot afford to go. On the contrary campers may only go to camp because scholarships give them the opportunity. According to the 2015 ACA Business Operations Report 2015 (www.acacamps.org), fees to attend ACA accredited camps vary from less than \$100 to more than \$1,500 per week.

Summary

Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are influential on decision-making. The decision to enroll a child in summer camp comes from extrinsic and intrinsic forms of motivation. Extrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain

some separable outcomes according previous research by Ryan & Deci (2000b).

Separable summer camp outcomes associated with tradition, growth and development, cost, childcare, spending time outside, and camp activities play a role in the enrollment decision of residential summer camp. Intrinsic motivation is associated with outcomes in a different manner. Intrinsic values are encountered when individuals are inherently supportive of summer camp values or mission. Such decisions are important to summer camp directors, parents, and children. The choice of summer camp enrollment has many factors and influences that help parents make an enrollment decision.

Extrinsic and intrinsic motivations behind summer camp enrollment may associate with the factors of tradition, growth and development, cost, childcare, spending time outside, and camp activities. Of the possible outcomes and benefits, these factors have the potential to motivate parents to enroll their child in youth residential summer camp. Each of these factors may play a significant role in summer camp experiences, and should be considered important for recognizing the reason for enrollment.

The parental intent of summer camp enrollment often represents an innate motivation to benefit children. “The fact that parents and children work together to find a camp that best matches the child’s interests, abilities and developmental needs surely maximizes the likelihood of positive outcomes” (Thurber et al., 2007, p. 252). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations seek positive outcomes in different forms. Thurber et al. (2007) explains that engaging children in activities that they show interest in can positively influence the growth and development throughout a camp session. Extrinsic motivations are identified with pressure and short-term achievement, where intrinsic motivations are known for engagement, involvement, and excitement.

Research about summer camps typically measure the outcomes of a summer camp experience, in areas such as growth and development, time spent outside, and camp activities (Bialeschki, 2007; Dworken, 2001; Garst et al., 2011; Henderson et al., 2007). These outcomes may be presented as motivating factors toward the enrollment decision, and this study connects prior research about common summer camp expectations with enrollment motivators. This study supports the expansion of residential summer camp research by investigating pre-camp motivations. Research regarding summer camp enrollment decisions is lacking, and this research begins to investigate motivations that drive the enrollment choice. Although some research projects have utilized pre-camp surveys, few have been conducted to assess camp enrollment motivators, or what reason parents felt so inclined to enroll their child in camp. This begins to fill gaps in our understanding of residential youth summer camp's target audiences, and their mentality behind enrolling their child in summer camp.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

This chapter describes the study design and research methods. The sample and instruments are then discussed. Finally, data analysis is considered.

Methodology and Study Design

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) has been tested in different dimensions including work organizations (Deci, Olafsen, & Ryan, 2017) and has been validated through many different studies. With a framework based on this theory, this study classified motivation to further understand participant choices. Because of this classification and the ease of converting attitudes into numbers, quantitative data were collected as suggested by Henderson, Bialeschki, and Browne (2017). For this study, quantitative data were collected through a survey.

By utilizing numeric data, we were able to uncover patterns that could be of interest to the broader camp community. The research objectives were to investigate parent motivations for enrolling children in residential summer camps, to enable camps to adapt to meet the needs and expectations of parents, and to provide camps with more information about their target audience. Although this research method was appropriate for investigating the research objectives, there are still some drawbacks. With a relatively small sample of 82 participants from two purposely-selected camps, each individual has a concentrated impact on the data set. This is good when participants are fair representations of the general population, but when they are outliers, the data are skewed. Also, with questions framed in particular ways we may have missed different components of motivation, but the study is focusing on extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

With such short in-person contact with the subjects, a survey was the best option for data collection. During camper drop off, many parents may arrive at the same time. Conducting qualitative interviews would take a lot of time, and impatient parents may decide to leave instead of interview. With survey data collection, multiple people could complete surveys at the same time.

In this research, the dependent variable is the enrollment of one's child into residential summer camp, while the independent variables are types of motivation and different camp factors. Individuals in this research have enrolled their child in camp as a result of their type of motivation and preferred camp factors, among other things.

Sample

Surveys in this study were administered as part of child drop off procedures at residential summer camp at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station and YMCA Camp Glacier Hollow using a handpicked convenience sampling method. Camps with similar characteristics were chosen to compare results, and would represent residential summer camps well. Similar results were validation of residential summer camp's expected commonalities. With two data collection sites, generalizations could more broadly represent residential summer camp enrollment. These similar camps were chosen because they were within a reasonable range of travel for data collection, and represented a common type of summer camp known nationally. The similarities between these two camps were programming, camp length, and similar price. Both camps were located in Central Wisconsin and offered weeklong residential summer camp that costs on average \$475 per camper. The children that the survey questions are referring to are between the

ages of 7 and 17 years old. Four data collection sites were asked to participate in this research, of those two sites were willing to participate. Both sites offered outdoor recreation, living in close quarters with others, and structured/unstructured activities.

Parents dropping off their children were the suitable audience because they have enrolled their child in camp, and because they were there in person able to take the surveys. This sampling method was appropriate because parent responses needed to be collected before their children were attending camp. This research was seeking motivations for enrollment, and by collecting survey data before children were in attendance, their pre-camp motivation was still in mind. If this research had asked parents about their purpose of enrollment after their child had been away at camp, they may reflect on their experience while their child was at camp instead of the factors that brought them to the decision of enrollment.

YMCA Camp Glacier Hollow collected completed surveys from 38 parents while 274 children were enrolled in their residential summer camps. These parents provided information on 14% of the 247 residential campers who attended YMCA Camp Glacier Hollow during summer 2017.

The Central Wisconsin Environmental Station collected surveys from 44 parents, representing 17% of the 266 children who attended residential camp in 2017. Surveys were collected from Camp Glacier Hollow six times and the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station seven times. Surveys were not collected in June because research required Institutional Review Board approval. Approval to begin survey collection was given during the last week of June. For this reason, three data collection dates were not included from either sites, but the number of campers attending the camps during those

weeks are still included in the overall numbers. Parents with multiple children were asked to keep one child in mind when completing surveys. Families also carpool to summer camp drop off, and parents who were not present were not given the opportunity to complete the survey. Due to these survey collection factors, the low response rates accurately represent the percentage of children about whom data were collected but incorrectly suggest that a high number of parents who were asked to complete the survey declined to participate.

Considering that data needed to be collected during specific time frames and with a parent that has enrolled their children, this research used a combination of a handpicked sampling method to choose the two residential summer camps, and a convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling alone is not a credible sampling method according to O’Leary (2014). This is why this research paired it with a handpicked sampling method. Handpicked sampling involves selection of a sample with a particular purpose in mind. This sampling method “enhances learning by exploring the limits or boundaries of a situation or phenomenon”(O’Leary, 2014, p. 190). The combination of these non-random sampling methods best fit this research because of the situational ability to choose the parent that enrolled their children in these residential summer camps.

Instrumentation

Survey questions were designed using Deci & Ryan’s (2000) SDT, and the Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS) by Guay et al. (2000). The SIMS by Guay et al. (2000) was designed to measure motivation in multiple settings using intrinsic and extrinsically motivated statement responses. In the surveys handed to parents who

enrolled their children in summer camps, they were asked to indicate their level of agreement to enrollment factors and motivation based statements. Survey statements in this research were worded similarly to statements in the SIMS. For example, Guay et al. (2000, p. 184) used the statement “Because I think that this activity is interesting” indicating an intrinsic motivation based on participant response. Similarly the survey for this research (see Appendix) used the statement “I am interested in what camps do for children” to indicate intrinsic motivation. Both statements mention personal interest for an activity and are meant to represent intrinsic motivation in decision-making. Responses to statements that indicate extrinsic motivation in regard to pressures are also related. Guay et al. (2000, p. 184) also asked subjects to respond to statements like “Because I feel that I have to” that represent extrinsic motivation through pressures and external reward. The related statement in the surveys collected at camps is “I enrolled my child in summer camp because I feel that I am supposed to enroll my child in activities during summer.” Both statements are used to indicate a pressure to do an activity, which are determinates of extrinsic motivation.

Surveys were 12 questions long, varying in question style and response (see Appendix). The first page of the survey is an informed consent waiver that indicates that participants are voluntary, and have the choice to stop taking the survey whenever they would like. Survey questions were open-ended, multiple choice, Likert scale response, and fill in the blank. Questions were designed to indicate motivation quality and attitudes toward youth residential summer camp enrollment. The influence of child growth and development, time spent outdoors, camp activities, tradition, childcare, and cost on enrollment was indicated by the response to paired Likert scale responses to thematic

statements. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation based statements also used a Likert scale to indicate responses to statements. Additional questions asked demographic information such as child age, prior summer camp attendance, who made the enrollment decision, if the parents had ever attended camp as youth, marital status, employment status, and if their child received a scholarship towards summer camp (see Appendix). The intention of demographic questions was to understand the target audience enrolling their children in summer camp, and to look for relationships between motivation, background, and enrollment.

Data Collection

Surveys were distributed to parents during the drop off procedure at summer camp between June and August of 2017. At the beginning or end of the check-in process, parents were asked if they would complete a 5-minute voluntary paper and pencil survey to better understand parental motivation toward summer camp enrollment. If they were not interested in completing the in-person survey, they were given the option of an online version designed using Qualtrics. The electronic version had no responses from parents.

Surveys and survey collection methods were reviewed by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects in research. The protocol was approved after minor edits from the review board.

Data Analysis

Upon survey completion, data were entered into Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS. For the analysis of data, multiple methods and tests were used to explore the results.

Surveys collected responses to multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, and Likert scale responses to statements. Responses to open-ended questions were reviewed and provide support for quantitative data. Descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation were calculated and reported. A Chronbach's alpha test was used to measure the reliability of the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation scales. Lastly, independent samples t-tests were calculated to compare responses to enrollment factors and motivation scales by different demographic groups.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to further understand the factors that motivate parents to enroll their children in residential youth summer camps. Data collection sites were chosen because they were residential youth summer camps of similar cost, length, price, and location. Surveys were collected from parents dropping off their children. Results are organized into three sections: (a) Demographics, (b) Camp enrollment factors, (c) Motivation.

Demographics

The two residential youth summer camps participating in the study had campers of similar age ranges, similar camp programming, and both camps were hosted in similar locations. If parents had more than one child attending camp, they were asked to choose one and answer all questions in relation to that child. When asked what one's relation was to the child enrolled in camp as an open ended question, responses indicated 43 mothers, 14 fathers, 20 parents, three grandparents, and two participants left the answer blank. Of the respondents, six indicated that they were single, 70 indicated that they were married or in domestic partnerships, five indicated that they were divorced, and one survey had no response. Respondents also reported their employment status as 70 employed, five self-employed, one retired, and six stay-at-home parents. Scholarships were awarded to 12 campers in the study, and 69 did not receive financial assistance. The mean age of respondents' children were 11.2 years old ($SD=1.71$). Between July and August YMCA Camp Glacier Hollow collected 38 surveys, with campers' ages ranging from seven years old to 15 years old. In the same time frame, the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station collected 44 surveys. The total number of residential campers at YMCA Glacier Hollow

was 274, and the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station was 266, including the month of June when no data were collected. The average number of children dropped off at YMCA Glacier Hollow ($M=1.35$ children) is comparable to the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station ($M=1.23$ children). The average age of children dropped off at YMCA Camp Glacier Hollow was 10.78 years old and the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station was 11.51 years old.

Both summer camps offered similar activities, which include canoeing, kayaking, archery, fishing, team building exercises, and much more. These camps were located in rural Central Wisconsin where there is an availability of forests and lakes. With a variety of similarities, these residential summer camps provided similar respondents, camp factors, and motivations for camper enrollment. Comparing demographic responses between the two camps affirms assumed similarities.

Responses of 80 parents showed that 46 of their children (57.5%) have attended a camp before, and 34 (42.5%) have not. From those responses, 14 campers attended a residential camp for one year, 10 campers attended residential camp for two years, nine campers attended residential camp for three to three and a half years, nine campers had attended residential camp for four years, and four campers attended residential camp for five or more years (Figure 4.1). When asked if parents had attended summer camp as children, 73% responded with “Yes”, and 27% responded with “No”.

Figure 4.1 Years Previously Attended Camp

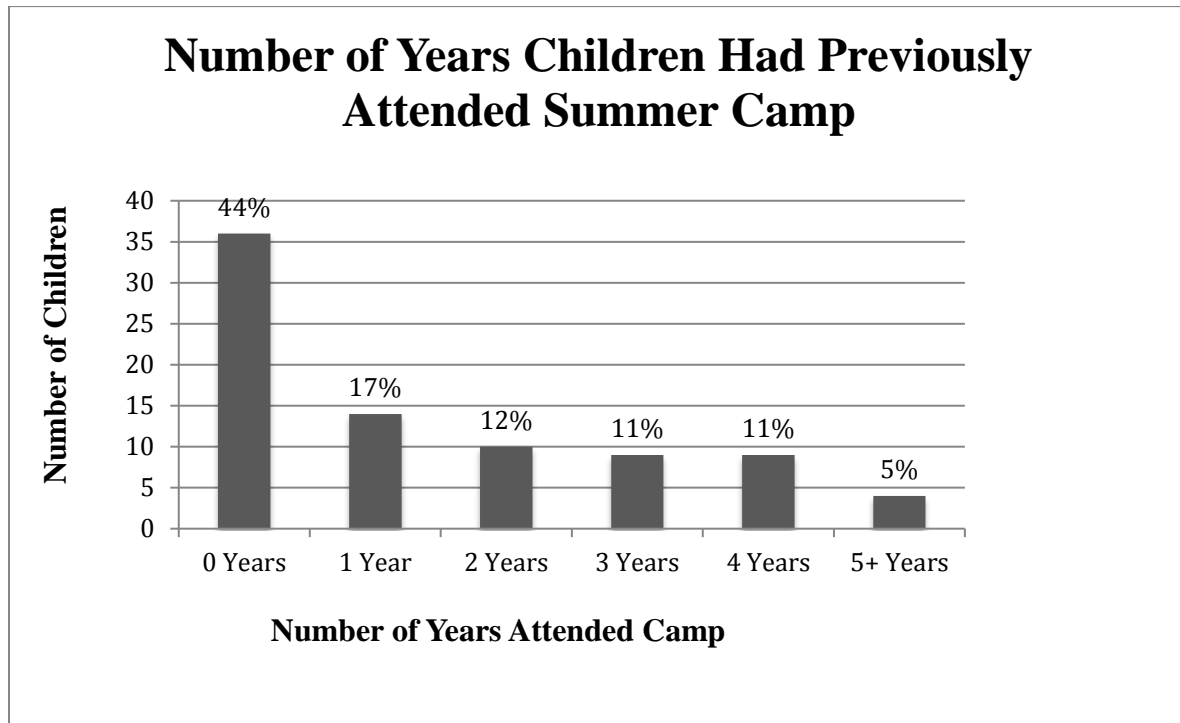


Figure 4.1 Representative of the amount of children who previously attended summer camp and the number of years participating.

Camp Enrollment Decisions

Parents were asked to indicate who made the decision to enroll the child in camp, an adult family member or the child. The respondents were instructed to place an “x” on a line to represent their situation (see Appendix). The far left end of the response line (0) represented that the parents fully made the decision for enrollment. As you follow the line towards the value of (1), the response for the enrollment decision was made more by the child. The average response was 0.45, indicating a stronger parental influence. Child influence was higher for families where the child had attended camp before ($M=0.52$, $SD=0.35$) than for first-time campers ($M=0.36$, $SD=0.36$), but the difference was not significant based on an independent samples t-test ($t(77)=1.93$, $p=0.057$). The lack of

significance is likely due to the high variation in responses, as evidenced by the high standard deviations.

Camp Enrollment Factors

There are many great reasons to go to summer camp. In this research we asked participants to respond to statements regarding their agreement with camp enrollment factors of tradition, growth and development, cost, time spent outdoors, childcare, and camp activities. Responses to factor statements were measured using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). As a result, parental attitudes and motivations, towards these factors emerged from their responses. Factors indicated strong agreement in camp activities, growth and development, and spending time outside (Figure 4.2). These three factors had the strongest agreement, and childcare, cost, and tradition were the factors with the lowest agreement responses.

Figure 4.2 Average Agreement to Camp Enrollment Factor

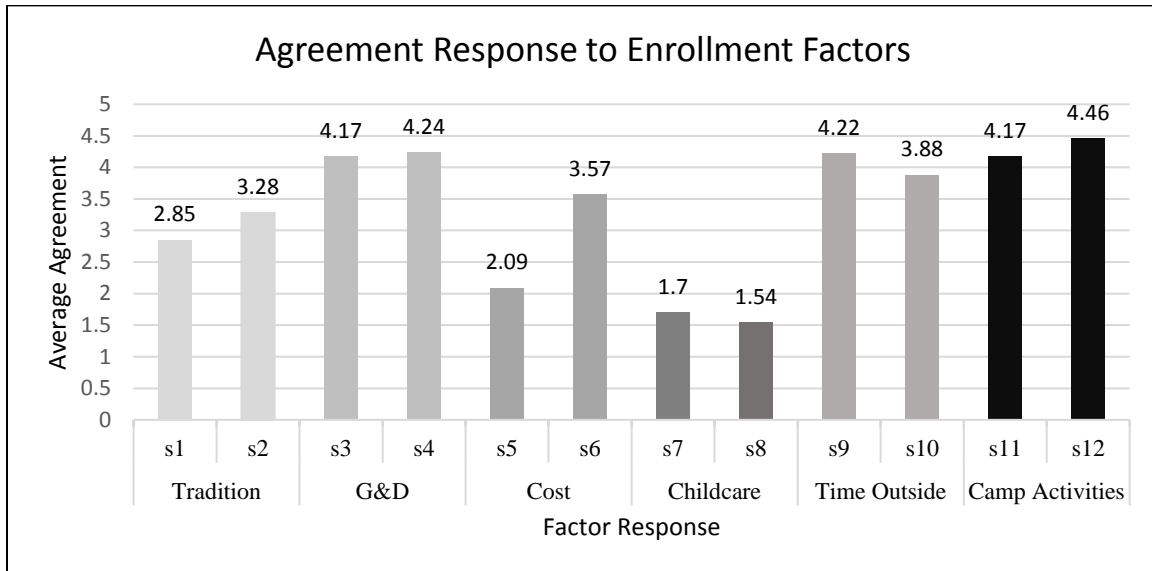


Figure 4.2 Camp activity, growth and development, and outdoor experience were the highest average responses, indicating that these areas are expected outcomes. Responses to specific statements are represented with (s) below the bar graph.

Table 4.1 Camp Enrollment Factor Agreement

Factor	Statement (I have enrolled my child in camp...)	Mean	(SD)
Tradition	s1. because everyone in my family goes to camp as children	2.85	1.28
	s2. to learn different cultural traditions	3.28	0.89
Growth and Development	s3. to help them gain independence	4.17	0.9
	s4. to help them gain social skills in real life situations	4.24	0.76
Cost	s5. because I was offered help financially to send them	2.09	1.38
	s6. because it is affordable	3.57	0.96
Childcare	s7. so that I can complete tasks	1.7	0.93
	s8. because camp is an alternate form of childcare	1.54	0.9
Spending Time Outdoors	s9. because they love the outdoors	4.22	0.79
	s10. to get them to spend more time outside	3.88	1.08
Camp Activities	s11. because of an activity this camp offers	4.17	0.78
	s12. because they enjoy activities at camp	4.46	0.87

Table 4.1 Camp factor agreement based on a Likert scale statement responses of 1=strongly disagree, to 5=strongly agree. Mean responses and Standard Deviation (SD) based on parental responses to each statement.

Based on independent samples t-tests, parents who attended camp as youth had significantly different responses to two summer camp enrollment factor statements: “I enrolled my child in camp because everyone in my family goes to camp as children” ($t(79) = 3.75, p < .001$) representing the camp enrollment factor of tradition, and “I enrolled my child in camp so that I can complete tasks” ($t(80) = -2.41, p = .018$) representing the camp enrollment factor of childcare. Parents that received scholarships gave significantly different responses based on independent samples t-tests to camp enrollment factor statements: “I enrolled my child in camp because I was offered help financially to send them” ($t(23) = 11.50, p < .001$, equal variances not assumed) representing the camp enrollment factor of cost, and “I enrolled my child in camp because it is an alternate form of childcare this week” ($t(65) = -5.14, p < .001$, equal variances not assumed) representing the camp enrollment factor of childcare. Parents whose children had attended camp before gave significantly different responses to two enrollment factors than those whose children had not attended camp, as determined by an independent samples t-test: “I have enrolled my child in camp because everyone in my family goes to camp as children” ($t(78) = 2.27, p = .026$) and “I enrolled my child in camp because they enjoy activities at camp” ($t(50) = 1.99, p = .052$, equal variances not assumed).

Surveys asked parents to respond to the open-ended question “What was the main reason you chose to enroll your child in [camp name here] in particular?” Responses to this question indicated common summer camp enrollment factors such as growth and development, time spent outdoors, and camp activities. Two responses that indicated growth and development were:

“To allow [child’s name] to have some experiences while gaining independence and confidence. We want him to have fun and enjoy his summer until we can all go on vacation together.”

“They need to learn some independence and confidence with new situations.”

Both statements mention that parents are seeking independence and confidence for their children, which are common themes of growth and development. Time spent outdoors was indicated in the following two statements:

“I want her to have a nature filled bonding experience. I liked the activities this camp offered.”

“Week away to gain independence. Love the outdoor activities for my child to get away from electronics.”

Mentioning nature and outdoor activities are indicators that parents are seeking an experience for their children outside. Two responses that indicated camp activities were:

“To enjoy activities she may not otherwise get a chance to enjoy or participate in.”

...really enjoys the activities and friends he makes, the counselors are fun too.”

These few responses were examples of camp enrollment factors and motivation toward summer camp enrollment. Although these are examples of only three of the six enrollment factors, tradition, cost, and childcare were also present. The fact that these enrollment factors showed up in an open-ended question suggests that the listed enrollment factors were appropriately chosen.

Motivation Factors

A second series of statements investigated whether parents were more motivated by intrinsic factors (i.e. youth development or enjoyment) or by extrinsic factors (i.e. pressure and guilt). The same Likert scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree was

used. (See Table 4.2) Statements were written based on Self-Determination Theory and the sub theory of Organismic Integration Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) to reflect those categories and parents' attitudes. Surveys asked parents why they enrolled their children in summer camp by responding to intrinsically and extrinsically based enrollment statements. One statement "It is good for me to have some time to myself" was excluded in the comparison of extrinsic to intrinsic motivation because it was determined that it did not fit into either group based on how the motivation types were operationalized in relation to camp enrollment. This statement did not represent outside pressures to enroll or benefits to the child. The statements were measured using a Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. Average responses indicated that parents agreed or strongly agreed with intrinsic motivation based enrollment statements, and had a low motivation agreement with extrinsically based enrollment statements. In other words, parents have high intrinsic motivation and low extrinsic motivation toward residential youth summer camp enrollment.

Table 4.2 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation Agreement

Why have you enrolled your child in summer camp this summer?		
Intrinsic motivation statements	Mean	(SD)
I am interested in what camps do for children	4.12	0.71
Summer camp had similar values to mine	4.23	0.73
I believe in the value / mission of summer camp	4.28	0.75
I enrolled my child for the quality of learning during camp	4.39	0.81
I enjoy hearing about my child's experience and knowing that they are having fun	4.84	0.37

Why have you enrolled your child in summer camp this summer?		
Extrinsic statements	Mean	(SD)
I feel pressure to enroll my child from other parents	1.28	0.58
I would feel guilty if I didn't enroll my children	1.52	0.73
I feel pressure to enroll my child from my child	2.22	1.13
I feel that I am supposed to enroll my child in activities during the summer	2.7	1.24
It is good for me to have some time for myself	2.89	1.18

Table 4.2 Motivation statement agreement based on Likert responses of 1=strongly disagree, to 5strongly agree. Mean response and Standard Deviation (SD) based on parental response to each statement.

A Chronbach's alpha test revealed high reliability for intrinsic statements ($\alpha=0.77$) and lower reliability for extrinsic statements ($\alpha=0.55$). Responses to intrinsic motivation statements and extrinsic motivation statements were averaged, thus creating two new variables that could be compared. A paired t-test of the agreement with intrinsic motivations statements ($M=4.37$, $SD=0.50$) and extrinsic motivation statements ($M=1.93$, $SD=0.63$) revealed a significant difference ($t(80)= 26.40$, $p < .000$). Plotting the level of agreement with intrinsic motivation statements against the level of agreement with extrinsic motivation statements revealed that parents fell into two groups: those motivated by intrinsic factors only and those motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. (See Figure 4.3.)

Figure 4.3 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations

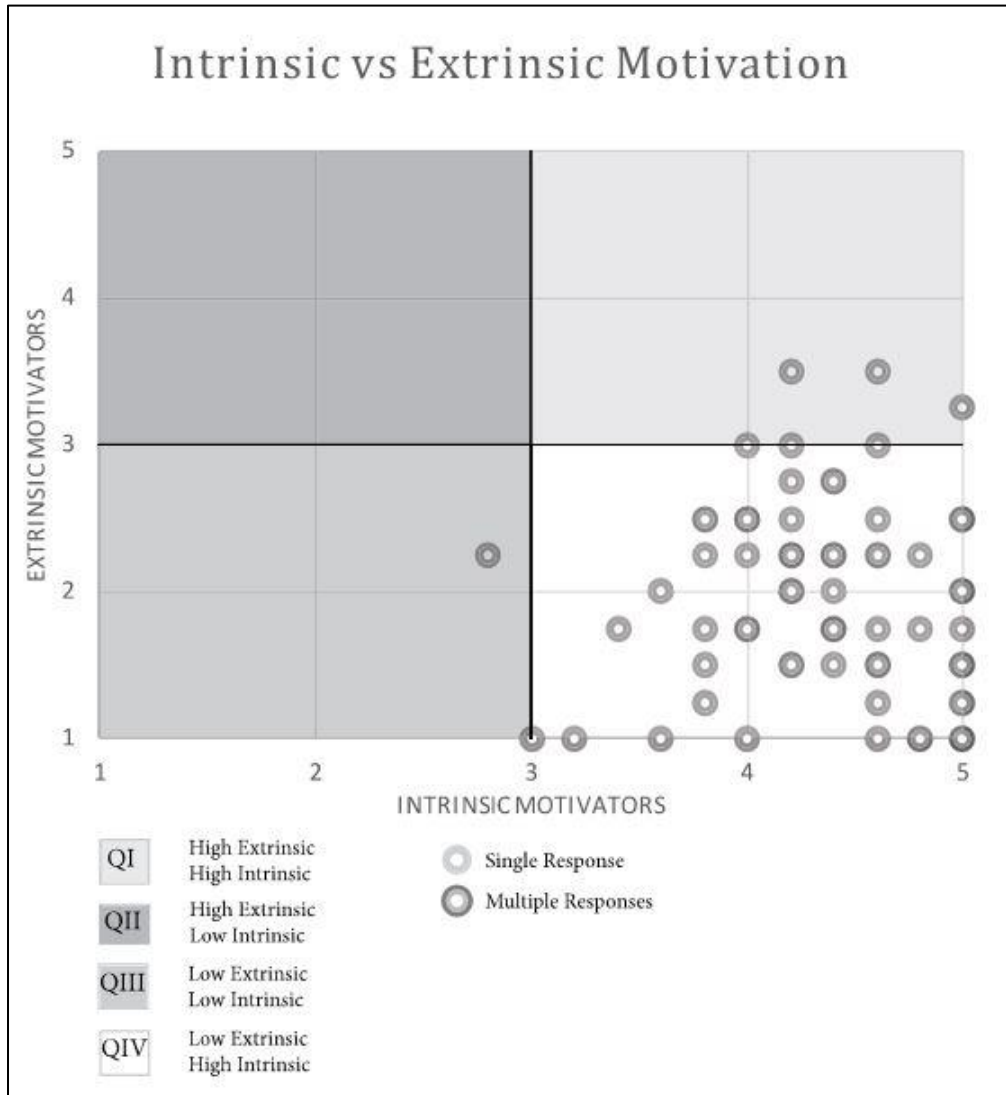


Figure 4.3 Motivational outcomes of parental responses. QI represents Highly Extrinsic and intrinsic responses, QII represents highly extrinsic and low intrinsic responses, QIII represents low extrinsic and low intrinsic responses, and QIV represents low extrinsic response and high intrinsic responses.

There were no significant differences in responses to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation statements between parents whose children had previously attended camp and parents whose children had not attended camp, based on independent samples t-tests.

Comparing parents who had attended camp themselves to those who had not also revealed no significant difference in relation to type of motivation.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Explanation of results

This research was conducted to explore what parental motivations toward summer camp enrollment are present. This study was interested in what types of motivations were most common for summer camp enrollment, and why people are sending their children to camp.

The two camps selected to participate in this research were chosen because of their commonalities. These two camps are similar cost, programming, length, and demographic. The average age of campers, the average number of children per family dropped off that day at camp, adult relationship to the child attending, and the employment status of respondents at each site were similar.

Over half of the children attending residential summer camp had attended before. The parents of those children have likely observed some benefits of residential summer camp noted in the literature, including an increase in self-confidence and social skills (Henderson, Whitaker, & Bialeschki, 2007). It is, therefore, encouraging that parents are choosing to enroll their children in camp for another summer.

Camp enrollment factors were measured by responses to two related statements. The factors used indicated tradition, growth and development, cost, childcare, spending time outdoors, and camp activities. Although the statements were written with the intention of collecting similar information in two ways, responses were not consistent. Further reflection on how the factors were operationalized suggested that all 12 statements should be considered separately rather than grouped. The largest difference in responses was within the factor of cost. The statement “because I was offered help

financially to send them” ($M=2.09$), is very different from the statement “because it is affordable” ($M=3.57$). With only two statements measuring this factor, responses for this factor were disconnected.

Childcare held the strongest disagreement response of the factors with averages of 1.7 and 1.54 responses on the five-point Likert scale for the two statements. Although parents stated in the open-ended question that they needed to find childcare for their children during the time of camp, it was not indicated to be a major contributing factor for enrollment. Residential summer camp can represent some of the functions of typical childcare, but that was not shown to be the focal purpose behind the enrollment decision. These parents could probably have utilized their current forms of childcare, but chose to enroll their children for different reasons. Parents often use family members as childcare providers (Burstein & Layzer, 2007), but engaging activities provided by camps can positively influence the growth and development of campers (Thurber et al., 2007).

The strongest agreement responses to camp factors were in the category of camp activities. Both statements in this area were strongly agreed with by respondents indicating the importance of unique camp activities. These responses highlight an aspect of summer camp that parents are expecting while considering residential camp enrollment. Growth and development and time outside also had a strong agreement response. This result can mean that parents are motivated to enroll their children because of the camp activities, time spent outdoors, and growth and development. These factors could have stood out because residential summer camps provide unique opportunities to participate in activities such as low ropes courses, lakefront time, and evening campfires. Camps also differentiate themselves from one another through their unique programming

and sites. Parents may choose to enroll their children in summer camp because the child enjoys certain activities, or because the parents want their child to like certain activities. Summer camps market their unique activities to the public, and parents have the chance to choose between multiple camps and activities.

Limitations

Although it was intended to complete this research with minimal limitations, some were still present. One limitation was that the data were collected during camper drop off. The timeframe of camper drop off is short, and with this restriction, parents could have missed the opportunity to complete a survey. Also, the person dropping off the child may not have been the person who enrolled them. Sometimes, children carpooled and only one adult was there to complete the survey for one child.

Data were collected by the administration of paper surveys that participants anonymously completed and submitted. Perhaps paper surveys were not a favored format by parents. Responses may be different if asked verbal responses to the survey questions. Surveys can prove to be limiting based on wording of questions, the understanding of questions, and completing surveys with integrity and honesty.

People may not have been completely truthful when responding to the survey. People may have felt that they needed to provide a socially expected answer instead of what truly applies to their situation. Some parents were responding to surveys with a child present, which may have influenced their responses. Perhaps parents couldn't identify reasons that they had enrolled their children in camp, or they were uncertain. There may have been confusion of directions or uncertainty. Also some survey questions

were missing responses. We do not know if this was because the parent was uncomfortable answering those questions, they did not feel that the questions applied to them, or they unintentionally skipped them.

Quantitative research methods collect numerical data in response to statements and questions. This is a limitation because people may have motivations or factors that are not included in the surveys.

With only two camps, the sample size was small (N=82). With more participating camps, the sample size would have been larger, and it might have been more possible to detect statistically significant differences between demographic groups or motivating factors. A larger sample size could also contribute to the diversity of parents that enrolled their children in residential summer camps. A higher amount of diversity could really change the results in this research. Surveys collected from residents of more urban areas may have indicated totally different motivational factors towards enrollment.

Recommendations

The data collected through this study provide useful guidance to camp directors seeking to recruit new and returning campers. Responses indicated that parents are looking for growth and development including independence and teamwork. Children at residential camp are expected to learn how to live with others and develop the skills required to coexist appropriately. In other words, children are learning self awareness and reasoning while adapting to live with one another. The expectations include gaining independence, and real life social skills. Independence and decision-making skills can

come from various activities, and programming choices. Many of these skills are also learned in downtime, but are not highlighted in camper outreach or advertisement.

When wording advertisement and promotional materials, one should consider some key words surrounding these skills. Camp Directors and Administrators should mention that campers will be facing challenges independently, but also will work in small and large teams. Campers are pushed to successfully gain various social and technical skills. Summer camp directors should not just say what these children will leave camp with; they also need to strategically plan activities that enable these skills. Many of these things are already activities and experiences in camps, but by drawing specific attention and acknowledgement to them marketing can address the factors motivating parents to enroll their children. Parents do not know that it is an intention for residential summer camps to achieve these benefits unless it is directly stated or explained to parents. This can be done in different forms of promotion, such as brochures, pamphlets, and through social media.

Residential summer camps do a variety of activities exposing children to the outdoors. An outdoor experience is desired by many parents, but camps should identify the environment programming is located in. The use of the term environment refers to the space that children are occupying during their time at camp. Environments can be different from camp to camp, and can be an intriguing component to camps. Part of this is to support parents who have not experienced residential camp before, and it also accentuates a uniqueness a site may have. Describing some of the landscapes their child will experience will help parents envision camp and be motivated to enroll their child.

A common response of subjects was that they did not enroll their children in camp as a form of childcare. Yes, childcare and residential summer camps have their similarities and common amenities, but this was not the factor pushing parents to enroll their children in camp. Camp directors should keep in mind that presenting their experience as childcare may not be productive. Camps have much more to offer than childcare alone.

In general, parents are intrinsically motivated toward residential summer camp enrollment. Parents enrolling their children value camps as quality learning spaces, are interested in providing growth and development opportunities for their children, and want to give their children a fun summer experience. The reward of sending one's child to camp is internal. The experiences gained at camp are why parents want their children to attend. As a camp director, this is important to keep in mind.

Research Recommendations

While completing this research, we encountered methods that worked successfully, and idealized what could be done to strengthen similar future research. It is suggested that the following recommendations are considered.

The subjects in this research were chosen because they were participants in the residential summer camps. People dropping their children off at camp were the target audience, and collecting data at camp check in worked well. By collecting data upon drop off, we minimized the possibility of surveying people that do not fit the parameters of the sample. Those dropping off their children at camp are most likely the same people who decided to enroll them. In future research, I suggest that data are collected upon drop off

with the addition of an online survey. Surveys could be sent via email to all families that registered their children in camp. Those who do not respond to the online survey will have the option of taking the survey in person during drop off. This is one way to increase the number of responses, and to offer the survey to parents whose children carpool on the day of check in. By using an online option through email, the limitation of a small timeframe for data collection is reduced.

Now that there are quantitative data collected about parental motivation towards residential summer camp enrollment, there is an opportunity for qualitative research to be conducted. Variables and motivations that were excluded from this research may reveal themselves in qualitative research. Such research would help to gather information surrounding parental motivation toward residential summer camp, and provide support to the results found in prior research.

To further understand motivational factors of enrollment, it would be beneficial to research summer camp deterrents. The challenge in this is that it is difficult finding people that considered residential summer camp, and then were deterred. People that were not interested in summer camp must have motivations or factors that pulled them away from enrolling their child.

Conclusion

This research begins to fill a gap in research involving parent perceptions, motivation, and decision-making regarding summer camp enrollment. Parents enrolling their children in residential summer camps have a variety of factors and motivations that push them to make an enrollment decision. With a plethora of positive outcomes,

residential summer camp can be an important decision that contributes to a child's development. Although it is not fully understood what motivates parents to enroll their children in residential summer camp, we can now grasp some concepts surrounding enrollment decisions. Most parents are enrolling their children because they are motivated by intrinsically-based values and want their children to have an enjoyable time doing new fun outdoor activities, while gaining social skills in real hands-on situations. Residential summer camps are valuable to parents, and valuable to children participating. With this research, camps are able to formulate programming that gives customers what they want and expect. In addition, programming can be strategically advertised and promoted to families with related values.

References

- Basile, C., & White, C. (2000). Respecting living things: Environmental literacy for young children. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 28(1), 57-61. Retrieved from <https://link-springer-com.ezproxy.uwsp.edu/article/10.1023/A%3A1009551705001>
- Bean, C. N., Kendellen, K., & Forneris, T. (2016). Examining needs support and positive developmental experiences through youth's leisure participation in a residential summer camp. *Leisure/Loisir*, 40(3), 271-295. doi:10.1080/14927713.2016.1252938
- Burstein, N., and Layzer, J.I. (2007). National study of child care for low- income families: Patterns of child care use among low-income families, final report. Cambridge, MA: ABT Associates. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/patterns_childcare.pdf
- Bialeschki, M. D., Henderson, K. A., & James, P. A. (2007). Camp experiences and developmental outcomes for youth. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 16(4), 769-788. doi:10.1016/j.chc.2007.05.011
- Compensation, Benefits, and Professional Development Report (n.d.). In *American Camp Association*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/research/compensation-benefits-and-professional-development-report>
- Culen, G., & Mony, P. S. (2003). Assessing environmental literacy in a nonformal youth program. *The Journal of Environmental Education*, 34(4), 26-28. doi:10.1080/00958960309603484
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behaviour. New York, NY: Plenum.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Correction to Deci and Ryan (2008). *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*, 49(3), 262-262. doi:10.1037/0708-5591.49.3.262
- Deci, E., Ryan, R., & Hunsley, J. (2008). Facilitating optimal motivation and psychological well-being across life's domains. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 49(1), 14-23. doi:10.1037/0708-5591.49.1.14
- Deci, E. L., Olafsen, A. H., & Ryan, R. M. (2017, March). Self-Determination Theory in Work Organizations: The State of Science. *The Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 4, 19-43. doi:https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032516-113108

- Dipeolu, A., Cook-Cottone, C., Lee, G. K., Donnelly, J. P., Janikowski, T. P., Reynolds, A. L., & Boling, T. (2016). A concept map of campers' perceptions of camp experience. *The Family Journal, 24*(2), 182-189. doi:10.1177/1066480716628566
- Dworken, B S. (2001). Research reveals the assets of camp: Parents and campers give their opinions. *Camping Magazine, 74*(5), 40-43.
- Frensch, K. M., Pratt, M. W., & Norris, J. E. (2007). Foundations of generativity: Personal and family correlates of emerging adults' generative life-story themes. *Journal of Research in Personality, 41*(1), 45-62. doi:10.1016/j.jrp.2006.01.005
- Flannery, M. (2017). Self-determination theory: Intrinsic motivation and behavioral change. *Oncology Nursing Forum, 44*(2), 155-156. doi:10.1188/17.ONF.155-156
- Gorry, D., & Thomas, D. W. (2017). Regulation and the cost of childcare. *Applied Economics, 49*(41), 4138-4147. doi:10.1080/00036846.2016.1276275
- Garst, B. A., Browne, L. P., & Bialeschki, M. D. (2011). Youth development and the camp experience. *New Directions for Youth Development, 2011*(130), 73-87. doi:10.1002/yd.398
- Guay, F., Vallerand, R., & Blanchard, C. (2000). On the assessment of situational intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: The situational motivation scale (SIMS). *Motivation and Emotion, 24*(3), 175-213. doi:10.1023/A:1005614228250
- Henderson, K. A., Bialeschki, D., & Browne, L. P. (2017). *Evaluating Recreation Services* (4th ed., pp. 113-115). Urbana, IL: Sagamore Venture Publishing LLC.
- Henderson, K. A., Whitker, L. S., Bialeschki, M. D., Scanlin, M. M., & Thurber, C. (2007). Summer camp experiences: Parental perceptions of youth development outcomes. *Journal of Family Issues, 28*(8), 987-1007. doi:10.1177/0192513X07301428
- Kuvaas, B., Buch, R., Weibel, A., Dysvik, A., & Nerstad, C, G.L. (2017). Do intrinsic and extrinsic motivation relate differently to employee outcomes? *Journal of Economic Psychology, 61*, 244-258. doi:10.1016/j.joep.2017.05.004
- Larson, L., Green, G., & Cordell, H. (2011). Children's time outdoors: Results and implications of the national kids survey. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 29*(2). 40.
- Loewenstein, G. (1994). The Psychology of curiosity: A review and reinterpretation. *Psychological Bulletin, 116*(1), 75-98. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.116.1.75

- O'Leary, Z. (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project* (2nd ed.).
Dorchester: Sage Publications.
- Rachidi, A. (2016). Child care assistance and nonstandard work schedules. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *65*, 104-111. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.03.023
- Ramsing, R., & Sibthorp, J. (2008). The role of autonomy support in summer camp programs: Preparing youth for productive behaviors. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, *26*(2), 61-77. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.18666/JPra-2016-V34-I4-7273>
- Ryan, R. (1995). Psychological needs and the facilitation of integrative processes. *Journal of Personality*, *63*(3), 397-427. doi:10.1111/1467-6494.ep9510042298
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000a). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *25*(1), 54-67. doi:10.1006/ceps.1999.1020
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000b). Self- determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, *55*(1), 68-78. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68
- Sibthorp, J., Bialeschki, M., Morgan, C., & Browne, L. (2013). Validating, norming, and utility of a youth outcomes battery for recreation programs and camps. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *45*(4), 514-536.
- Swindle, D (2010, May). Camp traditions: Memories in the making. Retrieved January 31, 2018, from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/campingmagazine/camp-traditions-memories-making>
- Thurber, C., Scanlin, M., Scheuler, L., & Henderson, K. (2007). Youth development outcomes of the camp experience: Evidence for multidimensional growth. *Journal of Youth Adolescence*, *36*(3), 241-254. doi:10.1007/s10964-006-9142-6
- Ventura, A. K., & Garst, B. A. (2013). Residential summer camp: a new venue for nutrition education and physical activity promotion.. *The International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, *10*(1), 64-72
- Wentzel, K., & Pressley, G. Michael. (1999). Social-motivational processes and interpersonal relationships: Implications for understanding motivation at school. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *91*(1), 76-97 doi:10.1037/0022-0663.91.1.76
- Wrenn, K. (2015). Autonomy. *Academic Emergency Medicine*, *22*(8), 1001-1001. doi:10.1111/acem.12719

Appendix: Survey

Graduate student Marcus Nack and research advisor Kendra Liddicoat researching through the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point would appreciate your participation in a research study designed to investigate motivation for camper enrollment by parents and legal guardians. You are being asked to complete an anonymous survey that should take approximately 10 minutes of your time.

Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and your decision whether or not to participate will not impact your current and future relationship with Camp (Camp name here). If you want to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so without penalty. The information collected on you up to that point would be destroyed.

We anticipate no risk to you as a result of your participation in this study other than the inconvenience of the time to complete the survey.

While there may be no immediate benefit to you as a result of your participation in this study, it is hoped that we may gain valuable information about parental motivation that will be of future value to society.

The information that you give us on the survey will be recorded in anonymous form. We will not release information that could identify you. All completed survey will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the office of Marcus Nack and will not be available to anyone not directly involved in this study.

Once the study is completed, we would be glad to give you the results. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please ask us or contact:

Marcus Nack
College of Natural Resources
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
800 Reserve Street
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 346-2741
mnack@uwsp.edu

If you have any questions or concerns about your treatment as participant in this study, please call or write:

Dr. Debbie Palmer, Chair
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Department of Psychology
Science Building, D240
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 346-3953
irbchair@uwsp.edu

Although Dr. Palmer will ask your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.

Your completion and submission of the survey represents your consent as a subject in this research.

This research project has been approved by the UWSP Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.

Please answer all questions as honestly as possible. Indicate your response by circling the appropriate answer or writing your response on the line provided. Thank you!

1. How many children from your family are you dropping off at (Camp name Here) today?

2. Have any of your children attend Camp (Camp name here) before?
 - Yes
 - No

If you are dropping off more than one child today, choose one and answer questions for that child only.

Please fill in the blank.

3. How old is your child?

Has your child been to an overnight camp before (here or at another camp)?

- Yes
- No

If you answered yes, for how many years? _____

Place an X on the line at the place that best represents your situation

4. The decision for your child to attend (Camp name here) was made by

Me or another adult
family member

The child
-----attending camp

Please circle the number that indicates your level of agreement.

5.1- 5.12 Why have you enrolled your child in Camp (camp name here) this summer?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I have enrolled my child in camp because everyone in my family goes to camp as children.	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp to help them gain independence	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp because I was offered help financially to send them	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp so that I can complete tasks	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp because they love the outdoors	1	2	3	4	5

I enrolled my child in camp because of an activity this camp offers	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp to learn different cultural traditions	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp to help them gain social skills in real life situations	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp because it is affordable	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp because camp is an alternate form of childcare this week	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp to get them to spend more time outside	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child in camp because they enjoy activities at camp	1	2	3	4	5

Please Circle the number that indicates your level of agreement

6.1-6.10 Why have you enrolled your child in Camp (Camp name here) this summer?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel pressure to enroll my child from other parents	1	2	3	4	5
I would feel guilty if I didn't enroll my child	1	2	3	4	5
I believe in the value/mission of summer camp	1	2	3	4	5
I feel pressure to enroll my child from my child	1	2	3	4	5
I am interested in what camps do for children	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I am supposed to enroll my child in activities during summer	1	2	3	4	5
Summer camp has similar values to mine	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy hearing about my child's experiences and knowing that they are having fun	1	2	3	4	5
I enrolled my child for the quality of learning during camp	1	2	3	4	5

It is good for me to have some time for myself	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

Write your answer in the blank space

7. What was the main reason you chose to enroll your child in Camp (camp name here) in particular this summer?

Demographic Questions

8. Did you or your spouse/partner attend overnight camp as a child?

- Yes
- No

9. What is your relationship to the child you are dropping off?

10. What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married or Domestic partner
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed

11. What is your employment status?

- Employed
- Self Employed
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Stay at home parent

12. Has your child received a scholarship to attend (Camp Name Here) this summer?

- Yes
- No