

The Employee Sportsphere: An Investigation of the Work Experience for the Paid, Part-Time Event Staff at Public Assembly facilities

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The primary purpose of this study was to examine the work experience for the paid, part-time event staff within public assembly facilities, and posited the "employee sportsphere" as a more comprehensive approach to study of the work experience for event staff. The employee sportsphere was conceptualized based upon previous research on servicescape and sportscape. Specifically, this study: (1) explored event staff ratings of various aspects of the employee sportsphere, (2) explored the relationship between the employee sportsphere and overall job satisfaction, and (3) explored the relationship between overall job satisfaction and employees' willingness to return to work.

This line of inquiry is important for three reasons. First, it provides an avenue to learn more about the paid, part-time event staff, a group that has been all but ignored in the literature to date, and what elements of the work experience influence them. Secondly, public assembly facilities operate within a highly competitive environment, competing for events, customer, and employees. By providing insight into what elements of the work experience are most essential in the public assembly facility setting, the proposed framework may assist in the retention of staff. Lastly, this line of inquiry may suggest that the event staff should be taken into consideration in the operation and design of public assembly facilities.

A questionnaire was designed for the study and was comprised of items from a number of pre-existing scales, as well as similarly structured items created for this study. Mail surveys were utilized to collect data via a census of the paid, part-time event staff at a 20,000+ seat multi-purpose public assembly facility in a mid-sized Midwestern city with over one million people living in the metropolitan area (N=406). Questionnaires were returned by 293 members of the event staff for a response rate of 72%. After testing for reliability (Cronbach's alphas) and internal consistency (item-to-total correlations), statistical tests were conducted to address the research questions.

Mean scores and standard deviations were calculated to measure employees' ratings of various aspects of their work experience, the employee sportsphere. The highest rated items (those above 5.0) included three pertaining to hedonistic pleasure, two pertaining to prestige / pride, one pertaining to parking, one pertaining to the facility, and one pertaining to training. When examining the mean scores for each of the twelve subscales, hedonistic pleasure and prestige / pride were ranked the highest.

Simultaneous multiple regression was utilized to examine the relationship between the twelve subscales of the employee sportsphere and employees' overall job satisfaction. The overall equation for the regression was significant ($F(12, 270) = 18.044$, $p < .001$) and the set of independent variables accounted for 44.5% of the variance (adjusted $R^2 = 42\%$) in job satisfaction. Of the twelve subscales, three contributed uniquely; facility, empowerment, and reward and recognition.

Simple multiple regression was utilized to examine the relationship between employees' overall job satisfaction and their willingness to return to work. The overall equation for the regression was significant ($F(1, 289) = 80.399$, $p < .001$) and the independent variable (job satisfaction) accounted for 21.8% of the variance (adjusted $R^2 = 21.5\%$) in employees' willingness to return.

Understanding that facility managers must work within the constraints of their environment, these findings and future studies may, in turn, assist facility managers in prioritizing services for their employees within their means. Additional implications of the results of this study are discussed and recommendations for future research are suggested.