

## A qualitative investigation of coaching satisfaction

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**Poster  
Abstract 252**

Job satisfaction is an important variable in the study of human resource management, by assessing attitudes towards work we can gain a better understanding of what motivates employees and thereby, more effectively manage individuals. While most research focuses on job satisfaction, a few scholars have argued it is just as important to study job dissatisfaction. These scholars have asserted that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are, in fact, distinct constructs and the relationship between various factors leading to satisfaction or dissatisfaction experienced is not necessarily linear (Berger et al., 1993).

Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory is one of the more recognized theories that supports this dual-factor concept as it relates to job attitudes (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959). Herzberg found satisfiers (motivators) to be intrinsic factors related to content of the job, while dissatisfiers (hygiene) were extrinsic factors that have more to do with the context or environment surrounding the job. Similarly, Kano (1984) developed a four-dimensional model of customer satisfaction that contends that customers will have different reactions to a product or service based on their expectations of that product or service and whether or not those expectations were met/fulfilled. He also argued that expectations and outcomes could vary by customer, industry, or market segment.

These models suggest that employee attitudes are complex and multidimensional, leading to the need to ground satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the employee experience and expectations. The purpose of this study was to utilize qualitative analysis to explore the elements of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in intercollegiate coaches. By understanding both facets, and by grounding them in their context, we can continue to develop comprehensive theory of individual and organizational effectiveness that inform not only sport management, but other literatures as well.

Participants were 15 Division III coaches representing both men's and women's major and minor sports who were interviewed on their respective campuses. The interview questions were adapted from Herzberg et al. (1957); all questions were asked of each participant, yet following a semi-structured approach, the researcher and participant were allowed to deviate from these exact questions or question order (Neuman, 2000).

Once the interviews were transcribed, two trained researchers independently reviewed them. Using open-coding, "the researcher locates themes and assigns initial codes or labels in a first attempt to condense the mass of data into categories" (Neuman, 2000, p. 421). In this study, the themes were derived from the existing literature, with special attention to Herzberg's dual model and Chelladurai and Ogaswara's (2003) Coaching Satisfaction Questionnaire, while allowing for flexibility and openness to other potential themes (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Neuman, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Examination of the data resulted in the development of a three-factor coaching satisfaction model that shows how various employment factors for coaching relate to both satisfaction and dissatisfaction as they are filtered through employee expectations. That is, whether or not these elements lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction seems not to be dependent upon their importance per se, but on the coaches' expectations of the job elements and whether or not those expectations are met.

"Industry Standard Factors" (e.g., fair salary, recruiting support, quality supervision) are those where employees expect certain job elements to be present in any coaching job. When these job element expectations are not met, employees express dissatisfaction and often intent to leave their current job; when expectations are met, the employee attitude is neutral.

"Performance Dependent Factors" can lead to either satisfaction or dissatisfaction dependent upon whether the coaches' expectations are met. When expectations are met, coaches express satisfaction; when expectations are not met, coaches express dissatisfaction. Achievement, Autonomy, the Job Itself, Pride and Pressure, and Relationships with Colleagues are all job factors in coaching that seem to be performance dependent, whereby coaches express satisfaction and loyalty to their current position or team if their expectations are met, but seem equally quick to express dissatisfaction and desire to change jobs if expectations are not met.

The third type of job element that emerged from the data is termed "Desirable Job Factors". These factors (e.g., working with athletes), when coaches' expectations are met, lead to satisfaction; when not met, they lead to neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction.

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From a theoretical perspective these results support the contention that satisfaction and dissatisfaction is complex, multi-dimensional, dynamic, and expectation-dependent. We must continue to examine employee attitudes from this perspective and through the filter of their expectations. From a human resource management perspective, these findings are important because they help managers (especially athletic directors) better diagnose and solve employee issues (Matzler et al., 2004). For example, managers might want to focus their attention on Performance Dependent and Industry Standard Factors if they want to motivate and retain their current workforce, as inattention to these factors easily leads to dissatisfaction and intent to search for other jobs.

Future research needs to extend these findings and test the model in other coaching settings to further develop the pathways and examine salient boundary conditions.