

Spring 5-7-2010

# Job satisfaction in young professional athletic trainers

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Job Satisfaction in Young Professional Athletic Trainers

Jennifer C. Stollery

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Master of Science in Education

Learning, Technology and Leadership Education

May 2010

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The author would like to acknowledge the following people for contribution to this research project; the National Athletic Trainer's Association, Dr. Jane Thall for your unconditional support in this process, Deborah Stollery, for your constant support and love throughout my life, and Dr. Diane Wilcox for your consistent review of my work and the timeline that has kept me on track. The author would also like to thank Diana Meza, Lisa Friesen, Stefanie Mancuso and Bahar Mikael for your encouragement, high-fives and helping me always put one foot in front of the other. I appreciate it more than you know.

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## **Abstract**

Job satisfaction levels in young professional athletic trainers in multiple settings were examined quantitatively using the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997) and qualitatively using an open-ended survey question. Job satisfaction levels were calculated to find that young professional athletic trainers are satisfied with their jobs according to the normative mean data for the scale. Post hoc analysis of the comparison of satisfaction levels by setting suggests that college/university athletic trainers have significantly lower job satisfaction levels than secondary school and clinic/outreach athletic trainers. Qualitative data suggests a high negative response rate revealing pay and operating procedures as two of the most important facets of job satisfaction. These findings suggest that a qualitative assessment of job satisfaction will provide better data for analysis regarding the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers.

*Keywords:* job, job satisfaction, athletic trainer, young professional, traditional job setting, non-traditional job setting, role conflict, human service workers.

## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

Job satisfaction is a topic of interest to both people in organizations and those who study organizations, and is one of the most highly studied variables in organizational behavior research (Cranny et al, 1992; Spector, 1997). Organizations choose to measure job satisfaction because of its direct relationship to the goals of reducing cost, increasing productivity and reducing absenteeism, turnover, errors and other costly events that occur when employees are dissatisfied with their jobs (Cranny et al, 1992). Job satisfaction is particularly important among health care professionals, as health care is one of the top ranking industries in the United States (Atwood & Woolf, 1982). From the perspective of health care professionals such as athletic trainers, job satisfaction is important to organizational effectiveness, personal needs satisfaction and potential employee productivity (Atwood & Woolf, 1982).

Understanding job satisfaction in young professional athletic trainers is imperative because athletic training is a rapidly expanding field that encompasses many work settings. Despite specialized training, young athletic trainers may experience low salary and challenging work conditions, similar to any young professional. The focus of this study is to understand the level of job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers across multiple work settings.

Athletic trainers are health care professionals who work with patients under the direction of a physician to specialize in the care of the physically active population (NATA.org, 2009). Historically, traditional job settings for athletic trainers are working with athletic teams at the middle school level all the way through to working with



professional athletes. Athletic trainers working in the secondary schools and collegiate settings make up more than 35% of the membership of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA). These traditional settings lay the foundation for athletic trainers to become recognized as health care professionals and begin to branch out into other settings to care for the physically active.

Athletic trainers can be found in any job setting where a physically active group of people is in need of health care. For a variety of reasons, athletic trainers have begun to be hired in more non-traditional settings such as hospitals, clinics, physicians' offices, law enforcement, the military, industrial and commercial companies and the performing arts (NATA.org, 2009). Reasons include new organizational goal to decrease workers' compensation issues, reduce absenteeism, assess ergonomics on the job and provide on-site rehabilitation for injured workers (NATA.org, 2009). Now that athletic trainers are working across a variety of settings, it is important to understand the job satisfaction levels of these athletic trainers, especially young professionals who represent the future of the profession.

Within the context of this research study, job satisfaction will be discussed in terms of the satisfaction of basic human needs according to Maslow's (1943) theory of self-actualization and the hierarchy of needs. The seminal nature of Maslow's theory laid the foundation for the development of Herzberg's (1968) and Locke's (1976) theories of job satisfaction. In turn, Herzberg and Locke provide the foundation for Spector (1985) to research and develop a reliable and valid way to assess job satisfaction. The literature review will discuss these theories and their impact on health care professionals including athletic training.

## Key Terms

**Job:** “a complex interrelationship of tasks, roles and responsibilities, interactions, incentives and rewards.” (Locke & Dunnette, 1976, p. 1301)

**Job Satisfaction:** “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences.” (Locke & Dunnette, 1976, p. 1300)

**Athletic Trainer:** “health care professionals who collaborate with physicians to optimize activity and participation of patients and clients.” (NATA.org, 2009)

**Young Professional:** For the purposes of this research, a young professional athletic trainer is defined as a Certified Athletic Trainer under the age of 32 and a member of the National Athletic Trainers’ Association.

**Traditional job setting:** Historical job settings for athletic trainers that include secondary schools, colleges, universities and professional sports. (NATA.org, 2009)

**Non-traditional job setting:** Emerging job settings for athletic trainers that include hospitals, clinics, physician’s offices, military and law enforcement, industrial and commercial companies and the performing arts. (NATA.org, 2009)

**Role Conflict:** “the simultaneous occurrence of two or more role expectations such that compliance with one would make compliance with the other more difficult” (Katz & Kahn, 1978, p. 204)

**Human Service Worker:** Employees working in non-industrial settings relating to human service, public and non-profit sector jobs. (Spector, 1985)

**Problem Statement**

The problem this study will examine is the relationship between job satisfaction and young professional Certified Athletic Trainers across multiple job settings. The research will compare job satisfaction levels of Certified Athletic Trainers younger than 32 years of age with an array of job settings. These venues include traditional settings, such as high school and college, and also include those who work in non-traditional settings such as the performing arts, industrial settings and military and law enforcement. The identified problem is the expansion of job settings for athletic trainers, with no published research on job satisfaction. Some of these job settings may represent a higher concentration of facets in which athletic trainers may be dissatisfied including pay, hours, job requirements, expectations and evaluation. This research will identify the job satisfaction level of athletic trainers across multiple settings. Specific facets of job satisfaction in which athletic trainers are most and least satisfied will also be identified.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to identify the job satisfaction levels of young professional athletic trainers across multiple job settings. Pinpointing these job settings will help those who hire athletic trainers understand the job satisfaction of young professionals and how to keep young people satisfied with their work. This research will also help to explain the attrition rates of young professionals and why young people may use athletic training as a stepping stone profession to move on to other health care professions.

The attrition among athletic trainers and reasons for leaving the profession are a major concern in this field (Capel, 1990). Low job satisfaction levels may contribute to young athletic trainers leaving the profession. This research will contribute to the body of knowledge about job satisfaction within athletic training and more specifically young professionals athletic trainers.

### **Nature of the Study**

Specifically, this research aims to answer three questions:

1. What is the overall job satisfaction rate of young professional athletic trainers?
2. What are the job satisfaction rates of young professionals as they relate to specific job settings?
3. What are the specific facets of job satisfaction in which young professional athletic trainers are least satisfied?

The hypothesis is that job satisfaction levels, overall, will be average for young professionals as compared to the normative data published by Spector (1997). The total score of the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) can range anywhere from 36 to 216 with the normative mean being 136.5 with a standard deviation of 12.1 (Spector, 1997). The average job satisfaction levels of young professional athletic trainers will be measured against that normative data. A secondary hypothesis is that job satisfaction rates will be lower in young professional athletic trainers working in clinics and/or a clinic/outreach position than in other job settings. A third hypothesis is that pay, benefits, nature of the work and operating procedures are facets within job satisfaction that will have below average scores.

Additionally, the researcher investigated the single most important factor relating to job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers through an open ended qualitative question. The results will provide depth to the readers' understanding of the most important facets of job satisfaction. The qualitative research results will provide additional data to frame the job satisfaction levels of young professional athletic trainers.

### **Assumptions, limitations, scope, delimitations**

This particular study is designed to reach young professional athletic trainers and to achieve a better understanding of their overall job satisfaction levels in various settings. The sample of athletic trainers has been narrowed to young professionals, defined as anyone in the National Athletic Trainers' Association who is a Certified Athletic Trainer and younger than 32 years of age. This age has been pre-determined by the National Athletic Trainers' Association. Also, the scope of athletic trainers has been narrowed to one thousand Certified Athletic Trainers within the Northeast United States (within Districts 1-3 of the NATA). Due to guidelines regarding the use of the NATA membership database for student research, the population was restricted.

This project is limited due to the researcher's interest about the topic. In performing this research, it is assumed that some level of dissatisfaction exists among young professional athletic trainers based in part, because of the author's experience. Further research has revealed a gap in the literature when it comes to young professional athletic trainers and job satisfaction across multiple settings. The gap in the research makes it difficult for the researcher to develop an educated opinion on the job satisfaction of young professionals. There are quite a few studies researching the job satisfaction of health care professionals including physical therapists and nurses, and a few studies on

the job satisfaction of athletic trainers. To date, there has been no published research discussing the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers across multiple job settings.

### **Study Significance**

This research will generate one of the first studies of young professional athletic trainers' job satisfaction levels. The knowledge produced by this research will help define the facets of entry-level jobs that impact job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in young professional athletic trainers. This knowledge is important to the profession of athletic training because keeping young professionals in the field, as with any occupation, is imperative to the advancement of the profession. Young professional athletic trainers bring passion, life and new ideas to the field. These are necessary for growth, research and recognition within the health care community.

The profession of athletic training is at a turning point in its young life. Athletic trainers are gaining access to more job settings and evolving within their scope of practice (NATA.org, 2009). Currently, it seems that there are few boundaries established, with regard to the types of jobs and job settings in which athletic trainers can work. More than 50% of athletic trainers work outside of school athletic settings and provide services to people of all ages (FACTS about Athletic Trainers and the National Athletic Trainers' Association, 2009). Athletic trainers are evolving as a medical profession and the need for their services has been identified throughout the physically active population (NATA.org, 2009). Albohm and Wilkerson (1999) argue that overall, athletic trainers improve patient function and physical outcomes and generate a positive change in health-related quality of life. Designing athletic training jobs properly and

understanding the job satisfaction of young people within different job settings will help keep athletic trainers in these jobs and ultimately help improve the function and physical outcomes of patients working with athletic trainers.

The evolution of a profession is dependent on many things, including the passionate young minds that join the profession. Research about young professional athletic trainers will continue the upward spiral of the profession and understanding the direction in which young professional athletic trainers see their careers. This research will aid in the understanding of this faction of athletic trainers and it is hoped that research like this will help to create positive change within the profession.

Understanding job satisfaction levels among young professional athletic trainers is pivotal to the endurance of the profession over time. There is an outdated paradigm that athletic trainers are, by nature, resistant to any change that may stray from the status quo of our common practice patterns (Ray, 2006). The idea that athletic trainers can have well-paying jobs that provide for some modicum of personal time while fulfilling the desire to help the physically active population is a new and emerging concept within athletic training.

The following literature review will discuss the research surrounding this topic, beginning with Maslow's (1943) *A Theory of Motivation*. Discussion of this theory will help set a framework for the discussion of motivation and satisfaction. Job satisfaction on the whole will be discussed, including different factors and components that relate to job satisfaction. Finally, the current research on job satisfaction in helping professions, including athletic training, will be reviewed.

## **Chapter II**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Introduction**

Job satisfaction is one of the most frequently studied variables within organizational behavior research (Spector, 1997). This research will view job satisfaction through the paradigm of Maslow's (1943) theory of motivation, specifically the hierarchy of needs. Many theories of job satisfaction have been developed since Maslow's theory of self-actualization was published. A review Herzberg's (1968) dual-factor theory of job satisfaction and motivation as well as Locke's (1976) composite theory of job satisfaction will help the reader understand the seminal nature of Maslow's theory of motivation and the hierarchy of needs. A discussion will follow regarding the use of Maslow's hierarchy of needs as the guiding theory for job satisfaction assessment. Although Maslow's (1943) is somewhat dated, its seminal nature provides the foundation to the development of job satisfaction theory and the Job Satisfaction Survey by Spector (1997).

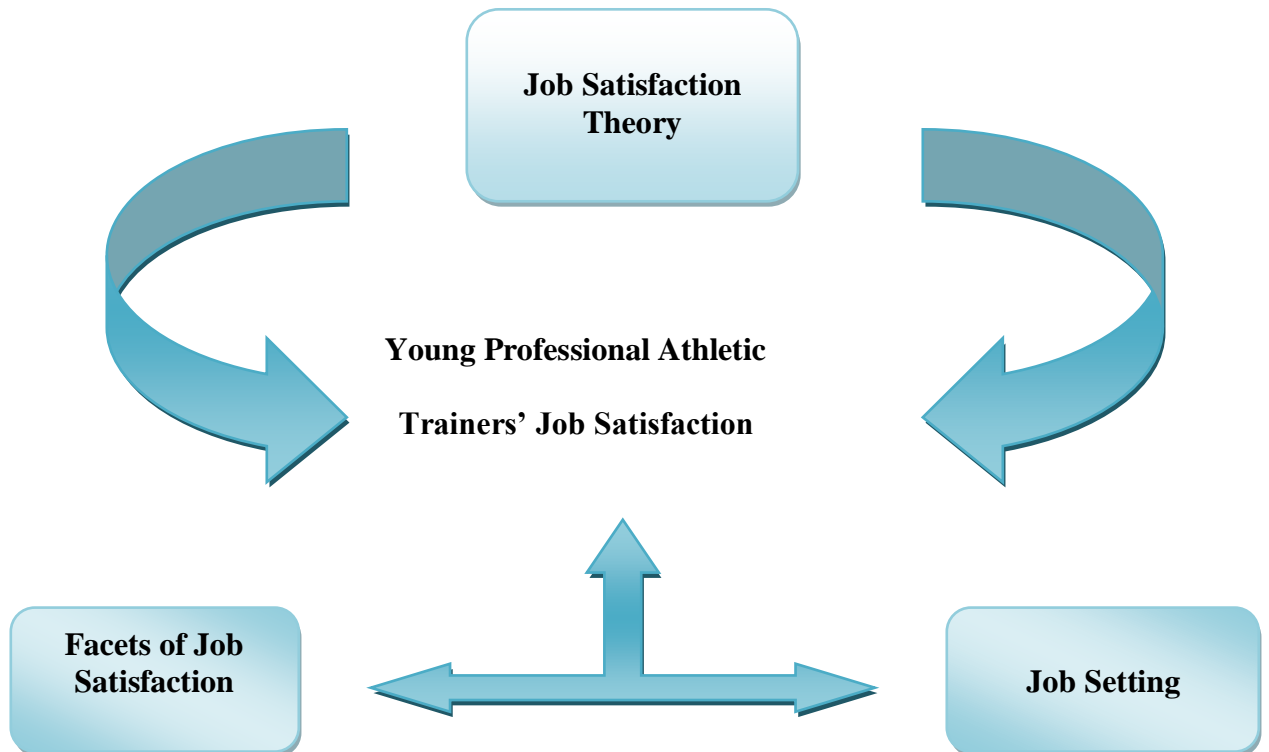
The purpose of this study is to identify the job satisfaction levels of young professional athletic trainers in multiple job settings. A secondary purpose of this study is to identify the facets of job satisfaction that may contribute to job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers. The nature of this study will combine bodies of literature regarding Maslow's (1943) theory of motivation, job satisfaction theory and job satisfaction research in health care professionals, specifically athletic trainers. The following conceptual framework is based on a gap in the literature regarding the job



satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers across multiple job settings. (See figure 1)

**Figure 1**

Conceptual Framework



There are many factors that affect the overall job satisfaction someone may have. Personal life and non-job related factors are major contributors to personal job satisfaction of workers (Tietjen & Myers, 1998). A brief discussion of some of these contributing factors will allow the reader to maintain a realistic outlook on the measurement of job satisfaction through a survey, which may not account for non-job

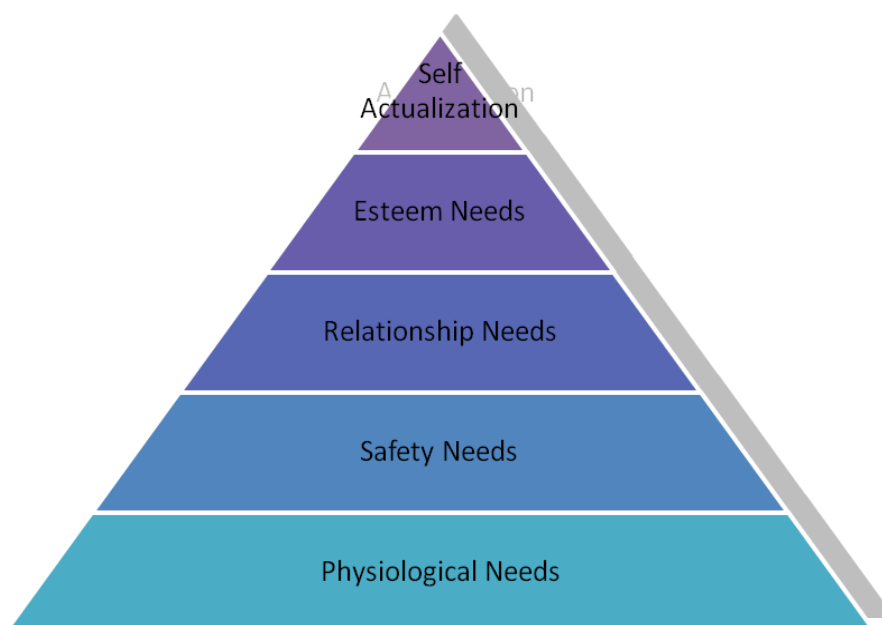
related factors. Some of these factors include goal determination, genetics, environment, and personal life (Arvey et al, 1989).

Finally, research surrounding the job satisfaction levels of health care professionals including nurses, physical therapists and athletic trainers will be discussed. At the conclusion of this literature review the reader will be able to view the development of job satisfaction through the lens of Maslow's (1943) theory of motivation, understand some of the factors within job satisfaction that may contribute to this research, as well as have a comprehensive understanding of the current research about the job satisfaction of athletic trainers.

### **Maslow (1943)**

The hierarchy of needs is clearly explained in Maslow's (1943) *A Theory of Motivation*. The hierarchy of needs is graphically depicted (See figure 2) in a pyramid fashion with physiological needs at the bottom and moving through safety, social, esteem and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). A needs-based approach to job satisfaction is predicated upon whether or not the job satisfies the basic physical and psychological needs of the employee (Spector, 1997). This approach will provide empirical data on job setting and need fulfillment for young professional athletic trainers, research that has not been conducted since the elaboration of job settings for athletic trainers.

**Figure 2. Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943)**



Young professional athletic trainers are framed within this research in accordance with the National Athletic Trainers' Association's (NATA) current push for involvement from this faction. The NATA has formed a young professionals committee whose mission is "to identify and address the interests, needs and concerns of young professional athletic training professionals and facilitate communication to and from members of that group" (NATA.org, 2009). One of the main goals of this committee is to increase recruitment and retention of young athletic training professionals in the NATA (NATA.org, 2009). Recruitment and retention of young professional athletic trainers may be directly correlated with job satisfaction levels. This research will shed light on job settings with which young professionals are satisfied and dissatisfied and whether their basic physical and psychological needs are being met.

Maslow's (1943) *A Theory of Human Motivation* is the basis of the hierarchy of needs and self-actualization. In the first part of this work, Maslow discusses the thirteen

various constructs that must be included in any theory of human motivation. These propositions include integrated wholeness, physiological drive, basic goals, cultural paths to the same goal, multiple and understood motivations, hierarchy of potency, classification of motivation and situational classification. *A Theory of Human Motivation*, is Maslow's formation of a theory that satisfies the theoretical demands and conforms to the known facts regarding clinical and observational experience in motivation.

The first section of Maslow's (1943) theory discusses the basic needs of all humans. Physiological needs are the original driving force behind human beings' actions. Maslow refers to homeostasis, or the body's automatic effort to maintain equilibrium. This means hunger, thirst, temperature and all other fundamental physiological needs are a driving force for all human beings. The idea of homeostasis can be confusing because there are many things that most humans would consider a physiological need that do not have homeostatic qualities. For example, sexual desire, sleepiness, exercise and touching are all considered physiological needs but have not been determined as homeostatic. The most important proposition Maslow determined regarding physiological need is that if these needs are not met and the person is dominated by this need, then all other needs become obsolete until these are met. The question that Maslow then asks is once these physiological needs are met, and are not in danger of being taken away, what is the human being's desire?

Maslow (1943) states that immediately after the consistent satisfaction of physiological needs, 'higher' needs come to light and dominate the person's decisions. Maslow classifies the next section as safety needs. Once the physiological needs have

been met, the person becomes interested primarily in their safety. When referring to safety, Maslow transitions from speaking about adults to talking about infants because they have a pure reaction to their own safety. Infants have an immediate reaction when they are scared, in danger, hurt or ill. Maslow postulates that children thrive on routine because it is safe and predictable, and it allows them to feel as if their need for safety is met. This is why for children, death, divorce, abuse and separation can cause terrible pain and a disruption of their idea of safety for a long period of time. Adults also have their safety needs met when their lives are running normally and society is functioning well. Normal society usually protects adults from inherent dangers such as wild animals, weather conditions, crime and tyranny. Other aspects that adults seek in order to protect themselves and seek order include financial stability, religion and/or philosophy. It is regarded that just as for physiological needs, adults only function specifically in this portion of the hierarchy when an emergency threatens their safety.

When physiological and safety needs have been met with relative consistency, the adult will now seek out love, affection and a sense of belonging (Maslow, 1943). At this point in time the person will feel the absence of friends, lovers, spouses and children. Relationships with people will, at this point, fulfill the most important desires in their lives. Seeking out love is an important aspect to adults nowadays, and they will continue to do that until the need has been fulfilled. It is important to remember that love and affection are not synonymous with sex. When referring to sex, Maslow describes it as a purely physiological need. The love and affection one is looking for in this level of the hierarchy does not have a physiological satisfaction component. Maslow stresses the fact

that love and sex are not synonymous and one's need for love has to do with both giving and receiving love outside of the physiological manifestation of that love through sex.

Once the adult feels that the need for love and affection is being met adequately, the need for a stable idea of who the person is and his or her own personal esteem emerges (Maslow, 1943). Maslow describes firmly based self-esteem as feelings grounded in the real capacity of the individuals' achievements and self-respect. He then classifies these desires into two categories: the desires for adequacy, confidence and freedom; and the desires for reputation, recognition and appreciation. These two subsets of needs can be classified also as intrinsic, or the person's own need to feel adequate and confident in his/her abilities and then extrinsic, or the person's need to feel that others respect and appreciate him/her. When these needs have been satisfied, the person's feelings of self-confidence, worth and the feeling that they are necessary in the world will flourish. People who are in an environment where these needs are dissatisfied have feelings of inferiority, weakness and helplessness. In essence, Maslow argues that without a satisfaction of the self-confidence level, people feel helpless and weak against the world around them.

Lastly, Maslow (1943) discusses the idea of self-actualization. The argument given by Maslow states that even when the basic physiological, safety, love and esteem needs have been met, unless the individual is truly doing what they are fit to do, there will ultimately be restlessness and discontent. Maslow adopted the word "self-actualization" from Goldstein (1947), who originally defined the term as an organism's re-organizational capability after injury to incorporate that injury into oneself to form a new unit (Francis & Kritsonis, 2006). Maslow (1943), however, takes this word and

defines it more narrowly, referring to it as man's desire for self-fulfillment and the tendency to become "actualized" into what one is potentially. Self-actualization is a highly individualized process, which emerges only after prior satisfaction of the physiological, safety, love and esteem needs of the individual. Maslow refers to people who have satisfied these first four levels of needs *basically* satisfied and subsequently having the ability to create things to their fullest extent. It is Maslow's assertion that because most of our society is not "basically" satisfied, we do now know much about self-actualization experimentally, clinically or observationally.

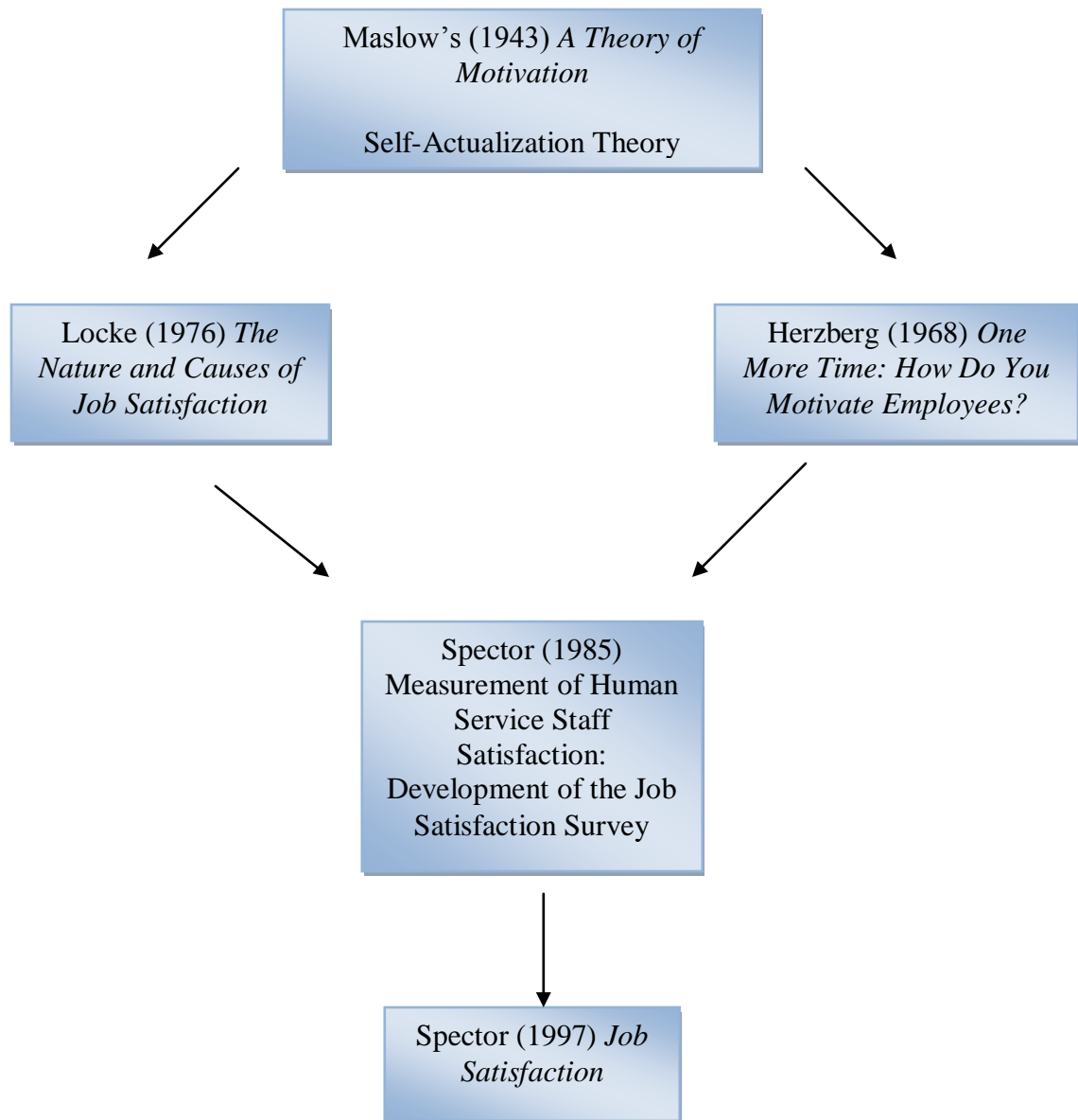
Maslow's (1943) theory of self-actualization is readily applied to world of work through *The Maslow Business Reader* (2000). In this compilation of original essays and letters by Maslow (2000), it is stated that reasonable satisfaction is achieved when the employee is individually satisfied with factors such as pay and job security. The adequate and equitable administration of salary and discipline gives employees the ability to manage their personal risk of failure without letting it distract them from their job duties. For example, an athletic trainer who is fairly compensated for their time according to national standards and is aware of the procedure in which they will be evaluated and disciplined is more comfortable managing their patients' health care because they are comfortable with the policies and the administration of these policies within their environment. When these lower level needs are not met, the creativity, learning ability, innovation and self-esteem of the employee remains sunk beneath the surface and masked by dissatisfaction and fear (Maslow, 2000).

Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs is an important building block in a work environment based on the growth and development of its employees (Maslow, 2000).

These concepts, originally identified in Maslow's (1943) work, can help create a self-actualizing workplace and high-performance organizations (Maslow, 2000). In an athletic training setting, a high-performance team of health care professionals leads to better healthcare for the patients, an environment that promotes learning and potentially higher job satisfaction of the members of the team including physicians, administrators, supervisors, athletic trainers and support staff. The following graphic (Figure 3) depicts the development of job satisfaction theory and the author's outline for the discussion of the literature regarding job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is often viewed as multifaceted (Locke, 1976). There are both dispositional and situational factors related to job satisfaction and job attitudes (Arvey et al, 1989). Disposition and non-job related factors are not accounted for in this research due to the individual nature of these factors and their inability to be measured on a consistent daily basis.



**Figure 3. Literature Development**

This study will measure the nine sub facets of job satisfaction identified in Spector's (1997) Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS): pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, communication and nature of work. These factors are measurable contributors to an individual's job satisfaction

level. Understanding personal factors that may contribute to an individual's overall disposition and thus, their job satisfaction is important when considering job satisfaction (Arvey et al, 1989). These factors may influence an individual's job satisfaction, but are quite difficult to measure consistently over time. For the purposes of this study, job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers will be measured within the nine sub facets of job satisfaction (Spector, 1997).

### **Job Satisfaction Theory**

Many job satisfaction theories have stemmed from Maslow's (1943) original hierarchy of needs. The first theory discussed will be Frederick Herzberg's (1959) dual-factor theory of job satisfaction. Then, Locke's (1976) composite theory of job satisfaction will be discussed. Finally, Spector's (1997) development of the Job Satisfaction Survey will be analyzed based on these theories of job satisfaction.

Herzberg's (1959) dual-factor theory states that human beings have two sets of needs: pain avoidance and psychological growth. From Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman's (1959) research, the dual-factor theory suggests that job satisfaction consists of two separate dimensions: job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al, 1959; House & Wigdor, 1967). Herzberg (1959), through an interview protocol, identifies different job characteristics that are "satisfiers", those that are "dissatisfiers", and the few characteristics that function in both directions (House & Wigdor, 1967).

The most important of these identified "satisfiers" are intrinsic factors such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and advancement (House & Wigdor, 1967). These factors directly foster the employee's need for self-actualization in

work. Job “dissatisfiers” are more extrinsic factors directly associated with the environment or the context in which the work is performed. Some of these factors include supervision, working conditions, relations with supervisors, salary and lack of recognition. The identification of these factors allows Herzberg (1959) to postulate that the “satisfiers” motivate employees in the direction of better performance and self-actualization at work while “dissatisfiers” do not motivate employees in that direction.

Job “dissatisfiers” are often considered extrinsic to the job itself (Herzberg, 1968). Job dissatisfiers include the company policies and procedures, supervision, interpersonal relationships at work, working conditions, salary, status and security. It is clear that some of these dissatisfiers relate directly to Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy with security, salary and relationships being the first three levels. Having a good external work environment is important to job satisfaction and working toward self-actualization in the workplace.

Herzberg (1968) further refines this theory by defining “satisfiers” as factors that cause positive job attitudes because they satisfy the worker’s need for self-actualization. In both Maslow (1943) and Herzberg’s (1968) theories, the ultimate goal is a self-actualized employee working in an environment in which creativity and learning are encouraged (Maslow, 2000). Locke’s (1976) composite theory of job satisfaction responds to Herzberg’s (1968) theory and adds the ideas of values and leadership to job satisfaction (Tietjen & Myers, 1998).

Edwin Locke (1976) explains the concept of satisfaction as an emotional response, meaning that satisfaction can only be understood by undergoing a process of introspection by the employee. This idea comes directly from Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs and the response to the need to be basically satisfied both physically and

emotionally. Locke (1976) recognizes Maslow's (1943) theory and the implications for the workplace, including the concept that the best work environments for employees correspond directly with the individual's position within the hierarchy of needs (Locke & Dunnette, 1976). Despite criticizing Maslow (1943) for a lack of firm support for his theory, Locke (1976) recognizes the importance of Maslow's (1943) theory as a seminal work in understanding needs satisfaction and consequently, the concept of job satisfaction.

Locke's (1976) composite theory of job satisfaction postulates that the attainment of values that support one's needs will lead to higher job satisfaction for employees. Some of these values and conditions include mentally challenging work in which the employee can be successful, personal interest in the work, work which is not too physically tiring, rewards for performance, compatible work environments, high self-esteem, ease of attaining work, pay and promotion. Locke also identifies the need for supervisors and a workplace environment that minimizes role conflict and ambiguity. This composite theory takes ideas from Maslow (1943) and Herzberg (1959) to create a theory that includes needs and values that will contribute to the motivation of the employee to be creative and become self-actualized at work. Role complexity can hinder that process and leave the employee frustrated and dissatisfied at work.

### **Role Conflict**

Role conflict is the simultaneous occurrence of two or more role expectations such that compliance with one role would make compliance with the other role difficult (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Brumels and Beach (2008) describe role complexity as an all-

inclusive term used to represent negative feelings and beliefs by the person in the role. Both role conflict and role ambiguity are a part of role complexity and are said to be associated with job dissatisfaction (Locke & Dunnette, 1976). Locke (1976) defines role conflict as “the degree to which role expectations are incompatible or self contradictory” (p. 1328). This conflict is present for many athletic trainers because of the complex interactions that exist in athletic departments between administrators, coaches, athletes, athletic trainers and athletic support staff (Brumels & Beach, 2008).

Role ambiguity, according to Locke (1976) is “the degree to which role expectations are vague, unclear or undefined” (p. 1328). Role ambiguity can also be common for athletic trainers as new job settings emerge and athletic trainers continue to work with physically active populations to whom the qualifications, education and abilities of an athletic trainer are foreign. Role complexity for athletic trainers will be further discussed later in the literature review.

Job satisfaction theorists including Maslow (1943), Herzberg (1968), and Locke (1976) have created multiple frameworks for understanding satisfaction by identifying employee needs, motivators, values and leadership practices that may lead toward self-actualization in the workplace. In the development of these theories, both Herzberg (1959) and Locke (1976) have relied heavily on Maslow’s (1943) original theory of self-actualization. As seminal theorists, Maslow (1943), Herzberg (1959) and Locke (1976) laid the foundation for Spector’s (1985) research on assessment of job satisfaction and the development of the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997).

### **Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey**

In the early 1970's, human service employees were dubbed "industry's forgotten staff" when it came to job satisfaction research (Dehlinger & Perlman, 1978).

Consequently, the late 1970's yielded more interest in the characteristics of job satisfaction of human service employees especially in comparison to industrial workers (Spector, 1985). Spector noted the vast differences between industrial workers and human service employees during this time and began his work creating a new job satisfaction scale for human service workers.

The first notation made by Spector (1985) was the difference in norms between industrial workers and human service staff, making comparisons impossible. Multiple studies in the late 1970's found the results of job satisfaction surveys for human service employees, the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, lower than the norms for the instrument (Spector, 1985). Spector postulates that it is difficult to know if those results are typical because of the major differences in the characteristics of job satisfaction between the two types of employees. For example, Locke (1976) notes that job satisfaction is not positively correlated with job performance. In human service employees, there is evidence that job satisfaction is linked with both employee performance and client outcomes (Wiggins & Moody, 1983). Therefore, Spector (1985) developed the Job Satisfaction Survey specifically for human service, public and nonprofit sector organizations.

Theoretically, the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) relies on the idea that job satisfaction represents an attitudinal reaction to a job (Spector, 1985). Job satisfaction is defined as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's

job or job experiences (Locke, 1976). Locke's research on attitudes toward jobs, individual fulfillment of needs on the job and the degree to which individual values are met were the driving factors in the creation of the JSS (Spector, 1985).

Spector (1985) created the JSS with three intentions. First, the content of the items is geared directly toward human service employees. These items were drawn from a literature review of job satisfaction dimensions. Second, the JSS is intended to cover the major aspects of job satisfaction with specific subscales within the content. Lastly, the scale was intended to quickly assess job satisfaction by making it under 40 questions. These three characteristics of the JSS are the reason this particular scale was chosen to assess the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers.

Job satisfaction has been of interest to both practitioners and researchers for many years (Spector, 1985). The theory discussed above has paved the way for the study of job satisfaction for all types of organizations, including human service employees. The JSS has been used to study the job satisfaction of athletic trainers before (Barrett et al, 2002) but never solely young professional athletic trainers and never across multiple job settings.

### **Job Level and Job Satisfaction**

“Satisfaction creates confidence, loyalty and ultimately improved quality in the output of the employed” (Tietjen & Myers, 1998, p. 226). Confidence and loyalty are both important to the self-actualized workplace and the employees' need to work toward self-actualization, which is the ultimate goal of the worker (Tietjen and Myers, 1998). For the profession of athletic training, becoming self-actualized at work requires

recognizing and understanding the current levels of job satisfaction of the next generation of athletic trainers, the young professionals.

Young professionals are often in entry-level positions, which correlate with low job satisfaction (Atwood & Woolf, 1982, Cranny et al, 1992; Robie et al, 1998; Barrett et al, 2002). Job level appears to be a broad situational factor that positively correlates with job satisfaction (Cranny et al, 1992) and as job level increases, job satisfaction tends to increase (Robie et al, 1998). The results may have a lower average than a survey of all types of professionals due to the potential for lower job levels in young professionals.

Within this study, young professional athletic trainers are defined as Board of Certification (BOC) Certified Athletic Trainers younger than thirty-two years of age (NATA, 2009). This study is designed to understand the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers, despite job level. Although in some job satisfaction studies job level can be a contaminating factor (Robie et al, 1998), it is not a concern for this study because this research is focused on understanding job satisfaction in multiple settings despite job level.

### **Health Care Workers and Job Satisfaction**

Helping professions such as health care workers often attract highly motivated people who are willing to work in overwhelming and demanding situations for long periods of time (Kalliath & Morris, 2002). These health care professions include but are not limited to nurses, physical therapists and athletic trainers. Over the years, this has led to an interest in studying both job satisfaction and burnout levels within helping professions in order to prevent the costly and frustrating consequences of burnout and job



dissatisfaction (Kalliath & Morris, 2002). Understanding the work environment, job demands and job satisfaction of both nurses and physical therapists will provide a framework for studying the job satisfaction of athletic trainers. Differences in the type of care delivered within these professions may be significant, as well as similarities and differences in job satisfaction as found the recent literature.

In 2009, it is projected that the government will spend over \$2.5 trillion dollars in health care costs, which equates to approximately \$8,160 per U.S. resident (Kaiser, 2009). Literature regarding the job satisfaction of health care professionals help frame this study and validate its importance regarding patient care and health care spending. Measuring and understanding job satisfaction, work stress and the environmental conditions in which health care employees are working helps to keep turnover low and, in turn, health care spending lower.

Physical therapy and nursing are both health care professions with high job demands and job stress (Campo et al, 2009; Geiger-Brown et al, 2004). Nursing attributes high turnover to environmental stress due to restructuring, the nursing shortage and long working hours (Kalliath et al, 2002; Geiger-Brown et al, 2004). Physical therapists attribute work stress to excessive workload and lack of resources in the clinic (Campo et al, 2009). In both sets of health care professionals, a good work environment and keeping work stress low is important in order to provide quality care for patients (Kalliath & Morris, 2002; Geiger-Brown et al, 2004; Campo et al, 2009). These same principles apply to the profession of athletic training.

A publication entitled *Job Satisfaction of Physical Therapists* from 1982 found high satisfaction levels on all scales for physical therapists (Atwood & Woolf). High

satisfaction levels were attributed to one on one patient contact time, substantial self-direction in terms of patient care, working within small departments, and defined accountability for work performed.

More current research on job stress in physical therapists yields different outcomes. Physical therapists are experiencing work stress relating to patient and administrative loads as well as a lack of resources and equipment (Campo et al, 2004). The combination of high job demands and reduced control at work leads to work strain. Work strain may lead to higher incidence of turnover for physical therapists (Campo et al, 2004). Research on those who provide physical medicine and rehabilitation, such as physical therapists, may help us understand the job satisfaction of athletic trainers.

It is important to note the significant differences between the profession of athletic training and the professions of physical therapy and nursing. Although all of these professions focus on patient care, the domains of these professions are different. Athletic training education focuses on prevention and care of injuries and illnesses, first aid and emergency care, evaluation of injury and illness, anatomy, physiology, therapeutic modalities and general nutrition of the physically active population (NATA.org, 2009). Physical therapy education focuses on the tertiary care of the patient after an injury or illness, understanding multiple systems including general health screen, the cardiovascular and pulmonary systems, integumentary system, musculoskeletal system and neurological system in order to provide rehabilitative care (APTA, 2005).

Nursing education focuses on clinical decision making through evidence based medicine for all types of patients found in hospitals, clinics, mental health facilities and long term care facilities (AACN, 2008). Although many of these skills overlap, physical

therapists and nurses are more qualified to work with the general population and athletic trainers are more qualified to work with the physically active population when providing care. Burnout and job satisfaction is studied in nursing because of erratic work schedules and high job demands, both physically and psychologically. At times, nursing and athletic training share many common job-related issues such as long work hours and high turnover rates (Kalliath & Morris, 2002).

Atwood and Woolf (1982) specifically indicate the need to better understand the job satisfaction of other professions closely related to physical therapy, such as athletic training, in order to find out what accounts for job satisfaction among these professions. The type of care provided by nurses does not always overlap with the type of care provided by athletic trainers, however, the job demands and job stress and potential for injury on the job are characteristics nursing shares with athletic training. The care provided by physical therapists often overlaps with the type of care provided by athletic trainers when working with the physically active population, however, the systems, job duties and expectations of athletic trainers are very different than those of physical therapists (NATA.org, 2009).

### **Musculoskeletal Injuries in Health Care Workers**

Nursing, physical therapy and athletic training, as professions, are all physically demanding. Nurses are often required to work long shifts, overtime shifts and in an understaffed environment which may cause musculoskeletal disorders (Geiger-Brown et al, 2004). Work related musculoskeletal disorders also plague physical therapists because of lifting patients, transferring patients, and performing manual therapy

techniques (Campo et al, 2008). The nature of the work of athletic trainers includes quickly responding to an injured athlete, assisting an injured patient from the field and transporting necessary equipment to and from different athletic venues, which may lead to musculoskeletal injury (Kawaguchi et al, 2008). Musculoskeletal injuries directly contribute to the job satisfaction of these professionals. Employee turnover, change of job settings, taking sick time and leaving the profession can be attributed to musculoskeletal disorders (Campo et al, 2008). These factors can relate directly to the job satisfaction levels of health care professionals.

### **Job Satisfaction in Athletic Training**

The earliest research on athletic training and job satisfaction studied the rates attrition among athletic trainers (Capel, 1990). In any profession, attrition is a major concern because the employee, the clients and the organization all suffer. Although Capel's (1990) study does not specifically measure job satisfaction, it was the first to identify the most enjoyable and least enjoyable aspects of athletic training as well as reasons for leaving the profession. The least enjoyable factors identified were long hours, salary, and conflicts with coaches, administrators and other support staff. These factors continued to be identified by participants throughout research on athletic trainers and job satisfaction (Brumels & Beach, 2008; Staurowsky & Scriber, 1998; Judd & Perkins, 2004). Capel's (1990) study of the attrition of athletic trainers opens the door to understanding why some athletic trainers are unhappy within their jobs.

Following the attrition of athletic trainers, lines of research were developed to determine a more holistic view the work lives of athletic trainers. Staurowsky and

Scriber (1998) investigated the development of the profession and the education of athletic trainers describing it as a coming of age process, which has created questions regarding the role of athletic trainers (Staurowsky & Scriber, 1998). The authors created a Survey of Athletic Trainer Workloads, Criteria for Retention and Promotion and Salary Levels to evaluate these factors and sent them to athletic trainers working in education programs to be completed.

Almost universally, athletic trainers working in this setting reported some combination of teaching, service to the athletic department and student supervision (Staurowsky & Scriber, 1998). Despite reporting working on staffs of three or more, athletic trainers in this setting still reported working fifty or more hours per week. Young professionals in this setting may be experiencing the same type of issues such as long hours, unrealistic expectations and limited resources identified as problematic in other settings.

Accredited ATEPs are required to have a Program Director (PD), which has become a complex and intense position due to the requirements of ATEPs and the accrediting body. Recently, Judd and Perkins (2004) studied PDs in order to better understand reasons for becoming a program director, reasons for leaving this position, and identifying the most and least satisfying aspects of the program director position. Results found that the primary reason for becoming a PD is the academic environment and professional appointment and in turn, the professional appointment was also the primary reason for leaving the position (Judd & Perkins, 2004).

Although it is unlikely that an athletic trainer will become a PD before age 32, this is important information in understanding why athletic trainers want to become PDs.

Defining the PDs roles, functions, duties, responsibilities and workloads has been a difficult task due to the overwhelming responsibilities within this job (Judd & Perkins, 2004). As with many jobs in athletic training, the responsibilities of the PD have been identified as stressful and overabundant. Program Directors often feel spread too thin to accomplish all of the expectations. A young professional athletic trainer seeking this appointment may have the same issues with stress, role complexity and workload as a clinical athletic trainer and consequently, may have low job satisfaction levels.

### **Clinical Athletic Trainers' Job Satisfaction**

Athletic trainers working in education programs experience different job duties and different roles than those working in clinical settings. Professional role complexity and role strain has become a serious problem over the past twenty years for athletic trainers (Brumels & Beach, 2008; Henning & Weidner, 2008). Although certified athletic trainers play a key role in the function of athletic departments, the job expectations of collegiate certified athletic trainers are demanding and complicated (Brumels & Beach, 2008). While trying to balance clinical care, teaching and the administrative tasks associated with supervising athletic training students and patient care, athletic trainers are also expected to have overwhelming accessibility for coaches and athletes (Henning & Weidner, 2008).

Brumels and Beach (2008) compared role complexities, ambiguity, overload, incongruity, incompetence and conflict to job satisfaction, intent to leave the job and intent to leave the profession for collegiate certified athletic trainers. Results showed that

workplace stress is common among collegiate athletic trainers however; these athletic trainers were satisfied with their jobs and seldom considered leaving their job or the profession. The trend identified by this research is that job satisfaction and contentment were negatively affected by higher levels of role ambiguity and incongruity. Athletic trainers experiencing different role stresses and strains are less satisfied with their jobs. Young professional athletic trainers are subject to role stresses and strains in many different settings. Understanding job satisfaction levels of athletic trainers in multiple settings will provide some insight into the types of jobs that are causing these role stresses and potentially low job satisfaction.

The most significant research in job satisfaction of athletic trainers is a study of the job satisfaction of athletic trainers in a Division I setting published in 2002 (Barrett et al, 2002). This study used the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997) in order to answer the following questions: Are athletic trainers satisfied with their jobs? With their pay? Does gender affect job satisfaction? Does job title affect job satisfaction? Do years of experience affect job satisfaction? Does age, education level or ethnicity have an effect on job satisfaction? (Barrett et al, 2002). Overall, the results of Barrett's (2002) study suggest that athletic trainers in this setting are satisfied with their jobs compared to the Job Satisfaction Survey norms published by Spector (1997), which included normative data for all Americans as well as for medical personnel.

While Barrett et al (2002) suggests overall high job satisfaction of athletic trainers working in a Division I setting. Little research has been done specifically on the job satisfaction of athletic trainers and to date, no research has been published regarding the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers.

## **Conclusion**

The literature on job satisfaction of athletic trainers varies across multiple job settings and job types. There is obvious interest in knowing and understanding the job satisfaction of athletic trainers because of the job demands and expectations often associated with athletic training jobs. Job satisfaction research will provide evidence to support and suggest change and development of job settings and job styles within the profession of athletic training.

Studying young professional athletic trainers will provide new information to be considered when creating athletic training jobs. Keeping young professional athletic trainers in the profession and satisfied with their jobs is imperative to the success of the profession. As the health care industry changes and fluctuates according to need, athletic trainers will continue to be affected by these changes.



## **Chapter III**

### **Methods**

The primary purpose of this study is to identify the job satisfaction levels of young professional athletic trainers across multiple job settings. The researcher created a survey starting with five demographic questions: age, salary, education, job title and job setting. After the demographic portion of the survey, participants responded to the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997). This survey contains 36 questions related to nine previously identified sub-facets of job satisfaction (Spector, 1997) (see Appendix B). Lastly, the participants are asked to answer one open-ended question to identify the single-most important factor relating to their job satisfaction as an athletic trainer. This survey quantitatively and qualitatively assesses the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers across multiple job settings.

### **Research Design**

This existing Job Satisfaction Survey (1997) was selected to assess job satisfaction levels among young professional athletic trainers. There are many advantages to using an existing survey to assess job satisfaction. First and foremost, existing surveys have published research to support reliability, validity and coverage of the major facets of job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). Existing job satisfaction scales also provide norms for comparison in order to better interpret results and save the researcher both the money and time it takes to develop a scale from scratch (Spector, 1997). In the case of this research, the time constraints do not allow the researcher the time to develop

a scale and test it for reliability and validity, and also develop normative data among a population for comparison.

Reliability of the Job Satisfaction Survey was determined through internal consistency reliability estimates and test-retest reliability. Internal consistency of a sample of 2,870 was reported at .91 for the total scale, which is well above the accepted level of .70 (Spector, 1997). Test-retest reliability was determined using a small sample of only 43. The reliabilities ranged from .37 to .74 over 18 months. The stability of job satisfaction is difficult to establish due to the situational and dispositional factors affecting attitudes toward a job, as discussed in the literature review. The validity of the scale was determined by correlation with similar scales such as the Job Descriptive Index and the Job Diagnostic Survey (Spector, 1997). The job characteristics that correlate include pay, promotion, coworkers, supervision and nature of work. Normative data for this survey was established using 8,113 individuals from 52 samples.

The survey was compiled using a quantitative method with the addition of one qualitative open-ended question. The demographic questions were chosen in order to better understand the sample size, as well as provide information in order to correlate the data. The Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997) questions were then transferred to the electronic format from the Spector (1997) text entitled *Job Satisfaction*. The open-ended question was added at the end of the survey for the participants to provide their thoughts on the single most important factor relating to job satisfaction as an athletic trainer. After IRB approval, this survey was piloted to the researchers' thesis committee and the researchers' cohort within the AHRD Masters' program at James Madison University for

grammatical and formatting issues. Data collected during the pilot was excluded from the formal data collection.

During the data collection process the data was monitored regularly for survey completion. The survey software allowed the researcher to force responses from every participant on every question. After the survey was closed, each survey was reviewed in order to ensure that each participant was a young professional employed as an athletic trainer within the designated settings.

### **Participants**

The National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) makes email addresses available to students for research purposes at no cost. The researcher contacted the NATA Systems Coordinator and inquired about the process of using NATA members' email addresses for research. The response included how to go about creating the email survey and that permission would be needed from the NATA District 3 Secretary.

The NATA's involvement in the broadcast email of this survey ensured the anonymity of the participants. The researcher never saw a copy of the email listserv or to whom the email was distributed. Within the survey, participants are not asked any identifying questions. The NATA randomly emailed 1,000 Certified Athletic Trainers under the age of 32 the survey link. This is the most email addresses available from the NATA for a broadcast email for student research.

Upon contacting the Systems Coordinator of the NATA, the researcher was given a survey mailing list packet and the directions to have the NATA anonymously broadcast the survey. The steps were as follows:

- 1) Gained approval from the District 3 Secretary needed the JMU IRB approval form and a copy of the survey instrument.
- 2) Completed the mailing list packet, which will identify the criteria for selecting subjects.
- 3) Created broadcast email message including the consent to participate and the link for the electronic survey. (See Appendix A)
- 4) Identified subject line for the email and the email address for the “From” field of the broadcast email.

Once this packet was complete and the research approved by the District 3 Secretary, the NATA contacted the researcher with an initial version of the email broadcast. This was edited by the researcher and sent back to the NATA. Once the final version was complete, the email broadcast was sent to 1,000 Certified Athletic Trainers who are active members of the NATA in Districts 1-3, which include the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states. The survey was open for submission from October 19, 2009 to November 4, 2009.

### **Data Analysis**

Survey responses were collected using Qualtrics.com Research Suite (2008) survey software. Qualtrics.com (2008) allows the researcher to develop an advanced survey that protects the data from those outside the boundaries of the research demographics. Qualtrics.com (2008) also allows for specific formatting and editing

techniques. These techniques allowed the user to make the survey easy for the participants to follow and complete.

The survey software requires that each question of the survey be complete before submission, however, any surveys started and aborted or not 100% complete were removed from the sample. Once the survey was closed and responses reviewed, the data were taken from the Qualtrics.com (2008) software and uploaded into SPSS 17.0 for analysis. The job satisfaction levels were tabulated using SPSS 17.0 for the entire sample and then broken down into job settings and averages were re-calculated for each setting. Individual satisfaction levels were also calculated for the 9 sub-facets of job satisfaction: pay, promotion, supervision, benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, coworkers, nature of work and communication. Computed scores and averages were compared to normative data provided in Spector's (1997) text, *Job Satisfaction*.

SPSS 17.0 was also used to perform a one-way ANOVA comparing satisfaction levels and setting. The purpose of this analysis was to identify statistical significance between the settings with the highest number of respondents: college/university, secondary schools and clinic/outreach. Post-hoc analysis using a Bonferroni correction factor was used to identify differences between the groups.

Qualitative results were analyzed through coding and blind coding in order to identify the themes of the qualitative results and to obtain meaning from the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Coding is defined as a type of analysis that applies tags and labels to data in order to assign units of meaning to the information compiled. The codes are used within the research to chunk the data into frequency support and quotation support for the hypotheses. Once identified, the researcher calculated the frequency of which

these codes occur within the qualitative survey question. Specific quotations from the qualitative survey questions were also pulled out in order to provide support for the research hypotheses.

External auditing of the qualitative data is important to ensure the dependability and credibility of the analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). External auditing is a process that requires a third party to audit the researcher's data collection process and the data itself. The external audit confirms the fairness of the researcher's original analysis of the data and increases the validity of the research. The external auditor was given the pre-selected themes, codes and key phrases and calculated frequency of responses as well. The external auditor also highlighted quotations deemed significant within the themes and coding structure (See Appendix C). Once finished, the external audit was compared with the researcher's results and analyzed.

## **Chapter IV**

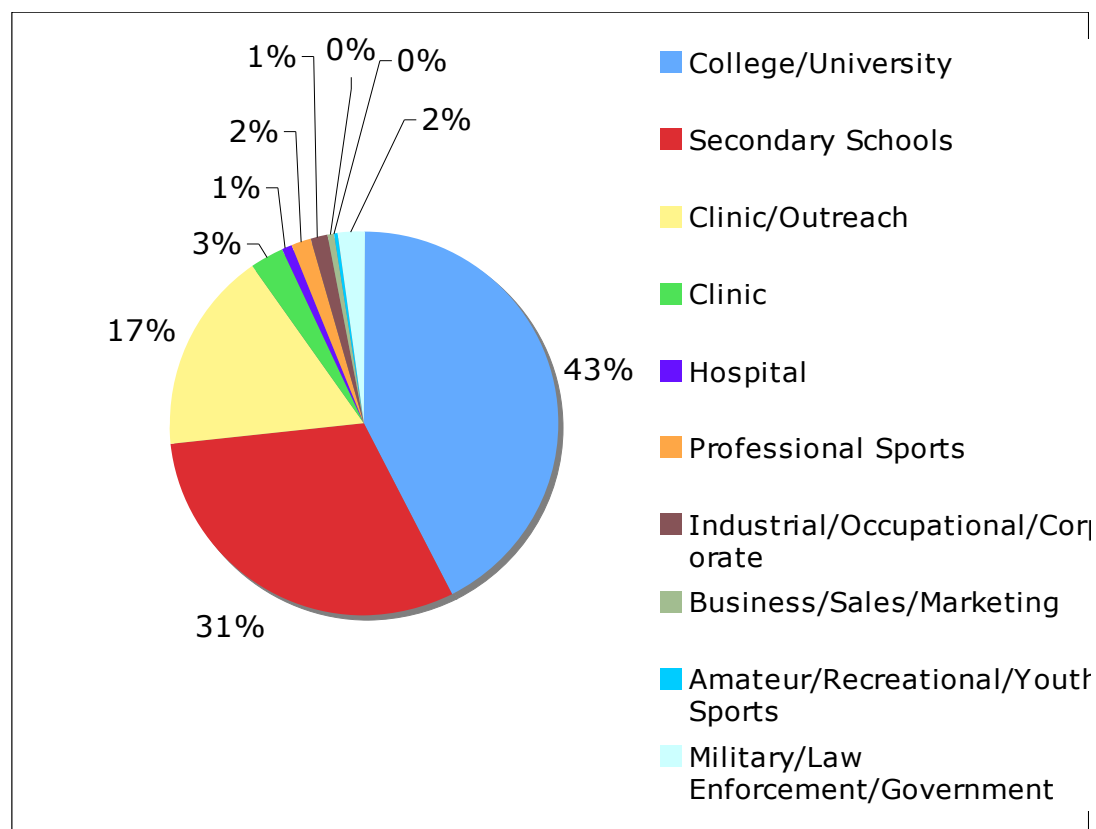
### **Results**

This research used both qualitative and quantitative methods in order to answer the research questions. An electronic survey was compiled using demographic questions, the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997) and one open-ended question in order to collect the data for this research. Data was collected and stored in Qualtrics (2008), an electronic survey suite. The final number of completed usable responses for data analysis is 228 for a 22.8% response rate. Five responses were deemed unusable for the following reasons: one survey was incomplete, and four participants indicated that they were not employed as athletic trainers within the designated settings (e.g. per diem, waitress, coach etc).

#### **Job Setting**

Most of the participants, 97 respondents (42.5%) of the sample, are employed in the college/university setting. Following those self-identified as working in the college/university are athletic trainers employed in the secondary school setting with 70 participants (30.7%). The third highest setting consists of those athletic trainers employed in a clinic/outreach setting with 39 participants (17.1%). Six were employed in clinics, 5 in military and law enforcement, 4 in professional sports, 3 in the industrial and corporate setting, 2 in the hospital and one in both business/sales and amateur/recreational sports. The latter seven job settings made up 9.7% of the sample. The following graph (Figure 4) depicts the percentage of participants within each job setting.

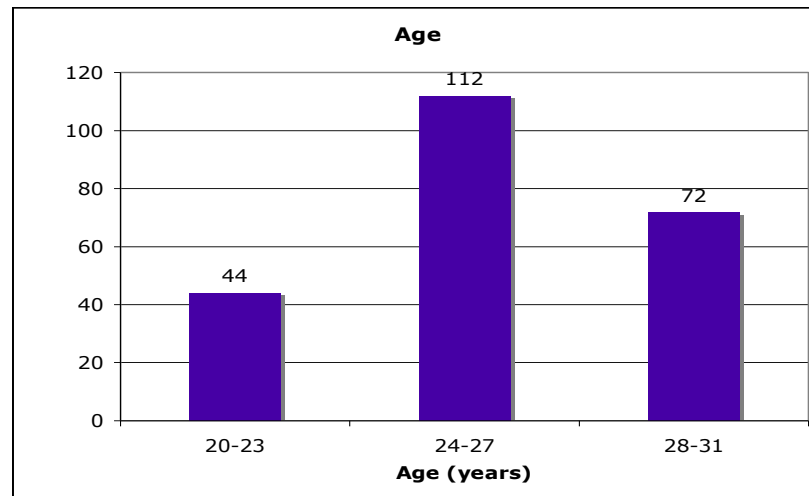
**Figure 4. Percentage of Respondents per Job Setting**



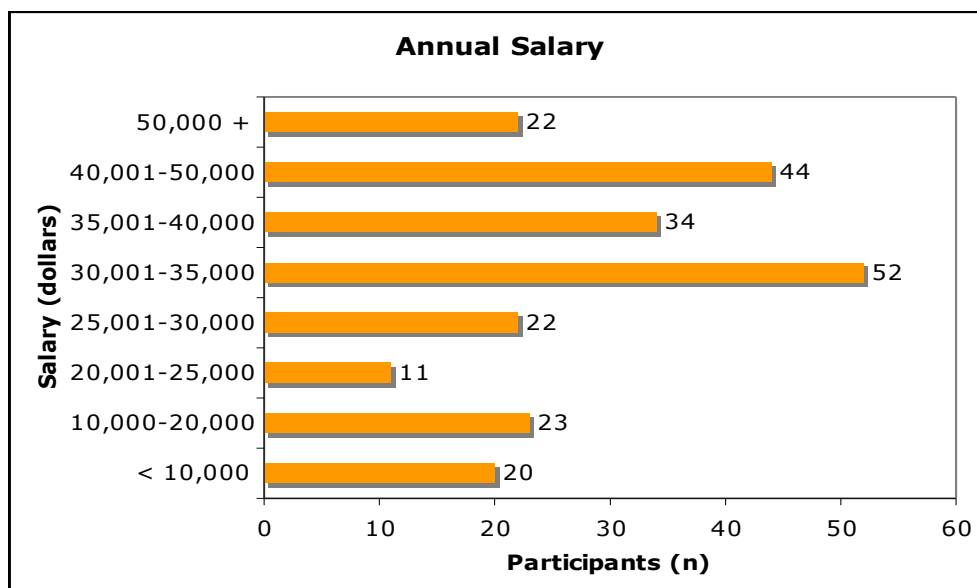
### **Age, Annual Salary and Education**

Participants in this survey were required to be less than 32 years of age at the time the survey was taken. The respondents were grouped into three categories: 20-23, 24-27 and 28-32. The 20-23 age group represents 20% of the respondents, the 24-27 age group represents 49% and 28-32 age group represents 31% of the population. Any participants 32 years of age or older were exited out of the survey after the demographic questions and not included in the sample.



**Figure 5. Age**

Annual salary results describe the participants' income and the distribution of incomes among young professionals. This demographic includes young professionals that have varying job titles from Graduate Assistant Athletic Trainers through Head Athletic Trainer, Clinical Coordinator, etc. This demographic distribution in figure 6 helps the reader understand the sample, especially when reading about the "pay" facet of job satisfaction.

**Figure 6. Annual Salary**

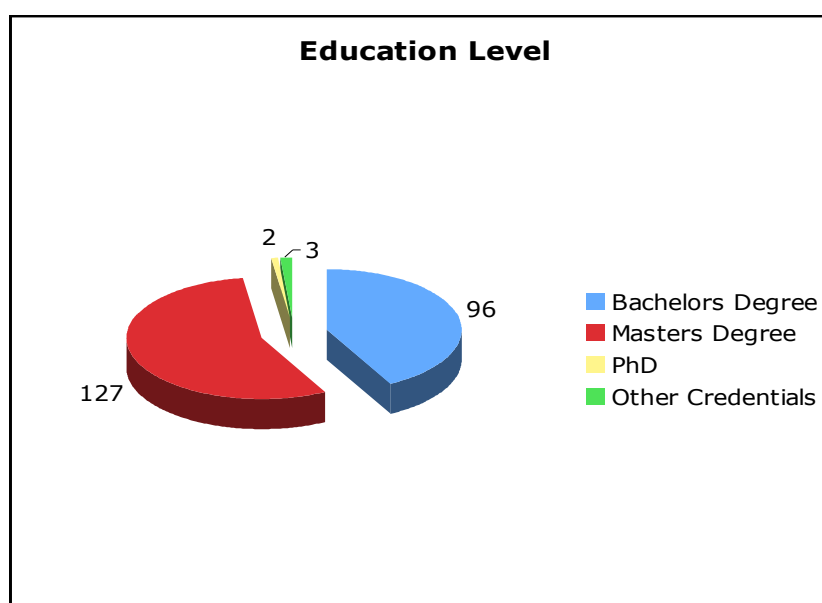
The above graph supports the data published in the 2008 NATA salary survey.

The 2008 salary survey is based on 7,758 responses collected online over several months (NATA, 2008). The data is organized by district, state, years of experience, job title and job setting. The 2008 survey states that compensation is higher in all 10 NATA districts than in 2005 with an average salary of \$44,235 not including bonuses and benefits. Overall, it seems that the 2008 salary information is much better than the 2005 data with compensation improving and average hours per workweek decreasing.

It is important to recognize also that of the 228 responses in this survey research, 29 were graduate assistant athletic trainers working mostly in the college/university setting. It is likely that these respondents reported only their stipend as annual salary rather than stipend and tuition waiver. Graduate assistants make up the entire “less than \$10,000” category in this graph.

This survey of young professionals reveals similar results as the salary survey. In this research, most respondents are making between 30 and 35 thousand dollars and 66% of the entire sample are making more than 30 thousand dollars. This is very similar to the results from the 2008 salary survey where athletic trainers with one to five years of experience are making, on average, \$34,436 (NATA, 2008). Athletic trainers with anywhere between five and ten years of experience are making, on average, \$41,677 which is supported by this research on young professionals.

**Figure 7. Education Level**



The NATA supports the continuing education of athletic trainers beyond the entry-level requirements and boasts that approximately 70% of athletic trainers have Masters' Degrees (NATA, 2009). This sample of young professional athletic trainers reveals that 42% have Bachelors' degrees, 55% have Masters' degrees and 2% are otherwise credentialed as Physical Therapists (PTs) and/or with a Doctorate.

## Analysis

The first research question the researcher set out to answer is the following: what is the overall job satisfaction rate of young professional athletic trainers? This was found through the use of Spector's (1997) text *Job Satisfaction* and tabulating the job satisfaction score from the survey results. The following charts represent the normative data for the JSS (1997) and the data collected during this research. Normative data was established using 8,113 completed surveys from 52 samples. It is compared to the 228-person sample achieved during this research.

**Table 1. Job Satisfaction Mean Scores**

	Normative Data	Young Professional Athletic Trainers
<b>Total Job Satisfaction</b>	136.5	142.7
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	12.1	26.2
<b>Data Range</b>	36-216 (lowest and highest possible)	79-204

The first hypothesis for this research states that the overall job satisfaction rate for young professional athletic trainers would be approximately average, according to the normative data given in Spector's (1997) text. As seen above in the table, the young professionals' job satisfaction was slightly above the given average in the normative data. The hypothesis was confirmed by the data. When comparing the two standard deviations, however, it is obvious that the data are very different from the normative values. Parametric testing makes the assumption that variances in each group are similar and the samples are similar in size. In this case, further parametric analysis is not

warranted due to the violations of assumptions. Further, finding significance is unlikely due to the large variances (standard deviations) and difference in the sample sizes.

The second question the researcher set out to answer is the following: what are the job satisfaction rates of young professionals as they relate to specific job settings? The following chart represents the descriptive statistics for each of the job settings represented by the sample. The descriptive statistics include the frequency, range, mean and standard deviation for each setting.

**Table 2. Sample Descriptive Statistics**

<b>Job Setting</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
College/University	97	85-192	137.4	23.2
Secondary School	70	79-201	146.9	27.8
Clinic/Outreach	39	96-204	144.5	24.4
Clinic	6	97-201	150.7	39.4
Military/Law Enforcement	5	103-169	134.6	24.0
Professional Sports	4	156-176	168	8.8
Industrial/Occupational	3	90-204	154	58.3
Hospital	2	158-182	170.0	17.0
Business/Sales	1	-	114.0	-
Amateur/Recreational Sports	1	-	122.0	-

The second hypothesis for this study states that young professional athletic trainers working in the clinic/outreach positions and clinic positions have lower rates than those working in other settings. This hypothesis was not supported. Both the clinic/outreach and clinic settings had mean job satisfaction levels above the average and higher than most of the other settings. Thirty-nine total responses (17%) were athletic trainers working in the clinic/outreach setting and 6 total responses for those working in the clinic. In order to infer statistical significance, more research needs to be completed.

A one-way ANOVA was completed comparing job satisfaction across these three settings, college/university, secondary schools, and clinic/outreach. Results suggest there is a significant difference across these settings ( $p = .043$ ). A significant difference was noted between the college/university and the other two settings (secondary school and clinic/outreach). There was no significant difference between the secondary school and clinic/outreach setting. This post hoc analysis revealed that job satisfaction levels are significantly lower in the college/university setting than in secondary school or clinic/outreach setting.

The third and final research question asked by the researcher is the following: what are the specific facets of job satisfaction in which young professional athletic trainers are least satisfied? The nine facets of job satisfaction include: pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communication. The data was grouped according to each one of these nine facets and compared to the normative data for means and standard deviations.

**Table 3. Job Satisfaction Facet Normative Data vs. Sample Data**

<b>Facets of Job Satisfaction</b>	<b>Normative Mean</b>	<b>Young Professional Athletic Trainers' Mean</b>	<b>Normative Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Young Professional Athletic Trainers' Standard Deviation</b>
Pay	<b>11.8</b>	<b>12.0</b>	2.6	5.1
Promotion	12.0	12.2	1.9	4.1
Supervision	19.2	19.4	1.5	4.7
Fringe Benefits	<b>14.2</b>	<b>16.1</b>	2.2	4.8
Contingent Rewards	13.7	14.6	2.0	4.4
Operating Procedures	<b>13.5</b>	<b>14.6</b>	2.2	3.6
Coworkers	18.3	18.4	1.1	3.9
Nature of Work	<b>19.2</b>	<b>19.5</b>	1.3	3.4
Communication	14.4	15.7	1.8	4.4

The third hypothesis in this research states that pay, benefits, nature of the work and operating procedures are the four facets of job satisfaction in which athletic trainers will be least satisfied. Table 3 provides the normative values for all 9 facets of job satisfaction. These numbers were derived from the same sample as the normative mean data (N=8113) (Spector, 1997). The normative range of each facet is 4-24 (4 being the lowest possible score and 24 being the highest possible score), with the normative mean and standard deviation given above. The normative data is then compared to the research data. Overall, there is little variance in the data from the norms given for the facets of

pay, benefits, nature of work and operating procedures and the data collected from young professional athletic trainers.

### **Qualitative Analysis**

The coding structure (See Appendix C) for the qualitative data uses all nine facets of job satisfaction as themes for the data. The qualitative survey question asks, "Please describe the single most important issue relating to your job satisfaction as an athletic trainer." The respondents were able to write as much or as little as they felt necessary in order to answer the question. The responses often contained more than one idea within different themes and sub-codes, and the coding analysis displays these responses. The frequency analysis noted more than 228 coded responses to the qualitative question.

The data was coded and the responses were tallied for frequency into each of the nine sub-facets of job satisfaction by both the researcher and the external auditor. Both sets of results (researcher and external auditor) found that the four highest represented facets were pay, operating procedures, communication and contingent rewards. The pay facet includes sub-codes such as pay, salary, education, overtime and compensation. In both analyses pay boasted the highest frequency of responses. Operating procedures is the facet with the next highest frequency of response and includes sub-codes such as policies, procedures, staffing and hours. The third most frequently represented facet is contingent rewards. Sub-codes for contingent rewards include appreciation, recognition, reward, acknowledgement and respect. The fourth highest facet mentioned was communication, which had sub-codes such as role, athletic director, communication, coaches and administration.



The qualitative results partially support the third hypothesis which states that pay, benefits, nature of the work and operating procedures are the four facets of job satisfaction in which athletic trainers will be least satisfied. The qualitative results suggests that pay and operating procedures are the most important aspects relating to the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers with over 60 recorded responses within the data. Throughout the responses, pay was often reported with hours as the two most important aspects of job satisfaction as an athletic trainer. Responses included quotations such as “salary vs. time spent at work”, “overworked, underpaid and often underappreciated” and “the amount of extra time with no compensation”. More than fifteen times throughout the qualitative responses, pay and hours were mentioned together.

The two other most frequently mentioned facets are communication and contingent rewards. These two facets were not a part of the hypothesis and were a surprise to the researcher. Young professional athletic trainers consistently state that contingent rewards such as respect and appreciation are very important to their job satisfaction. Statements such as “limited appreciation/understanding from the administration” and “feeling that what I do and the hours I put in go underappreciated by my supervisor” and “respect and understanding” displayed the respondents’ feelings toward contingent rewards. Communication was also mentioned often and deemed important by the participants. Responses such as “lack of communication between supervisors and athletic trainers”, “effective communications” and “communications with parents and doctors” were mentioned throughout the qualitative responses more than thirty times.

Throughout the qualitative responses, participants answered the question freely with no limit to their responses. The qualitative answers were grouped into positive, negative and neutral responses for all 228 participants. Results yielded more negative and neutral responses than positive responses. The following table displays the number of responses in each category.

**Table 4. Response Rates**

Positive	Neutral	Negative
36	89	101

Positive responses reported things like “I work a 9-5 schedule so I get to spend time with family. I love it!” and “My job is enjoyable and a once in a lifetime opportunity”. Many of the responses were not as positive. The most concerning responses mentioned leaving the profession, such as “I definitely regret my career choice. See myself going back to school for something else in the near future once enough money can be saved” and “Long hours, low pay and poor benefits lead me to leave the profession”. Responses that mention leaving the profession as well as responses such as “way overworked, covering way too many sports, working 14 hours a day with no days off” and “completely burnt out” are common throughout the qualitative responses.

## **Conclusion**

The data collected quantitatively and qualitatively answers the following research questions: What is the overall job satisfaction rate of young professional athletic trainers?

What are the job satisfaction rates of young professionals as they relate to specific job settings? What are the specific facets of job satisfaction in which young professional athletic trainers are least satisfied? Although the hypotheses were not all supported by the results suggest that more research needs to be done in the area of job satisfaction for athletic trainers. Chapter 5 will discuss the implications of the data for athletic trainers and further research.

## **Chapter V**

### **Discussion**

This research study was conducted to contribute to the body of knowledge surrounding the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers. The research sought to answer the following research questions; what is the overall job satisfaction rate of young professional athletic trainers? What are the job satisfaction rates of young professionals as they relate to specific job settings? What are the specific facets of job satisfaction in which young professional athletic trainers are least satisfied? The researcher answered the research questions by using a mixed method approach using the quantitative Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997) and an open ended question that asked participants, “what is the single most important factor relating to job satisfaction as an athletic trainer?”

While results of this research did not precisely support the researcher’s hypotheses, significant advances were made in understanding the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainers. The first hypothesis stated that participants would have overall average job satisfaction when compared to the normative data for the pre-validated survey. This hypothesis was supported by the results. Although the overall job satisfaction level was average many respondents identified having job satisfaction lower than average. The results indicate that there are some professional athletic trainers that are dissatisfied with their jobs. Moreover, the results highlight the potential risk for turnover and the risk of young professionals leaving the profession.

The second hypothesis states that athletic trainers working in the clinic/outreach setting and the clinic setting would have lower job satisfaction than other job settings.

This hypothesis was not supported by the results. Athletic trainers working in the college/university setting appear to have lower job satisfaction than other settings.

The small sample size does not provide enough data to conclude whether or not the clinic, hospital, industrial, military, business, professional sports and amateur sports settings have lower job satisfaction than other settings. The results of this research have concluded that most young professionals are working in the college/university, secondary school and clinic/outreach settings. The responses provide only enough datum to compare the college/university, secondary schools and clinic/outreach settings to one another. Of these three settings, college/university had the lowest average job satisfaction score.

Interpretation of the one-way ANOVA results suggests that college/university athletic trainers have significantly lower job satisfaction than secondary school and clinic/outreach athletic trainers. The comparison of the groups identifies an area in which more research needs to be done: job satisfaction of college/university athletic trainers. Although different job satisfaction scores cannot be compared to the norms for the survey, when compared to each other these results suggest that college/university athletic trainers have significantly lower job satisfaction levels.

This result is important because it clearly defines the work settings in which many young professional athletic trainers have low job satisfaction and the issues relating to job satisfaction. Due to lack of responses in certain work settings, this research cannot shed light on the state of job satisfaction across all job settings. The highest number of responses came from the college/university, secondary schools and clinic/outreach settings. Results from these settings revealed average satisfaction with the job and a wide

variance. Although these results did not support the researcher's original hypothesis, it has offered a chance to understand the job satisfaction levels of young professionals across multiple settings.

The third hypothesis was not supported by the quantitative results. Young professionals have stated, quantitatively, that the facets of pay, fringe benefits, nature of work and operating procedures are average within their jobs while the hypothesis stated that these facets would be lower than average. The only facet that was lower than average quantitatively were fringe benefits. This outcome suggests that young professional athletic trainers are having issues with fringe benefits, however the qualitative data did not suggest that this facet is an important issue relating to job satisfaction.

Analysis of the qualitative data suggests that the third hypothesis is partially supported. Participants stated through frequency of responses that the four most important facets of job satisfaction are pay, operating procedures, contingent rewards and communication. This result supports the hypothesis, which states that both pay and operating procedures would be among the four facets which young professional athletic trainers identify as important.

Although many positive remarks were made, there were quite a few comments suggesting that these athletic trainers are unhappy and may leave the profession. Comments such as, "I regret my career choice", "I need a full time position instead of part time" and "long hours, low pay and poor benefits lead me to leave the profession" truly drive home the fact that although some people are satisfied, those who aren't may be leaving this profession. Young professional athletic trainers are the cornerstone for

the continued development and maturation of athletic training as a health care profession; if we don't nurture young professionals with jobs that support them financially for the amount of work done and create positive work environments then the profession itself may be at stake.

Young professionals' dissatisfaction with their job is not new to any profession. Previous research within athletic training acknowledges that younger professionals usually have lower job levels and in turn, lower job satisfaction (Barrett et al, 2002; Robie et al, 1998). Current research suggests that low job satisfaction and job level are correlated across multiple professions. For example, junior lawyers are paid quite well but have to combat the workload, pressure to create more billable hours and the lack of appreciation as they enter their profession (Forstenlechner & Lettice, 2008). Young professional nurses have to handle high levels of stress due to the amount of responsibility given to them, and report high commitment to the profession but low commitment to the organization in which they are first hired (Blythe et al, 2008). All professions have issues with young professionals and job satisfaction; however, no profession can take this problem lightly.

When studying job satisfaction, it is important to remember also the extrinsic factors that cannot be accounted for in this type of research. These factors include things such as disposition, genetic make-up and general health (Arvey et al, 1989). There are many issues that may affect any employee at any point in time. Some people are consistently unhappy for reasons unrelated to their work, which makes it difficult to assess job satisfaction in a sterile environment.

Researching young professional athletic trainers' job satisfaction must become a priority to the National Athletic Trainers' Association. The NATA has begun to support young professionals by creating a Young Professionals' Committee, providing online support through blogs, Facebook, Twitter and creating specific events for young professionals at the annual NATA Symposium. The Young Professionals Committee has begun to look at burnout issues among young professionals and is trying to enhance job satisfaction through education of fellow athletic trainers, athletic training students and employers. These innovations will definitely help increase accessibility to these professionals and increase communication from the national organization to its young professional constituents.

The creation of a quantitative scale that is specific to measuring the job satisfaction of athletic trainers will help to better understand satisfaction levels within the field. Athletic training is a profession that continually combines many different roles and responsibilities into one job making it difficult to identify the most important aspects of job satisfaction. Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (1997) is designed more narrowly for health service workers and does not seem to account for the complexity involved in the broader health care professional career field. Also, it was the researcher's responsibility to identify the codes that fall into Spector's (1997) nine facets of job satisfaction from the given qualitative answers. A survey designed for athletic trainers will take the guesswork out of coding and analyzing qualitative data relating to the job satisfaction of athletic trainers.

A longitudinal study of the job satisfaction of athletic trainers will also help professionals understand trends in job satisfaction and help predict job satisfaction issues



within the profession. This research provides a cursory glance at the distribution of young professionals in different settings and an idea of their job satisfaction levels. This snapshot of young professional athletic trainers has opened the door for a longitudinal study in order to validate the trends in job satisfaction. Research of this magnitude will truly help understand the profession of athletic training and the role that job satisfaction plays in the attrition of athletic trainers.

### **Limitations of the Research**

This research had many limiting factors. First, the researcher was limited by the NATA's research policies for students. The researcher could only obtain 1,000 email addresses of young professional athletic trainers, which limited the possible number of responses and the representation of settings among the sample. The researcher was also limited by time constraints because this project must be completed within one academic year. These constraints, in turn, limited the time the researcher was able to leave the survey open for responses. Also, using the NATA email distribution made it impossible to send a reminder email to the participants. Most of the participants responded within one week of the survey being open and after that date the responses were few and far between. This limited the number of responses possible for the survey as well as the number of settings represented in the total sample. Finally, this research is also limited by the lack of current research in job satisfaction for athletic trainers. It was difficult to frame this project due to the lack of research in this field.

The result of this research was also limited by the geographical region and age demographic of the respondents. Districts one, two and three of the NATA include major

east coast cities such as Boston, New York City and Washington DC which all have a very high cost of living. Many athletic trainers may be dissatisfied with their jobs based on a poor cost of living adjustment of the salary versus dissatisfaction with the job itself. This demographic of athletic trainers also includes graduate assistant athletic trainers who have a different outlook on their jobs due to their school requirements. In the future, research should be done across the entire nation to obtain a good geographic sample. Also, separating out the graduate assistant athletic trainers for a separate comparison may provide more accurate results.

Researching job satisfaction throughout the past year has provided a myriad of learning opportunities for the researcher. The researcher has learned about job satisfaction theory and how it relates to human resource development. The literature streams pertaining to athletic training and human resource development have rarely been combined in research. Completing this research has helped the researcher to understand how the theories and principles of human resource development can combine with any profession to support its constituents.

Completing this research has also helped the researcher form an educated opinion on the need for a new scale to measure job satisfaction amongst athletic trainers. Barrett et al (2002) used the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997) to study job satisfaction among Division I athletic trainers in the Southeastern Conference. Similar results were found: average job satisfaction scores and some basic demographic data including age and job title and the relationship to job satisfaction. Barrett et al (2002) is the basis for this study and provides the rationale for the use of Spector's (1997) Job Satisfaction Survey. However, this study also includes a qualitative component to gain more

perspective on the job satisfaction of young professional athletic trainer. The analysis of the research about athletic trainers and job satisfaction as well as conducting this research has concluded that the Job Satisfaction Survey, though valid, is not tailored specifically to athletic training. The creation and use of a more specific and tailored scale must be explored in the future.

Athletic trainers are in a unique position as health care professionals. The nature of the work requires long and odd work hours, physical stress, traveling, working with many other health care professionals and an overall ability to maintain relationships between many different entities including; coaches, other athletic trainers, patients, physicians, medical professionals, administration and so on. The creation of a job satisfaction survey unique to the profession would focus on facets that are most important to athletic trainers: working hours, pay, communication skills and appreciation. This survey would also determine specific information regarding overtime compensation, continuing education funding and other facets pertinent to the satisfaction of athletic trainers. Development and use of a survey like this might significantly contribute to the body of knowledge regarding athletic trainers and job satisfaction.

Analysis of this research has directly correlated to Maslow's (1943) self actualization theory and the hierarchy of needs. Athletic trainers that are satisfied within their jobs will undoubtedly provide better health care for their patients, seek out new opportunities, and continually educate themselves on the current research in the field. This is what an athletic trainer who is in the self-actualization process at the workplace would be doing. Some young professionals reported in this survey not making enough money to support them and/or their families, inappropriate compensation for the amount

of hours they work, underappreciated and potentially leaving the profession. It is likely that these athletic trainers function in the lower levels of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy and pose a serious problem for the development of the profession. It is difficult to move out of the lower levels of the hierarchy without basic satisfaction of these levels. In this case, that means appropriate pay for hours worked, job security, and benefits to support self and family.

### **Personal Learning**

As a young professional athletic trainer, I have worked in a position where I was overworked and underpaid, definitely underappreciated and constantly considering going back to school for a different health care profession. I have learned through this process that this positive change will take time and requires a paradigm shift in the mind of athletic trainers and other health care professionals with whom we work. We must stand up for ourselves, only accepting jobs that acknowledge the education and competencies of athletic trainers. We must require those around us to understand and respect the profession through education and by providing high level health care within our scope of practice. Finally, this research has proven to me that there is a lot more work to do and that we must start somewhere if we want to see the profession continue to thrive in the market.

Completing this research has helped me define my life's ambition as an athletic trainer. My passion is to be an athletic trainer who consistently advocates for others in order to keep them in the profession. I want to be an athletic trainer who continues to practice and learn clinically while also managing athletic trainers in entry-level positions.

I believe that good management skills will help entry-level athletic trainers stay in this profession and become motivated and excited to do so. This research has helped to define me as an athletic trainer and as an educated human resource professional. It is my dream to contribute to the decreased attrition of athletic trainers and increased passion for the profession.

## **Appendix A**

### **Broadcast Email**

Dear Fellow Certified Athletic Trainer:

I am a master's degree candidate at James Madison University, requesting your help to complete part of my degree requirements. Please follow the link at the end of this letter to an online survey titled: Job Satisfaction of Young Professional Athletic Trainers. A young professional athletic trainer is defined as any certified athletic trainer thirty-two years of age or younger.

This student survey is not approved or endorsed by NATA. It is being sent to you because of NATA's commitment to athletic training education and research.

The questionnaire consists of 6 demographic questions and 36 Likert Scale (from disagree very much to agree very much) questions, which will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

One thousand randomly selected certified NATA members in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions with a listed email address are being asked to submit this questionnaire, but you have the right to choose not to participate. The James Madison University Institutional Review Board has approved this study for the Protection of Human Subjects.

This is a completely anonymous questionnaire and upon submission, neither your name nor email address will be attached to your answers. Your information will be kept strictly confidential. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. However, once your responses have been submitted and anonymously recorded you will not be able to withdraw from the study.

There is no more than minimal risk to the participants agreeing to be a part of this research study. Participants will benefit indirectly from the research results by becoming aware of issues and challenges regarding job satisfaction for athletic trainers.

#### **Questions about the Study**

If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final aggregate results of this study, please contact:

Jennifer Stollery  
AHRD Masters Student  
James Madison University  
stoll3jc@jmu.edu

Dr. Jane B. Thall  
James Madison University  
Telephone: (540) 568-5531  
thalljb@jmu.edu

**Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject**

Dr. David Cockley  
Chair, Institutional Review Board  
James Madison University  
(540) 568-2834  
cocklede@jmu.edu

As a fellow certified athletic trainer, your knowledge and opinions regarding this topic makes your input invaluable. Please take a few minutes to fill out the anonymous questionnaire you will find by clicking on this link and submit it by November 15, 2009.

**Giving of Consent**

I have read this cover letter and I understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I freely consent to participate. I have been given satisfactory answers to my questions. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age. By clicking on the link below, and completing and submitting this anonymous survey, I am consenting to participate in this research.

[http://jmu.qualtrics.com/SE?SID=SV\\_3xWTbTkMhQRAv9a&SVID=Prod](http://jmu.qualtrics.com/SE?SID=SV_3xWTbTkMhQRAv9a&SVID=Prod)

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer C. Stollery, ATC

## Appendix B

### Job Satisfaction Survey

This survey was created in order to better understand the job satisfaction levels of young professional athletic trainers. Your email address was chosen at random to receive this survey. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes. Please answer each question and submit the survey upon completion. Thank you for your participation in this research.

1) What is your current job title?

2) How would you classify your job setting?

- College/University –if answered, go to question 3. All other answers, go to question 4.
- Secondary School
- Clinic/Outreach
- Clinic
- Hospital
- Professional Sports
- Industrial/Occupational/Corporate
- Business/Sales/Marketing
- Health/Fitness/Sports Clubs/Performance Enhancement Clinics
- Amateur/Recreational/Youth Sports
- Military/Law Enforcement/Government
- Independent Contractor
- Other

3) In what Division is your college/university?

- Division I
- Division II
- Division III
- Other

4) How old are you?

- 20-23
- 24-27
- 28-32



- 32 or above
- 5) What is your annual salary?

- Less than 10,000
- 10,000-20,000
- 20,001-25,000
- 25,001-30,000
- 30,001-35,000
- 35,001-40,000
- 40,001-50,000
- 50,000

- 6) What is your education level?

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- PhD
- Other credentials

**The following questions are taken from a previously validated Job Satisfaction Survey. Please fill out each question honestly using the scale provided. There are 36 questions.**

**I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**I like the people I work with.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Communication seems good within this organization.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Raises are too few and far between.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**My supervisor is unfair to me.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**I like doing the things I do at work.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**The goals of this organization are not clear to me.**

Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
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**I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**The benefit package we have is equitable.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**There are few rewards for those who work here.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**I have too much to do at work.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**I enjoy my coworkers.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**There are benefits we do not have which we should have.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**I like my supervisor.**

Disagree very much    Disagree moderately    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

**I have too much paperwork.**

Disagree very much    Disagree    Disagree slightly    Agree slightly    Agree moderately    Agree very much

much		moderately				
<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.</b>						
Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.</b>						
Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>There is too much bickering and fighting at work.</b>						
Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>My job is enjoyable.</b>						
Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Work assignments are not fully explained.</b>						
Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please describe the single most important issue relating to your job satisfaction as an athletic trainer.

**Thank you for your participation in this survey. As a certified athletic trainer, your input on this research topic is invaluable.**

**Appendix C**  
**Coding Structure**

Facets	Pay	Fringe Benefits	Operating Procedures	Communication
Key Words	Salary, pay, education, overtime compensation	Benefits, insurance, time off, CEUs	Policies, procedures, staffing	Communication, role, athletic director, coaches, administration
Frequency				
Quotation Support				

Facets	<b>Promotion</b>	<b>Supervision</b>	<b>Contingent Rewards</b>	<b>Nature of Work</b>	<b>Coworkers</b>
Key Words	Promotion, Moving up	Supervisor, Boss, Superior	Appreciation, Recognition, Reward, Acknowledgement, Respect	Enjoy, Meaningful, Helping, Like	Coworkers, People I work with, People
Frequency					
Quotation Support					

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