

Job satisfaction of sports instructors of tennis, padel and swimming

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Abstract:

There are few studies examining the sports instructors' job satisfaction. The objective of the present paper is to reliably evaluate and analyse the job satisfaction of sports instructors of tennis, padel and swimming. The sample for this research comprised 135 sports instructors. 72 sports instructors (14 women and 58 men) of tennis (n=35) and padel (n=37) participated in the investigation, with an average age of $28,63 \pm 4,90$ years, aged between 20 and 47. Moreover, 63 sports instructors of swimming (34 women and 29 men) who were working in public pools participated as well, with an average age of $29,32 \pm 6,19$ years, aged between 20 and 52. The instrument used was the job satisfaction survey for sports instructors (CSLTD). The statistical analysis was carried out with the SPSS-24.0. The sports instructors of tennis showed greater job satisfaction than the padel ones, especially when it comes to *Safety* and *Promotion*. In both sports, the best valued dimension was *Working conditions* and the worst valued one was *Salary*. The sports instructors of swimming showed an average job satisfaction. The best valued dimension was *Working conditions* and the worst valued one was *Salary*. Women showed significantly less satisfaction in *External factors* and people under age 30 in *Safety*. Sports managers in charge of facilities like tennis and padel courts and public pools should therefore develop strategies that address these results.

Key words: perceived quality, sports management, racquet sports, pools.

Introduction

Management is present at all levels, whether it is in factories, at school, in hospitals, in the government or in a tennis club. In every situation in which human beings group together as teams to achieve common objectives, it is crucial that each individual's efforts are coordinated to reach an effective outcome. Therefore, management involves directing and coordinating human, material, financial and temporary resources within the group successfully so that the objectives set by the organisation and its members are achieved. The individuals who are responsible of such management work within the organisation are indeed performing management tasks (Soucie, 2002). In the specific case of sports, these individuals would be the sports managers. One of their main tasks is that the satisfaction both of the users of sports facilities and of the sports instructors remains as high as possible at all times.

For this reason, in recent years there have been more researches focused on evaluating the satisfaction of users of sports facilities (Cuadrado Cayuela, Gómez Arcas, López Sánchez & Díaz Suárez, 2015; García Mayor, Vegara Ferri, López Sánchez, & Díaz Suárez, 2016; Morales-Baños, Borrego-Balsalobre, & Angosto-Sánchez, 2017; Rodríguez Carrasco, Ros Saura, López Sánchez, & Díaz Suárez, 2015) as well as the job satisfaction (Reynoso Vergara, Riquelme López, López Sánchez, & Díaz Suárez, 2016). Nevertheless, there are still few researches carried out in the world of sport mainly due to the lack of measuring instruments adapted to the physical activity and sport, so the studies conducted to date have always used instruments which evaluated general aspects of the work (Sánchez-Alcáraz, & Parra-Meroño, 2013). Thus, studies about job satisfaction of sports instructors remain scarce.

According to Rojas (2012), the job satisfaction depends on factors such as that the professional is updated and in line with the socio-economic development, that they master the different information and communication tools, and that they continue learning so that their daily work is a reflection of the human development. Besides, job satisfaction may be defined as an attitude or set of attitudes developed by the individual towards their working conditions, which can be referred to the overall work or to some of its specific aspects (Meliá, & Peiró, 1989). The researches about job satisfaction have a direct influence on performance and quality of service (Anaya, & Suárez, 2004).

Even though there are numerous studies which have measured job satisfaction in diverse work sectors like education (Caprara, Barbanelli, & Borgogni, 2003; Somech, & Drach-Zahavy, 2000; Viciano, Zurita, Castro, Martínez, Chacón, & Espejo, 2017) or health (López-Soriano, Bernal, & Cánovas, 2001; Molina, & Ávalos, 2009), the researches focused on the sports field are still scarce. Hence, on a general level, the data provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs reveal that the major motivations for job satisfaction would be taking

pleasure in work and a good relationship between co-workers, whereas the main reasons for labour dissatisfaction would be a low salary, a bad work schedule and job insecurity (Sánchez, 2004).

Both the coaches and the sports instructors are one of the bases for the athletes since they keep them motivated to give their best in the sport practice. Besides, it should be remarked that the work of the coach is crucial to sustain their own motivation as well as their work group's (athletes) (Brustad, 1993; Chelladurai, & Saleh, 1980; Pelegrín, 2005).

As Arruza & Arribas (2008) point out, the sports instructors structure the quality of youth sports experience by shaping the context of participation, especially with its values and types of feedback. The sports instructors are becoming increasingly influential among children and youths, but they also have to take on a range of responsibilities that need to be considered at all times including surrounding factors, which contribute to their job satisfaction.

The sports instructors' increasing responsibility and specificity as well as the worsening of their working conditions may cause a loss of motivation and satisfaction towards their job, which can directly affect their performance, absenteeism, accident rate, and the change or withdrawal from the organisation (Martín, Campos, Jiménez, & Martínez, 2007).

Therefore, as Carrasco, Solsona, Lledó, Pallarés & Hurnet (1999) assert, a common practice in any management group must be establishing mechanisms such as regularly measuring the job satisfaction and designing improvement measures to correct the aspects showing the worst results.

The objective of the present study, thus, is to reliably evaluate and analyse the job satisfaction of sports instructors of tennis, padel and swimming, sports activities which have a high demand nowadays. The aspects related to safety, promotion, salary, external factors and working conditions will be particularly considered.

Procedure

Participants

The sample for this research comprised 135 sports instructors. 72 sports instructors (14 women and 58 men) of tennis (n=35) and padel (n=37) participated in the investigation, with an average age of 28,63 ± 4,90 years, aged between 20 and 47: under age 30 (n=43) and over 30 years old (n=29). Moreover, 63 sports instructors of swimming (34 women and 29 men) who were working in public pools participated as well, with an average age of 29,32 ± 6,19 years, aged between 20 and 52: under age 30 (n=35) and over 30 years old (n=28).

Procedure

The instrument used was a survey that evaluated the sports instructors' job satisfaction, for which participants had to anonymously fill out the job satisfaction survey for sports instructors (CSLTD) by Sánchez & Parra (2013). This survey consists of 25 items, measured through a Likert type scale made of 7 choices and which evaluates 5 dimensions for job satisfaction: safety, promotion, salary, working conditions and external factors. As far as the reliability of this instrument is concerned, the total scale displays a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0,86, a fairly acceptable value.

Statistical analysis

A statistical analysis has been carried out by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences 24.0 (SPSS-24.0). The descriptive statistics of each variable have been analysed. Besides, significant differences in terms of gender, age and sport have also been analysed by means of t-test for independent samples.

Results

Due to the different nature of the sports analysed (tennis and padel vs. swimming), the results are presented into two blocks, analysing firstly the tennis and padel results and the swimming results next.

Regarding the sports of tennis and padel, no major differences for job satisfaction were found in terms of gender and age, but there were significant variations when comparing both sports. In Table 1, the different dimensions for job satisfaction are analysed according to the sport (tennis or padel). It can be seen that the instructors of tennis are more satisfied in all dimensions than the padel ones. Moreover, there are major variations in the dimensions of *Safety* and *Promotion* as well as in the overall satisfaction.

Table 1. Differences in tennis and padel instructors' job satisfaction

	Mean (DE)	Mean (DE)	Dif. M.	t	t test	
	Tennis	Padel			GL	Sig.
Safety	5,01 (0,95)	4,38 (1,49)	0,63	2,155	61,63	0,035*
Promotion	5,48 (0,75)	4,95 (1,10)	0,53	2,397	63,78	0,019*
Salary	4,61 (0,99)	4,20 (1,77)	0,40	1,205	57,18	0,233
Working conditions	5,56 (0,88)	5,06 (1,33)	0,49	1,870	62,59	0,066
External factors	5,10 (1,14)	4,95 (1,20)	0,14	,509	70	0,612
Total	5,26 (0,63)	4,79 (1,18)	0,47	2,102	55,72	0,040*

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

Concerning the job satisfaction of sports instructors of swimming, the results are presented in two tables, where the different dimensions for job satisfaction are analysed according to gender (Table 2) and age

(Table 3). Based on gender (Table 2), men are more satisfied than women in all dimensions. Such differences are significant in the dimension *External factors*. Based on age (Table 3), major differences are only found in the dimension *Safety*, where it can be seen that people over 30 years are appreciably more satisfied than those under age 30.

Table 2. Differences in swimming instructors' job satisfaction, based on gender

	Mean (DE)	Mean (DE)	Dif. M.	<i>t</i> test		
	Men	Women		<i>t</i>	GL	Sig.
Safety	4,68 (1,12)	4,22 (1,08)	0,46	1,668	61	0,100
Promotion	4,70 (0,99)	4,37 (0,98)	0,34	1,363	61	0,178
Salary	3,48 (1,33)	3,15 (1,72)	0,34	0,857	61	0,395
Working conditions	5,01 (1,07)	4,68 (1,17)	0,33	1,159	61	0,251
External factors	5,18 (1,23)	4,11 (1,30)	1,08	3,361	61	0,001**
Total	4,64 (0,91)	4,20 (0,97)	0,44	1,836	61	0,071

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

Table 3. Differences in swimming instructors' job satisfaction, based on age

	Mean (DE) <	Mean (DE) ≥	Dif.	<i>t</i> test		
	30	30		<i>t</i>	GL	Sig.
Safety	4,10 (1,01)	4,83 (1,12)	0,73	2,712	61	0,009**
Promotion	4,46 (0,93)	4,60 (1,08)	0,13	0,521	61	0,604
Salary	3,06 (1,52)	3,60 (1,56)	0,53	1,371	61	0,175
Working conditions	4,81 (1,02)	4,86 (1,27)	0,04	0,148	61	0,883
External factors	4,62 (1,11)	4,58 (1,66)	0,04	0,098	45,20	0,922
Total	4,30 (0,86)	4,53 (1,08)	0,23	0,923	61	0,359

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

Discussion

There are few studies analysing the sports instructors' job satisfaction. Nevertheless, the results of the present study can be compared with Sánchez-Alcaraz et al. (2014) ones as well as with those of Reynoso Vergara et al (2016). When comparing the results with Sánchez-Alcaraz et al. (2014), who tested 54 instructors of padel, it can be seen that the job satisfaction of padel instructors in this study is lower in every dimension (2014: 5,14. 2018: 4,79). In both studies, *Salary* is the variable which has a lower level of satisfaction, whereas *Working conditions* is the one with a higher level. The tendency of these results shows that there has been a substantial reduction in the job satisfaction of padel instructors in recent years.

Regarding the swimming instructors, Sánchez-Alcaraz et al. (2014) tested 71 instructors of swimming, whose results showed that swimming instructors had lower levels of job satisfaction than those in the present study (2014: 4,10. 2018: 4,40). The only dimension with lower satisfaction in this study is *Salary* (2014: 3,54. 2018: 3,30). The tendency of these results shows that there has been an increment in the job satisfaction of swimming instructors in terms of safety, promotion, working conditions and external factors, even though it has decreased with respect to salary. Reynoso Vergara et al. (2016) analysed the job satisfaction of 9 sports instructors in Pilar de la Horadada (2 women and 2 men), with an average age of 34,55 ± 8,75 years, aged between 24 and 49. The results obtained showed that the instructors were satisfied in their jobs with a score of 4,55 points out of 7 in the CSLTD (job satisfaction survey for sports instructors), being *Working conditions* the best valued dimension and *Safety* the worst valued one. In such way, the instructors of Pilar de la Horadada were less satisfied than the tennis and paddle instructors of the present study, but they had a similar satisfaction level to that of the swimming instructors of this study. The best valued dimension was *Working conditions* in all cases.

Conclusions

The sports instructors of tennis have greater job satisfaction levels than padel ones, with emphasis on *Safety* and *Promotion*. In both sports, the best valued dimension is *Working conditions* whereas the worst valued one is *Salary*. Sports managers in charge of facilities like tennis and padel courts are advised to develop strategies that address these results to improve their functioning.

The swimming instructors have an average job satisfaction level. The best valued dimension is *Working conditions* and the worst valued one is *Salary*. Women showed significantly less satisfaction in *External factors* and people under age 30 in *Safety*. Sports managers in charge of public pools should develop strategies that address these results.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest

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