

Recruiting and Retaining Sport Management Faculty: Factors Affecting Job Choice

Daniel F. Mahony

University of Louisville

Michael Mondello

Florida State University

Mary A. Hums

University of Louisville

Michael Judd

Marian College of Fond du Lac

The growth of sport management has led to concerns about the quantity and quality of candidates for faculty positions. In addition to trying to recruit recent doctoral graduates, many programs focus on recruiting established faculty members. This study examines factors affecting the willingness of sport management faculty to accept new positions, and the likelihood of leaving their current positions. While the likelihood of leaving was not high, objective factors such as salary and location were important to those willing to take a new position. Subjective factors such as fit within the program and quality of faculty in the program were also important, whereas several factors were less important (e.g., recruiter description, recruiter approach, and leadership opportunities). Results confirm that attracting faculty in sport management is challenging and universities must consider a combination of strategies to attract them.

Sport management has experienced considerable growth as an academic discipline over the last 25 years. The number of programs in North America grew from 20 in 1980 to over 200 by the year 2000 (Parkhouse & Pitts, 2001). The combination of the increased number of programs and the increased number of majors in those programs has led to a dramatic increase in the number of advertised tenure-track

faculty positions in sport management (Mahony, Mondello, Hums, & Judd, 2004). In fact, Mahony et al. found that the number of advertised faculty positions in sport management increased from 48 in 1996-1997 to 112 in 2000-2001. However, the number of doctoral graduates during this period averaged only 15 per year.

With the large difference between supply and demand, legitimate concerns exist about the quantity and quality of applicants for faculty positions in sport management (Mahony et al., 2004; Mondello, Mahony, Hums, & Moorman, 2002; Weese, 2002). Search committee chairs in Mondello et al. indicated they generally had few applicants and low-to-moderate satisfaction with the overall quality of those applicants. With few doctoral students available, many search committees are targeting more experienced sport management faculty. In fact, many jobs advertised in recent years sought individuals at a rank above assistant professor. While attracting experienced sport management faculty members has become increasingly important, little is known about them or the factors important to them when looking at a new position.

Recruitment Literature

Most empirical research on recruitment in higher education has focused on the administrator perspective, including what qualities administrators look for in a candidate and what factors influence the decision made by administrators in the hiring process (Young, Rinehart, & Place, 1989). However, more recent research efforts followed the lead of researchers in noneducation areas and examined the decision-making process from the applicants' perspective (Young et al., 1989). It is important to note that while this line of research used the term *applicant*, researchers in this area use the same theories to examine both actual applicants and potential applicants (Kjorlien, 2001).

The authors of the current paper were interested in examining factors affecting the likelihood that a sport management faculty member would take a new position. With this in mind, job choice theory appeared to provide the best guide for identifying possible factors. Job choice theory, originally articulated by Behling, Labovitz, and Gainer (1968), is a comprehensive approach to understanding the factors affecting job decisions and is actually a combination of three distinct theories: (a) objective theory, (b) subjective theory, and (c) critical contact theory. The objective theory of job choice views job applicants as being economically driven and researchers predict applicants will accept the jobs with the best combination of economic benefits (Young et al., 1989). Factors such as base salary, opportunities for supplemental pay, benefits packages, location, and job responsibilities are particularly important to the applicant.

In contrast, the subjective theory of job choice views applicants as being psychologically driven and affected more by their desire to fulfill their psychological needs than their desire for additional economic rewards (Young et al., 1989). Applicants try to find a job with an "organization that is perceived to have a work environment which is most conducive to their particular psychological needs" (Young et al., 1989, p. 330). In other words, applicants will be more likely to accept a job with an organization when they believe their personality matches the firm's image (Tom, 1971). This suggests organizations understanding employee

emotional needs, and structuring a position to meet those needs, should be most successful in recruiting quality employees (Behling et al., 1968). It is also important for the organization to recognize that while some job-related factors can be adjusted to meet the needs of the applicant, many factors are not easily adjustable (e.g., research expectations), and it would be a mistake to mislead the applicant about these factors during the recruitment process.

The critical contact theory suggests applicants are not capable of comparing firms based on objective and subjective factors for a variety of reasons, including a lack of time and experience (Behling et al., 1968). Therefore, applicants make decisions based on the interactions with the recruiter and through the information this individual provides about the job (Young et al., 1989). The implication here is that organizations using impressive recruiters, having structured interviews, and doing the best job of presenting critical information about the work itself will be most successful at recruiting employees. Overall, previous research has supported the objective theory (e.g., Butler, Sanders, & Whitecotton, 2000; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Rynes & Miller, 1983; Young et al., 1989), subjective theory (e.g., Butler et al., 2000; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Young et al., 1989), and critical contact theory (e.g., Harris & Fink, 1987; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Rynes & Miller, 1983; Schmitt & Coyle, 1976; Young et al., 1989). However, in different settings the relative importance of each varied (Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Young et al., 1989). Therefore, examining each in the current paper was logical.

Retention Factors

Whereas the primary focus of this paper is on faculty recruitment, the authors also examined faculty retention. Given the large number of faculty positions available and the small number of qualified faculty, universities must also focus on faculty retention. Previous research on faculty in other disciplines found financial compensation and workload to be key factors in faculty turnover and retention (e.g., Matier, 1990; Miller, Jackson, & Pope, 2001). Therefore, the current paper also examined the impact of these factors on turnover intentions.

Method

Participants

In order to address recruitment and retention issues, the authors surveyed 427 faculty members in North America currently teaching in sport management programs. The address list came from two sources: the North American Society for Sport Management membership list (for 2003) and college and university sport management Web pages. Participants had the option of completing a hard copy of the survey by mail or going to a Web site and completing the survey there. Follow-up e-mail reminders were sent to the participants every month for 3 months, with the survey attached and a link to the Web site. Overall, 178 individuals responded, with 172 usable surveys for a final response rate of 40.28%. The respondents were primarily white males (73.10%), with an average age around 44.

Measurement

The survey had three parts. Part A collected basic demographic information (e.g., tenure status, gender, year of birth). The participants were then asked (on a 5-point Likert scale, 1 = much lower and 5 = much higher) to evaluate their workloads (the research, teaching, and service expectations of their positions versus typical faculty positions in the field) and rewards (the comparison of their salary versus the typical faculty salaries in the field). They were also asked, "Would you ever consider leaving your current institution for a sport management faculty position at another institution?" If they responded yes, they were then asked the likelihood they would leave for a new position (on a 5-point Likert scale, 1 = highly unlikely and 5 = highly likely). It is important to note that only participants who indicated they would consider leaving completed the items in Part B and C.

Part B included one open-ended question asking participants to list three to five factors that would be most important to them when deciding to accept a new job. Part C asked respondents the importance of various job attributes to consider when deciding whether to take a new job. This list of items was generated based on research on job choice theory (e.g., Behling et al., 1968; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Young et al., 1989) which identified three categories of factors—objective, subjective, and critical contact. Within the objective category, factors included (a) compensation, (b) work setting, (c) leadership opportunities, (d) rank/tenure, (e) location, (f) teaching workload responsibilities, and (g) research opportunities. Within the subjective category, factors included (a) reputation; (b) satisfaction of work needs; (c) feelings of being wanted by the university; and (d) similarity of goals, culture, and fit in the organization. Within the critical contact category, the factors included (a) recruiter approach and (b) recruiter description. The survey asked participants to evaluate each item on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = not at all important, 7 = very important). Some items came directly from previous research (e.g., Young et al., 1989), but no scale existed to examine college faculty in sport management, so many of the items were generated by the authors of the current study. A panel of experts reviewed the instrument before distributing it to the respondents, and the researchers modified the survey based on their suggestions.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics were generated for the items in Part A. In order to do a preliminary analysis on relationships among the items within each factor in Part C, the authors then computed Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each factor. In addition, the authors used a multiple regression analysis to examine the impact of various factors on the likelihood of leaving. The four independent variables were (a) perceptions of current research expectations in comparison with others, (b) perceptions of current teaching expectations in comparison with others, (c) perceptions of current service expectations in comparison with others, and (d) perceptions of current salary in comparison with others. The dependent variable was how likely they were to leave their current position. The authors used multiple regression analysis in this case because the dependent variable, willingness to leave the current position, was normally distributed. The authors analyzed the R^2 , adjusted R^2 , F value, and the

standardized beta coefficients. The authors also transcribed the responses in Part B word-for-word and distributed them to each author to review independently. The authors tabulated and categorized each response independently and attempted to combine those under the same categories listed above for the quantitative data in Part C (Malhotra, 1996). After examining the data independently, the authors compared their analyses for similarities and differences in categories. Initial inter-coder reliability was 76.97%. By discussing the independent analysis together, the researchers reached consensus on the categorizations for each response.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Using responses from Part A of the survey, Tables 1 through 3 present the means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages by rank. Several results are worth noting. First, there was little variability by rank except where expected (e.g., age, years of teaching, years at institution, salary, tenure, administration, would consider leaving). Second, although approximately 91% were untenured, over a third of the assistant professors had some administrative title. This has implications for the difficulty that some sport management faculty members may face when trying to meet tenure requirements. Third, the population was largely white (95.80%) and male (73.10%), which has implications for the ability of programs to hire a diverse faculty and points to unsuccessful attempts in recruiting minorities into sport management doctoral programs. Fourth, the base salaries for tenure-track faculty in the United States (see Table 3) started at \$45,001–50,000 for the assistant professor level and reached \$70,001–75,000 for the professor level. However, many appeared to make around \$5,000–10,000 above their base salary for other activities (e.g., summer school teaching). In addition, the relatively high standard deviations suggest salaries vary across universities. The salaries in Canada were generally higher at the upper ranks, but based on the exchange rate at the time of the study (about 1.4 Canadian dollars to 1 U.S. dollar), the pay was actually better in the United States.

Fifth, sport management faculty as a group did not appear to be interested in changing jobs frequently. The average number of institutions at which they worked was less than two ($M = 1.82$), they spent most of their careers at one institution (7.88 of 9.28 years teaching), over 25% indicated there was no possibility they would leave, and the remainder did not indicate a strong preference for moving ($M = 3.02$ on a scale of 1 to 5). Sixth, the average age was about 44 years old (the median was also 44 years old). Given the average number of years the respondents had been teaching, it appears typical faculty members began teaching in their mid-30s, and are many years away from retirement. Seventh, the means for the faculty members' comparisons of their teaching expectations, research expectations, and service expectations were near or above the average on a 5-point Likert scale, indicating they were slightly more likely to indicate that the expectations in these areas were higher at their current institution than the standard in the field. The mean for salary comparison was slightly below the midpoint on the scale, indicating that respondents were more likely to indicate that their pay was lower than the norm. However, there was some variability in the responses to these items (see Table 2).

Table 1 Number of Respondents and Percentages for Sport Management Faculty (*N* = 172)

Item	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Professor	Other	Total
Total	78 (45.30%)	41 (23.80%)	37 (21.50%)	16 (9.40%)	172
Tenured					
Yes	7 (8.97%)	31 (75.61%)	33 (89.19%)	3 (25.00%)	74 (44.05%)
No	71 (91.03%)	10 (24.39%)	4 (10.81%)	9 (75.00%)	94 (55.95%)
Administrator					
Program director	16 (20.51%)	10 (24.39%)	14 (37.84%)	7 (43.75%)	47 (27.30%)
Department chair	2 (2.56%)	4 (9.76%)	7 (18.92%)	1 (6.25%)	14 (8.10%)
Other	10 (12.82%)	10 (24.39%)	4 (10.81%)	2 (12.50%)	25 (15.20%)
Total	28 (35.90%)	24 (58.54%)	25 (67.57%)	10 (62.50%)	86 (50.00%)
Highest Degree					
Ph.D.	42 (53.85%)	26 (63.41%)	19 (51.35%)	4 (25.00%)	91 (52.90%)
Ed.D.	24 (30.77%)	9 (21.95%)	15 (40.54%)	1 (6.25%)	49 (28.50%)
J.D.	6 (7.69%)	3 (7.32%)	1 (2.70%)	0 (0.00%)	10 (5.80%)
Other terminal	1 (1.28%)	1 (2.44%)	1 (2.70%)	3 (18.75%)	6 (3.50%)
Master's	5 (6.41%)	2 (4.88%)	1 (2.70%)	8 (50.00%)	16 (9.30%)
Race					
White	68 (93.15%)	40 (97.56%)	36 (100.00%)	14 (93.33%)	158 (95.80%)
Other	5 (6.85%)	1 (2.44%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (6.67%)	7 (4.20%)
Gender					
Male	60 (77.92%)	25 (60.98%)	28 (75.68%)	12 (75.00%)	125 (73.10%)
Female	17 (22.08%)	16 (39.02%)	9 (24.32%)	4 (25.00%)	46 (26.90%)
Would Consider Leaving					
Yes	64 (82.05%)	28 (68.29%)	21 (56.76%)	15 (93.75%)	128 (74.40%)
No	14 (17.95%)	13 (31.71%)	16 (43.24%)	1 (6.25%)	44 (25.60%)

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations for Sport Management Faculty (N = 172)

Item	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Professor	Other	Total
Years at Current Institution	3.41 (4.69)	10.52 (8.79)	15.85 (8.57)	4.47 (6.29)	7.88 (8.52)
Number of Institutions	1.66 (0.76)	1.73 (0.76)	2.32 (2.99)	1.63 (0.96)	1.82 (1.56)
Number of Interviews	3.11 (2.30)	2.49 (2.08)	3.31 (4.79)	1.88 (1.71)	2.89 (2.93)
Years Teaching Sport Management	4.74 (3.29)	11.03 (6.37)	18.57 (7.89)	5.84 (5.67)	9.28 (7.74)
Classes Taught Per Term	2.76 (1.00)	2.41 (1.07)	2.60 (1.03)	2.63 (1.35)	2.63 (1.06)
Salary Comparison	2.92 (0.86)	2.80 (1.17)	3.15 (1.29)	2.31 (1.14)	2.89 (1.08)
Research Comparison	3.00 (1.32)	3.15 (1.22)	3.10 (1.33)	2.50 (1.55)	3.01 (1.32)
Teaching Comparison	3.46 (0.99)	3.32 (1.01)	3.60 (1.09)	3.44 (0.81)	3.45 (1.00)
Service Comparison	3.01 (0.93)	2.98 (0.88)	3.14 (0.90)	3.69 (1.08)	3.09 (0.94)
Likelihood of Leaving	3.11 (1.44)	2.79 (1.40)	3.00 (1.14)	3.07 (1.22)	3.02 (1.35)
Age	38.82 (7.46)	47.27 (7.28)	53.28 (7.30)	40.47 (13.50)	44.13 (9.93)

Table 3 Means and Standard Deviations for Salary by Rank ($N = 172$)

U.S. Job Rank	United States		Canada	
	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Range (U.S. \$)	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Range (CDN \$)
Lecturer/Instructor				
Base Salary	4.36 (4.32)	\$40,001–45,000	NA	NA
Total Salary	5.18 (4.31)	\$45,001–50,000	NA	NA
Assistant Professor				
Base Salary	5.40 (1.95)	\$45,001–50,000	4.00 (3.46)	\$40,001–45,000
Total Salary	6.70 (2.10)	\$50,001–55,000	4.00 (3.46)	\$40,001–45,000
Associate Professor				
Base Salary	7.51 (2.64)	\$55,001–60,000	10.67 (3.72)	\$70,001–75,000
Total Salary	8.91 (2.79)	\$60,001–65,000	10.67 (3.72)	\$70,001–75,000
Professor				
Base Salary	10.32 (3.69)	\$70,001–75,000	15.00 (3.00)	\$95,001–100,000
Total Salary	11.47 (3.48)	\$75,001–80,000	15.00 (3.00)	\$95,001–100,000

Factors Affecting Turnover Intentions

The results of the multiple regression analysis with four independent variables (perceptions of current research expectations in comparison with others, perceptions of current teaching expectations in comparison with others, perceptions of current service expectations in comparison with others, and perceptions of current salary in comparison with others) and “likelihood of leaving their current position” as the dependent variable were significant ($R^2 = 0.10$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.07$; $F(4, 123) = 3.356$, $p = .012$). However, research expectations ($\beta = .118$, $p = .226$), teaching expectations ($\beta = -0.050$, $p = .610$), and service expectations ($\beta = 0.073$, $p = .443$) were not significant, and the only significant predictor in the model was perceptions of their current salary in comparison with that of others ($\beta = -0.317$, $p > .001$). Moreover, none of the first three independent variables were significantly correlated with the dependent variable and the adjusted R^2 was highest when the current salary was the only independent variable ($R^2 = 0.09$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.08$; $F(1, 127) = 11.605$, $p > .001$). Overall, the analysis indicated that faculty who felt they were undercompensated in comparison to others indicated they were most likely to leave. However, only a small portion of the variance in likelihood of leaving was predicted by the salary comparison.

Factors Affecting the Likelihood of Taking a New Job

Table 4 presents means and standard deviations for the items in Part C and frequencies for the open-ended question in Part B. Only those participants ($n = 126$) who indicated they would be willing to leave their current position responded to these questions. An examination of the means indicated those items with the highest means were objective items, such as base pay ($M = 6.29$), location (town or city) ($M = 6.24$), and location (part of country) ($M = 6.23$). However, many subjective items were also rated as important, including organization cares about me ($M = 6.11$) and fit in the department or program ($M = 6.00$). However, the critical contact items generally had lower means, with only recruiter is informative ($M = 4.53$) and recruiter is positive and friendly ($M = 4.53$) above the midpoint of the scale. When the items were grouped under factors, those rated most important were location ($M = 6.20$), feelings of being wanted by the university ($M = 5.79$), rank/tenure ($M = 5.66$), compensation ($M = 5.62$), and satisfaction of work needs ($M = 5.56$). Most of Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeded .70 and all were above .60.

Perhaps the most interesting results from the comparison of the responses in Part B and Part C were the high levels of consistency on some items and the inconsistency on others. For example, the two most often mentioned terms were compensation (108) and location (97), which was very similar to the results from the quantitative section. Whereas a few open-ended responses appeared consistent with the ratings in Part C, a number of items evaluated highly in Part C were rarely mentioned in the open-ended section. In particular, satisfaction of work needs, rank/tenure, and wanted by the university were rarely or never mentioned. Respondents also generally ignored “work setting” items in the open-ended responses. This may indicate that even though these items are “important,” they are not as salient and do not outweigh other highly rated items, such as salary and location.

Table 4 Importance of Factors in Faculty Job Market (*N* = 126)

Factor	Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Open- Ended Responses
Location	.687	6.20	0.96	97
Location (town or city)		6.24	1.15	
Location (part of the country)		6.23	1.23	
Impact on Family		6.18	1.46	
Wanted by University	.713	5.79	1.01	0
Organization Cares About Me		6.11	1.02	
Feelings During the Interview		5.82	1.33	
Organization Wanted Me		5.44	1.42	
Compensation	.857	5.62	0.99	108
Base Pay		6.29	0.88	
Retirement Benefits		5.80	1.42	
Insurance Benefits		5.67	1.50	
Normal Pay Raises		5.59	1.26	
Cost of Living		5.44	1.27	
Relocation Costs		5.32	1.48	
Supplemental Pay		5.02	1.68	
Rank/Tenure	.764	5.66	1.17	14
Tenure Offered		5.75	1.43	
Tenure and Promotion Requirements		5.71	1.45	
Rank Offered		5.50	1.42	
Satisfaction of Work Needs	.833	5.56	1.13	4
Satisfy Work-Related Needs		5.76	1.27	
New Challenge		5.37	1.17	
Reputation	.805	5.37	1.12	56
Quality of Sport Management Faculty		5.89	1.17	
Reputation of the Program		5.15	1.42	
Reputation of the University		5.10	1.36	

(continued)

Table 4 (*continued*)

Factor	Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Open- Ended Responses
Teaching Workload Responsibilities	.606	5.20	0.88	66
Teaching Areas		5.89	1.16	
Number of Classes Taught		5.88	1.14	
Teaching Masters Students		5.22	1.57	
Teaching Only Sport Management		5.12	1.78	
Number of Sport Management Faculty		4.74	1.51	
Teaching Undergraduate Students		4.21	1.92	
Similarity of Goals/ Culture/Fit	.763	5.19	0.89	51
Fit in Department or Program		6.00	1.13	
Sport Management Goals		5.91	1.18	
Sport Management Faculty Goals		5.66	1.17	
University Goals		5.57	1.36	
Research Expectations		5.46	1.36	
Culture of Home Unit		5.33	1.43	
Consistency Between Views Home Unit		4.95	1.43	
Home Unit		4.52	1.93	
Carnegie Classification		3.62	1.80	
Research Opportunities	.704	5.11	1.21	56
Potential to Collaborate		5.60	1.24	
Research Support		5.20	1.47	
Teaching Doctoral Students		4.57	1.76	
Work Setting	.815	4.78	1.19	2
Computer and Technology Money		5.33	1.32	
Quality of Classrooms		4.69	1.47	
Quality of Office		4.42	1.39	
Leadership Opportunities	.770	4.16	1.73	12
Opportunity to Lead Program		4.40	1.86	
Administrative Possibilities		3.95	1.97	

Factor	Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Open- Ended Responses
Recruiter Approach	.844	4.04	1.28	0
Recruiter Is Informative		4.53	1.65	
Recruiter Is Positive and Friendly		4.53	1.60	
Recruiter Is Warm and Caring		3.86	1.57	
Recruiter Interpersonal Skills		3.84	1.49	
Recruiter Contacts Me First		3.54	1.81	
Recruiter Description	.788	2.85	1.15	0
Recruiter Has Similar Priorities		3.75	1.72	
Recruiter Title		2.87	1.62	
Recruiter Is a Friend		2.78	1.60	
Recruiter Is Similar to Me in Age		2.73	1.39	
Recruiter Is the Same Gender		2.20	1.53	

Discussion

The results provided a number of insights into the current faculty job market in sport management as well as implications for institutions seeking to fill sport management faculty positions and retain their current faculty. The results confirmed the difficulties faced by programs attempting to recruit sport management faculty (Mondello et al., 2002). In addition to the problems created by the low number of doctoral students produced each year (Mahony et al., 2004), sport management faculty do not appear to have a strong desire to change jobs and do not appear to change jobs frequently. Respondents worked at fewer than two institutions and were at their current institution for most of their careers. It is important to note, however, that the sample was relatively young (average age of around 44), so some may work at more institutions by the end of their career. Still, over 25% indicated they would not leave their jobs under any circumstances and even for those who indicated they would consider leaving, the likelihood was only about neutral. While the results certainly did not indicate getting sport management faculty to move was impossible, it is likely going to be difficult in many cases. This result is quite logical given the realities of the current job market. Because the faculty job market has been favorable for applicants a number of years (Mahony et al., 2004), most sport management applicants probably had a few job choices when they accepted their current position, so it is likely many were already able to accept positions favorable to them. Therefore, the fact the respondents did not indicate a strong desire to leave their current positions makes sense.

Suggestions for Universities

Based on the data from this survey, attracting experienced faculty in sport management is a challenge. Those seeking to increase diversity in their faculty face even greater challenges because of the high percentage of white males. However, the authors can provide a number of suggestions for search committees seeking to hire current sport management faculty and those trying to retain their current faculty. First, the analyses clearly indicated that financial compensation was important. The only factor that increased the likelihood of leaving a current position was the belief that one's salary was lower than the norm. This is consistent with previous research, which found positive relationships between pay and job satisfaction (Terpstra & Honoree, 2004) and job changes (Gomez-Mejia & Balkin, 1992). Although a number of items related to financial compensation were important, base pay had the highest mean among all items. This suggests being able to offer a competitive salary is important to the success of a search or in retaining a valuable faculty member. The data in Table 3 provides universities some valuable information about the "going rates," but sport management programs still may face difficulties convincing their universities to pay the higher rates. Whereas high enrollments in sport management programs could help the programs make this case, limited grant funding in sport management will make it difficult in some cases (Mondello et al., 2002). However, given the clear supply–demand imbalance in the sport management faculty job market, it is likely that candidates in sport management will be able to get higher salaries than faculty in areas where far more candidates than positions are available (e.g., history, English).

Second, location was clearly among the most important factors in each of the analyses. At first, location would appear to be an item beyond the control of the search committee (i.e., a university cannot change its location to please a potential candidate). However, the importance of location does suggest that when search committees are focusing on recruiting candidates, they should spend time focusing on the positives relative to their location (e.g., family friendly, cultural activities). A tour of the community, with a focus on its positive aspects, would appear to be critical in recruiting. Search committees must realize the importance of recognizing that different locations may appeal to different people, so the tour and positive aspects that the search committee focuses on may vary for different candidates. This suggests that getting to know potential candidates before the on-site interview will be very helpful so the search committee knows what to promote about the local community. This is not always easy because universities often have policies about the consistency of questions and the like presented to each candidate and some questions are not allowed (e.g., marital status and family). Still, many candidates share information about themselves with search committees even when the committee does not ask.

Third, other objective factors were also important. For example, respondents rated rank, tenure, and promotion issues as very important. Organizations may sometimes have to overreach with their offers to fill open positions. For example, offering a strong candidate an associate professor position instead of an assistant title may be important. However, the fact that few respondents identified these items in the open-ended section would indicate that rank/tenure/promotion issues may

not be as salient and are not likely to attract the best candidates without attention to other factors. Faculty members were also concerned with which classes they were going to teach, the number of classes they would teach, and the level of students with which they would be working. The responses to some of these items varied, suggesting that although some faculty may perceive working with undergraduate (or doctoral) students as a benefit, others may see this as a liability. In addition, providing support for research, including potential collaboration opportunities, was also important to candidates.

Fourth, while the objective factors of salary and location appeared to be the most important, some subjective items were also important. Faculty wanted to go where they were wanted, felt that they fit, and agreed with the goals of the hiring institution. The importance of these items suggests finding candidates who will fit in well with the organization and then clearly communicating to them how they will fit in and where their goals are consistent with the organizational goals. For example, the program may need someone with expertise in sport marketing. The program may want to focus on candidates with this specialization and then make sure the candidates understand this is where they will fit. It is also important the organization shows it cares about and wants the candidate. Contacting desired candidates personally as soon as the advertisement appears and then following up on a regular basis can help create this impression.

Fifth, faculty members value reputation factors, such as the quality of the current sport management faculty and the reputation of the program. In fact, respondents frequently cited reputation in the open-ended responses and more than half of these (30) mentioned the current faculty. After salary and location, current faculty was the third most often cited item. The importance of these factors indicated it may be easier for those programs that already “have” to get more (i.e., the rich get richer). This has two important implications. One, those programs “without” will have to be particularly creative and/or generous to attract good candidates. In fact, developing programs may want to try to bring in two candidates together instead of starting with only one and should try to use each candidate to help recruit the other. Two, the field may face a problem due to the best faculty clustering in a few programs. While one could argue that spreading the talent around would be best for developing the field, this will not likely occur given the desires of faculty and their ability to choose among many options. This trend may increase if the more prominent programs increase the size of their faculty over time.

Sixth, respondents did not rate all items as very important. In particular, the critical contact factors were not as important as the objective and subjective factors. Although this would appear to suggest the recruiter is not a critical factor, it is important to note that the current study looked at the faculty members’ perceptions of the importance of the recruiter in possible future positions, not the impact of the recruiter in past searches. If the survey asked faculty about the importance of the recruiter after an actual interview, the responses may have been different. Moreover, respondents rated the items related to similarities with the recruiter as less important than items focusing on the style of the recruiter, which were at least somewhat important. Future research should focus on faculty members’ reactions to actual interviews and the importance placed on recruiters in these situations.

In addition to the critical contact factors, respondents did not indicate work setting or leadership opportunities as very important in either set of responses. This suggests departments need not focus as much time and resources on improving the physical facilities. Whereas these items were somewhat important, the responses indicated these were not key items to applicants. In addition, search committees should approach the possibility of leadership opportunities with some caution. The large variability in responses indicated that while some candidates would want those opportunities, others clearly would rather avoid administrative responsibilities. Again, a search committee that understands the desires of the candidate, as well as the organization's needs, is in the best position to attract its top choice.

Finally, it is important to note the various subjective and objective factors may overlap in some cases. For example, offering candidates more money, rank, and/or tenure may be helpful in letting the candidates know the university wants them. Likewise, a university offering a larger salary to retain employees may increase its odds of success because the increased salary not only has economic benefits, but also demonstrates to employees their current university cares about them and wants to keep them.

Implications for Research Using the Job Choice Theory

The current study also has implications for future research on the job choice theory. In particular, the implications are greatest for research on higher education faculty. First, the study developed the first scale to measure the various factors within the job choice theory in a higher education setting. Although the scale needs additional analysis, most of the Cronbach alphas were above .70, so there does appear to be some potential for the items generated in the current study. Future research could refine this list of items and improve on this measure. In addition, future research could examine a larger population of faculty and perform a factor analysis to help develop a more sophisticated motivation scale for use across academic disciplines.

Second, the current study is the first to examine the importance of the factors in job choice theory within a higher education setting. Whereas the study only indicates how sport management faculty rated the importance of these factors, future research across disciplines could now examine differences in the relative importance of factors in various disciplines to determine whether the responses of sport management faculty are consistent with or different from faculty in other disciplines. If differences do exist, researchers could then start to determine what factors (e.g., job market supply/demand ratio, revenue-generating potential) may affect the importance of various factors. For example, it is possible that sport management faculty were able to focus on money and location because those who are willing to move are facing a favorable supply/demand ratio (i.e., the demand for sport management faculty far exceeds the supply). Faculty in job markets in which the supply/demand ratio is not in their favor may focus on different factors as being most important.

Third, the results of the current study indicated that future researchers should be cautious about using only Likert scale evaluations of each item. The current

study asked respondents to both rate the importance of items on a 7-point scale and list the three to five most important items. The findings indicated that some items rated as important on the 7-point scale were rarely or never mentioned in the open-ended listing question. Therefore, it appears possible that even though respondents may indicate that many things are very important, some items are the most important and researchers need to try to identify those items. For example, it may make sense to have respondents rank items in order of importance or have them evaluate descriptions of jobs in which these items are manipulated. Universities are always somewhat limited on what they can do to attract candidates, so finding the items most likely to impact decisions is important.

Finally, although the current study did not predict much of the variance in likelihood to leave, the results indicate that the items likely to attract faculty (i.e., salary) may also be important in trying to retain faculty. It follows that some other items within job choice theory may also affect decisions by faculty to stay at their current institution. Therefore, the scale in the current study developed to measure the factors that would appeal to faculty looking at a new position may also be useful in examining their attraction to their current job and better predict their likelihood of leaving. Again, since institutions have some limitations, understanding the factors that will help them retain their current sport management faculty will facilitate the effective administration and development of sport management programs.

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