The educational system within the United States creates many opportunities for youth sport programs to exist in our society (Covell, 2012). As such, these programs have a direct impact on the youth who participate and their families within communities. General participation from youth in sport seems as if it is a common rite and part of American culture as the numbers of participants within youth sport continually grow (Coakley, 2009). Although some may argue, reasons for the increased numbers of participation stem from the positive traits received from individuals participating within these athletic programs. Such positive traits learned within these programs are proper sport instruction, character building, and the avenue of sport as a bridge between childhood and adulthood (Hansen, Larson, & Dworkin, 2003).

Furthermore, one’s involvement within youth sport as an administrator, coach, or official may increase the positive traits received from overall involvement within youth sport. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that turnover and staffing may be a significant issue for youth sport officials (Yu, 2007). Therefore from a management perspective, recruitment, training, and retention of youth sport officials are salient to the continual growth of youth sport within our society.

The existence of these youth programs depend on proper management from administrators who oversee finances, facilities, and most importantly the human resources needed to execute these programs (Quinn, 1999). More specifically, it is pertinent that these administrators recruit individuals who can attempt to continually build a positive youth sport culture. Such a task has proven to be difficult, as budgetary constraints do not allow for a surplus of income for those who choose a career in youth sport (Wilcox, 2003). To overcome financial constraints, youth sport officials often turn to individuals who are willing to become involved in youth sport as an avocation. An avocation is briefly defined as a subordinate occupation an individual chooses to participate in, in addition to one’s primary employment (Eitzen, 1989). From this definition, many individuals who become involved in youth sport (e.g., officials) have professional careers outside of the avocation of choice. In addition, it can further be assumed that many of these individuals work in industries that demand attention and time resulting in minimal attention to other avenues of employment. As such, the primary demands of their professional careers often interfere with the secondary demands of the avocation resulting in high turnover in youth sport.

Many sport organizations, to a great extent, dedicate their planning hours into recruiting individuals who choose youth sport as an avocation (Eitzen, 1989). In addition, administrators in youth sport spend a great deal of time focusing on the coaching and player development. As a result, opportunities...
to play and receive formalized training in coaching seem to be readily available in many youth sport organizations. However, one such area of formalized training that is often neglected is that of officiating (i.e., referees). Arguably, officials are most important to youth sport contests aside from the coaches and the participant, as their primary focus is to provide an atmosphere of safety and fair play. Practitioners are not alone in their under examination of youth sport officials, scholars in sport management to a great extent have also focused much of their related works on coaches and player dynamics (Clopton, 2011; Cunningham & Sagas, 2004; Smith & Smoll, 1997; Turman, 2003). Currently, there is scant literature devoted to the individual outcomes of youth sport officials and their influence on the overall organization within youth sport. In general, it is relevant to these organizations to understand the attitudes and behaviors of youth sport officials whose primary careers are not in youth sport.

To that end, the primary focus of this study is to identify the influence of formalized training on quality of work outcome of youth sport officials. More specifically, it was the intent of this study to explore the influence of levels of formalized training on job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, and intentions to leave high school sports officiating. Presently, retaining individuals whose avocation of choice is officiating has proven difficult to many sport organizations (Kellet & Shilbury, 2007). Following relevant works within management (Badri, Davis, & Davis, 1995; Kathuria & Davis, 2001; Natarajan & Nagar, 2011), training is linked to influencing the aforementioned quality of work outcomes. Yet, these linkages have been studied in the general management context of full-time employees and have yet to be explored within an avocation. To that end, we intended to analyze the effects of formalized training on job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, and turnover intentions of high school sport officials.

Conceptual Framework

To examine the influence of training on job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, and turnover intentions, it is important to come to an understanding of each of these constructs. In addition, we intend to identify some of the relevant works completed utilizing these constructs and their association within the management literature. To date, there are many works dedicated to these constructs within and out of sport, but there is a dearth of literature dedicated to examining these constructs in the avocational context. We contended that there may be differences in attitudes and behaviors in the context of the avocation of youth sport officiating compared with those officials who choose to officiate as full-time employment.

Formalized Training

Sport organizations are heavily dependent on their human resources as the sport industry is very much a service industry (Chelladurai, 2006; Flagestad & Hope, 2001). To provide optimal service in all facets of the sport industry, each organization is vying for the best employees to create a premium product or service. The same holds true within youth sport as these organizations actively seek employees who can create an environment for safe youth sport participation. To offer an opportunity for youth to become involved, there is a need for everyone within the organization to work together as cohesively as possible. As such, the focus of many organizations and its managers should be the employees or those who are vested within the organization (Eys & Carron, 2001). To that end, formalized training of employees within the organization seems necessary in controlling quality, creating organizational culture, and retaining employees (Anderson, Rungtusanatham, Schroeder, & Devaraj, 2007). Furthermore, training employees leads to tenure and organizational commitment, which are both positive outcomes that improve quality and productivity within the organization (Chelladurai, 2006). Winterton (2004) suggested employees who are committed to the organization and have intentions to stay within the organization for an extended period of time seek training opportunities. These outcomes of training have been studied within a perspective of full-time employees within organizations in and outside of sport. Within the context of this study, it was the purpose to explore levels formalized training on individuals who are employed within an avocation of choice. Therefore, it is important to assess the amount of time dedicated to training on the avocation of youth sport officials in attempts to understand the influences of formalized training on quality of work outcomes. Job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, and intentions to leave the organization are pertinent quality of work outcomes that have been found to influence the individual and the overall quality and production of the overall organization (Judge, Thoresen, Carron, 2001). As such, each of the aforementioned constructs will be outlined in an attempt to illustrate the rationale of importance of training on these quality of work outcomes.

Job Satisfaction and Intentions to Leave

Scholars and practitioners alike have an esteemed interest in job satisfaction due to its association to the individual and organizational outcomes (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998). Hamermesh (2002) contended that job satisfaction is the most relevant construct used to measure the individual’s attitudes toward the job position, organization, and outside opportunities within the industry. From this, job satisfaction globally encompasses the individual’s attitudes and well-being gleaned from the job. Within the sport officiating context, the demands may be quite intense as officials not only adhere to the internal demands of the contest (e.g., fairness and player safety) but also the environmental extensions (e.g., coaches and fans) of the contest as well (Dale & Weinberg, 1990). As such, relevant works dedicated to job satisfaction have suggested that those who report lower
levels of job satisfaction have higher absenteeism and are more likely to leave the organization (Nagy, 2002). Furthermore, job satisfaction relates to overall firm performance as those firms who maintain a higher level of job satisfaction within their employees generally have higher productivity rates (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). Yet, within the context of this study, it was important to identify the influence of job satisfaction of individuals who were involved in youth sport officiating as an avocation. To date, there is a dearth of literature dedicated to this area of sport. Within the general business management literature, part-time workers are generally more dissatisfied with their jobs than full-time workers (Steffy & Jones, 2006). As such, it was deemed timely to identify job satisfaction levels of officials whose avocation is in youth sport. Reasons as to why part-time workers, or those employed within an avocation, may be understudied, is due to the general focus of scholars on full-time management and those positions occupied by full-time employees (e.g., coaches). Within the avocation of officiating, turnover of officials may create instability from season to season resulting in diluting the quality of officiating within youth sport. As aforementioned, officiating is dire to the safety and overall execution of the contest, thus quality and experience are a necessity. Within this sport context, it is pertinent to identify the levels of job satisfaction of youth sport officials, as differential management strategies may be needed for the development and retention of qualified officials.

**Pay Satisfaction and Intentions to Leave**

Similar to job satisfaction, pay satisfaction of an individual has been a principal focus of work quality outcomes of many organizational behavior researchers. Griffith, Hom, and Gaetner (2000) contended that pay satisfaction is linked to individual turnover intentions, which is of much concern to youth sport organizations as many individuals within the avocation of youth sport have low retention rates. In addition, relevant works within pay satisfaction suggest that the individual utilizes social referents to determine satisfaction with pay (Ryan & Sagas, 2009; Williams, McDaniel, & Nguyen, 2006). For example, individuals assess their pay satisfaction based on their individual contributions (e.g., hours worked) and compensation to those of other employees who perform similar job duties. Furthermore, pay satisfaction is often a measure of what one receives in comparison with what they would like to receive (Tang, 1995). As such, pay satisfaction is heavily reliant upon distributive justice within the profession. This example of pay satisfaction fits well when analyzing individuals who are in a job that is outside their primary career choice, as these individuals may value their extra time expecting to be compensated according to their hours devoted to officiating in youth sport. Alternatively, within the framework of this particular study, these individuals choosing to officiate as an avocation may have different perspectives in pay satisfaction. For example, a sport official whose primary profession is in litigation may not be concerned with the amount of money earned within a season of officiating, and may not use social referents as a basis of pay satisfaction. This individual may be involved in youth sport officiating as an escape from the rigorous demands of their primary employment, but still may have an optimal level of pay that will satisfy their efforts within the avocation of officiating. As such, it is important to explore pay satisfaction within the avocation of sport officials and its relationship, if any, to formalized training of sport officials.

**Method**

**Participants**

This study was part of a larger investigation that examined perceptions of high school officiating as an avocation. In this portion of the study, only volleyball and basketball officials were selected as an appropriate sample due to similarities in seasonal play, the number of opportunities to officiate games, and the total number of officials available to officiate during these seasons. Furthermore, basketball and volleyball serve as ideal sports because opportunities to officiate for women are higher than other sports such as high school football (Casey, 1992). A large Southwestern state was chosen for its availability and size. The state high school officiating association’s member database was used to contact officials via broadcast email asking them to respond to the web-based survey (n = 1,075). After 2 weeks had passed, a second broadcast email was sent out as a reminder and prompt to respond to the web-based questionnaire. Of this sample, between volleyball and basketball officials, n = 926 usable responses were gathered, resulting in an approximate 86% response rate. A large portion of those officials who responded were male 83% (n = 770). In addition, a large number of the respondents classified themselves as Caucasian 62.5% (n = 575), while 20.8% (n = 191) classified themselves as African American, 15.5% (n = 138) Asian, 0.8% (n = 8) Latino, and 0.4% (n = 4) as Other.

**Measures**

All participants who completed the questionnaire were asked to respond to demographic questions (sex, ethnicity, age) and to respond to items related to satisfaction with their jobs, pay, and intentions to leave the avocation of officiating. All multi-item measure items were measured utilizing a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). In addition, respondents were asked to approximate the number of hours per season dedicated to training within their avocation. Forty hours was used as the dividing time as it most was closest to the middle point for dividing officials into two groups. Those officials who dedicated less than 40 hr were categorized into a “low training group” (n = 492), whereas...
those officials who spent 40 or more hours were categorized into a “high training group” \((n = 434)\).

Job satisfaction was assessed with three items based on Hackman and Oldham’s (1975) measure. An example item from the scale is “All in all I am satisfied with my job.” The reliability estimate produced by the scale for this sample was \((\alpha = .81)\) and is considered acceptable.

To assess pay satisfaction, the Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire (Judge & Welbourne, 1994) was utilized. An example item from the four-item scale is “All in all I am satisfied with my take home pay.” As with the job satisfaction construct, the reliability of the multi-item scale for this sample was \((\alpha = .77)\) and is considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Finally to measure individual respondent’s intentions to leave the avocation of officiating, turnover intentions were measured through a three-item scale (Jaros, 1997). An example item from the turnover intentions scale is “All in all I often think about leaving the avocation of officiating.” The construct reliability for this particular sample was \((\alpha = .88)\).

### Data Analysis

As noted above, reliability estimates (Cronbach’s \(\alpha\)) were computed for each of the multi-item measures on the questionnaire, and means and standard deviation were calculated for the multi-item measures. See Table 1 for these descriptive statistics, including correlations and reliability estimates. To explore the relationships between levels of formalized training on the quality of work outcomes, we conducted a three-way MANOVA. This analysis was deemed appropriate due to the number of the dependent variables (DVs) under study, and the differences in levels of formalized training (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). The level of formalized training served as the independent variable (IV), whereas job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, and intentions to leave were operationalized as the DVs.

### Results

The MANOVA procedures revealed a significant multivariate effect for the three latent variables as a group in relation to the level of training of the officials within the data set Wilks’s \(\lambda = .96, F(3, 922) = 14.14, p < .001\). Results indicated significant effects for level of formalized training with respect to job satisfaction, \(F(1, 924) = 19.68, p < .001, \eta^2 = .02\); pay satisfaction, \(F(1, 924) = 14.04, p < .001, \eta^2 = .02\); and intentions to leave the avocation of officiating, \(F(1, 916) = 7.37, p < .01, \eta^2 = .01\). From these results, we were able to identify officials who were in the high-level training groups \((M = 6.37, SD = 0.58)\) were more satisfied with their avocation, than those who were in the low training group \((M = 6.18, SD = 0.58)\). In addition, officials who were in the high training group \((M = 3.29, SD = 1.12)\) were less satisfied with their pay, whereas those in the low training group \((M = 3.56, SD = 1.14)\) showed signs of higher pay satisfaction. Finally, in regard to intentions to leave the avocation, officials in the high training group \((M = 2.36, SD = 1.27)\) were overall less likely to leave officiating, whereas those in the low training group \((M = 2.59, SD = 1.28)\) were more likely to leave the avocation.

### Discussion

The results of this study suggest that formalized training correlates with various meaningful work outcomes. Small but significant effects were observed between an official’s training amount and their job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, and intention to leave the officiating profession. These results suggest some alignment with past research, and should be of some significance to administrators. One possible interpretation of the results is that those officials with higher level of training experience significantly more job satisfaction, have lower turnover intentions, but also greater dissatisfaction with pay.

In inspecting the results for each DV, the outcome aligns with past research in that individuals who receive more training often report greater job satisfaction, and thus, lower turnover intentions (Natarajan & Nagar, 2011). Moreover, and of interest, is that referees who have logged more hours in training may feel that they should be paid more. This can be seen as confirmation with some organizational justice theories in satisfaction (DeConick & Stillwell, 2004), where individuals feel satisfaction when their inputs are approximately equal to what they receive. Likewise, those officials who are in the lower training group reported greater satisfaction with pay.

Unfortunately, the relationship between training and the three examined outcomes need to be evaluated together, and not individually. This justifies looking at the unusual findings of those in the higher training group reporting lower pay satisfaction. However, as might be expected, higher training correlated with higher job satisfaction. This unusual relationship may be partially due to the avocation nature of officials, as referees may enjoy the work they are doing, but may not feel they are adequately rewarded for the hours and training that they put into their work. In addition, it is worth noting that officials, like many volunteers, have some amount of

### Table 1. Correlations Between Measures.

| Variable               | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
|------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| 1. Job satisfaction    | .81|    |    |    |
| 2. Pay satisfaction    | .15**| .77|    |    |
| 3. Intentions to leave | -.46**|-.17**|.88|    |
| 4. Training groups     | .14**|-.12**|-.09*|    |
| \(M\)                  | 6.26| 3.46| 2.49| 0.47|
| \(SD\)                | 0.68| 1.12| 1.30| 0.50|

Note. Cronbach’s alpha on diagonal.
*p < .01. **p < .001.
control of when they work, and as important, when they do not work. In this way, they may act as free agents, as they may have some autonomy in selecting the schools, conferences, and sports that they work with. From a theoretical perspective, this research is significant as it looks at pay and job satisfaction in jobs that are avocations, and it is suggested here that from a theoretical and practical perspective, the levers that motivate and satisfy workers will not be similar.

In addition, this research is quite meaningful in sport organizations as many operate with a significant number of volunteers or part-time workers (Chelladurai, 2006). It is quite possible that many workers within sport enter to be involved with the teams, kids, organizations, or sport, and while pay might not be necessary to retain these employees, training may improve satisfaction for these workers. Therefore, a meaningful application for this research is for managers to invest in training for officials, coaches, and volunteers, especially when pay is limited or control by school or organizational limits.

Furthermore, it is suggested that much of this research could be replicated to youth, high school, and college coaches who enjoy investing time and energy into a sport organization, and find their work satisfying, yet might find that the pay received for their job is not aligning with their perceptions of their inputs (Covell, 2012). Again, it is suggested that for these individuals, when pay is limited, training and other items may help compensate, and further research could be done on what areas help satisfy coaches, officials, and others in avocation-type jobs when pay is limited. In addition, it would be interesting to see what effect role salience has on officials as we suggest that individuals who identify stronger with their role of official also are the ones more likely to receive extra training and greater satisfaction in the job they do. It is suggested that future research examine similar constructs among high school coaches as many of these coaches will work a full-time job in teaching, but identify with, further training in, and find more satisfaction within their part-time coaching role (Ryan & Sagas, 2006).

A main strength to this research is the examination of a prominent cog of the athletic event—the official. While other researchers have examined the athlete and the coach, examination of officials has not been undertaken. We hope that this research is foundational, not only for officials but also for studying quality of work factors for those in a part-time job or avocation. An additional strength is the large sample size and high response rate from the officials. However, as with any research, limitations should be considered when evaluating results. One limitation is the limited amount of variance explained for each of the DVs as $R^2 = 2\%$ for largest value. In addition, the cross-sectional nature of web-based survey would suggest stronger results may be found with longitudinal research.

As mentioned above, future research should consider examination of other groups within sport who work full-time jobs, but work part-time jobs within sport. Within this, an examination of role salience might be a meaningful area to consider, especially when considering quality of work outcomes like job satisfaction, organizational and occupational commitment, and turnover intentions.

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