



2008-12-04

Work is Fun: The Phenomenon of Boys Enjoying Work in a Camp Setting

Zina Lenore Bennion

Brigham Young University - Provo

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Recreation Business Commons](#)

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Bennion, Zina Lenore, "Work is Fun: The Phenomenon of Boys Enjoying Work in a Camp Setting" (2008). *All Theses and Dissertations*. 1605.

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/1605>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

“WORK IS FUN”: THE PHENOMENON OF BOYS ENJOYING WORK
IN A CAMP SETTING

by

Zina L. Bennion

A thesis submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

Department of Recreation Management & Youth Leadership

Brigham Young University

December 2008

Copyright © 2008 Zina L. Bennion

All Rights Reserved

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Zina L. Bennion

This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

Date

Patti Freeman, Chair

Date

Mark Widmer

Date

Stacy Taniguchi

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the thesis of Zina L. Bennion in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

Date

Patti Freeman
Chair, Graduate Committee

Accepted for the Department

Date

Patti Freeman, Chair
Department of Recreation Management
& Youth Leadership

Accepted for the College

Date

Gordon B. Lindsay, Associate Dean
College of Health and Human Performance

ABSTRACT

“WORK IS FUN”: THE PHENOMENON OF BOYS ENJOYING WORK IN A CAMP SETTING

Zina L. Bennion

Department of Recreation Management and Youth Leadership

Master of Science

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived outcomes of participation in a summer camp that included physical work and service as a major component. A qualitative data analysis approach was used. A convenience sample of 10 male adolescents and 10 parents were selected. The data were analyzed using open, axial, and selective coding. Data analysis was used to ascertain perceived outcomes from the program from both boys and their parents. Analysis of the data showed the emergence of a core theme of boys learning to work and enjoying work. *Enjoying work* was the gerund chosen to represent this core theme, and a theory of enjoying work was developed with seven salient attributes. These attributes were that the work was productive and taught skills, provided challenge, was intrinsically rewarding, made a difference for someone else, was done with others, was physical and done outdoors, and took place over an extended period of time.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the many people, places and things that have contributed to my success in finishing this project. First of all Dr./Ms./Sister Patti Freeman thank you so much for your patience, discerning eye, and endless humor. Thank you for helping in my entity moments to see the incremental perspective. I will miss our talks about my “thesis”. Also thanks to Dr. Mark Widmer for introducing me to positive psychology and being willing to go qualitative. Thanks also to Dr. Stacy Taniguchi for helping me start the whole thing, and especially for letting me use your computer. Thanks to all my professors at BYU for being inspiring, dedicated, and challenging. I have loved my time and work here. Big thanks to Paula Curtis for all the girl talk, friendship, and recipes. And of course a great big Palangi hug to my girl Irene Fotu—the other half of my brain. Thank you for so many long hours, hard work, hysterical moments and support. You showed me how it’s done. Thanks to the many other wonderful grad students who have shown the way and been great friends. Special thanks to my parents for their continual support, and for teaching by example to do what I love. I love you both so much. Also thanks to the many friends who have lived with me, and been by my side through this process. Reuben, Hans, and Momo, you guys are my ace team. Thanks also to Lowell, Eric, & Adam, for dreaming the dream and letting me be a part of it. And most of all, I express gratitude to my Heavenly Father who has given me so many opportunities and blessed my life continually. I hope this work contributes to the cause.

Table of Contents

“Work is Fun”: The Phenomenon of boys Enjoying Work in a Camp Setting

Abstract.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Methods.....	10
Results.....	14
Discussion.....	30
Implications for Enjoying Work.....	36
Recommendations for Future Research.....	37
Conclusion.....	38
References.....	39
Appendix A Prospectus.....	44
Introduction.....	45
Review of Literature.....	54
Methods.....	76
References.....	84
Appendix A-1a Consent Forms.....	92
Appendix A-1b Interview Prompt Questions.....	97

Running head: WORK IS FUN

“Work is Fun”: The Phenomenon of Boys Enjoying Work in a Camp Setting

Zina L. Bennion

Brigham Young University

2 Work is Fun

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived outcomes of participation in a summer camp that included physical work and service as a major component. A qualitative data analysis approach was used. A convenience sample of 10 male adolescents and 10 parents were selected. The data was analyzed using open, axial, and selective coding. Data analysis was used to ascertain perceived outcomes from the program from both boys and their parents. Analysis of the data showed the emergence of a core theme of boys learning to work and enjoying work. *Enjoying work* was the term chosen to represent this core theme, and a theory of enjoying work was developed with seven salient attributes. These attributes were that the work was productive and taught skills, provided challenge, was intrinsically rewarding, made a difference for someone else, was done with others, was physical and done outdoors, and took place over an extended period of time.

Key Words: adolescence, enjoying work, physical work, recreational summer camp program, service, flow theory, character strengths

Introduction

In past generations physical work and its inherent challenges and rewards were often part of youths' lives (Conger & Elder, 1994). Working around the house was a typical part of daily life, whether it was done through helping in the garden, cooking from scratch, cleaning, animal care, or a host of other chores. Also, many youth were expected to work to contribute to their family's income, and many of these jobs included physical labor. Although household chores are still expected of youth in most homes today, the types and extent of work have changed substantially, and often do not include any challenging physical work (Goodnow, 1988).

Lowell Bennion noticed this change even in the 1950s, and as a father, he worried his sons and their peers, growing up in an urban environment, would miss the benefits of challenging work and outdoor recreational activities. He dreamed of having a ranch where adolescent boys could come and participate in hard physical work, like he had enjoyed as a boy working on his uncle's farm (Bennion, 1995b). In 1960, Bennion's dream was realized in the creation of the Bennion Teton Boys Ranch (BTBR) located in Victor, Idaho. During the last 40 years, over 1,000 boys, ages 12-15 have come to work, play, and grow at Bennion's Ranch. The self-proclaimed purpose of his ranch was "building boys into self-respecting and self-reliant men" (Bradford, 1995, p. 198).

In 2003, Birch Creek Service Ranch (BCSR), another program based on Bennion's philosophy, was established in Spring City, Utah (Peterson & Bateman, 2006). Birch Creek Service Ranch has the same daily schedule of BTBR with four hours of work in the morning (with many of the work projects including community service);

4 Work is Fun

outdoor recreation and arts in the afternoon; and discussions, cultural presentations, and games in the evenings. While there may be positive outcomes for youth who participate in this unique program, little research has been done to examine the influence physical work done in a recreational setting on youth. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to determine perceived outcomes of participating in a three-and-a-half week session of the BCSR camp program from the perspective of the participants (campers) and their parents. A phenomenological approach based on semi structured, in-depth interviews were used.

Review of Literature

To better understand, interpret, and explain the findings, literature concerning Positive youth development (PYD), service/volunteerism in youth, and physical work in adolescence was examined.

Positive Youth Development

Since the 1950s, major federal funding initiatives have been developed to intervene in a large range of specific problems youth encounter such as drug abuse, poor academic performance, and other delinquent behavior (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004; Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003). In the 1980s, the first preventative measures were introduced with a focus on helping youth before problems occurred. These efforts lacked a theoretical basis, however, and both treatment and prevention programs usually focused on a single issue such as substance abuse, or promiscuity.

Over time, drawing from longitudinal studies that indicated predictors for negative behavior, practitioners, policy makers, and prevention researchers began to

realize the interrelatedness of many negative issues and recognized that a single-issue behavior focus did not suffice in research or programming (Catalano et al., 2004; Lerner et al., 2003). They also found that focusing on positive development programs inherently reduced the risk of problem outcomes. They realized a successful transition to adulthood involved more than an avoidance of negative behaviors (drugs, violence, failure in school, etc.), and found that attention to a child's emotional, cognitive and social development was key to prevention and promotion (Catalano et al.).

Subsequent to these observations came an influx of youth development programs in private, public, and government sectors. Although many of these programs seemed to produce some positive outcomes, their effectiveness was not empirically known (Park, 2004b). Without a unifying theoretical foundation, and measures to assess outcomes, it was difficult to determine the efficacy of these varied programs (Park, 2004a, 2004b; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

In an effort to provide unification and promote effective programs, leading scientists met with government planning and evaluation staff to create an operational definition of Positive Youth Development (PYD). The interdisciplinary field of PYD centers on the individual child's distinctive strengths, talents, potential, and interests rather than the approaches that focus on problems youth often encounter (e.g., substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, learning disabilities, etc.) (Damon, 2004; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

6 Work is Fun

Service/Volunteerism in Youth

Youth volunteerism and various service activities play an important role in the field of PYD. Elements of service have been used in a variety of programs and a number of positive outcomes have been evaluated. A qualitative study by Arai and Pedlar (1997) examined volunteerism as a leisure activity. Some perceived benefits of participating in volunteerism that they found were acquiring and improving skills, making an observable difference through group cooperation and work, and being a part of community development (Arai & Pedlar; Palmer, 2005; Wilson, 2000). Additionally, Wilson found that “positive effects are found for life-satisfaction, self-esteem, self-rated health, and for educational and occupational achievement, functional ability, and mortality,” (p. 215), through involvement in volunteerism and service amongst youth.

Serving with others, especially adults, has proven to help make the service experience more meaningful for youth. Littlepage, Obergfell, and Zanin (2003) determined that when volunteering with family members or other adults, adolescents’ values were strengthened as they saw real life examples of values in action. Adolescents who volunteered with adult role models were also more likely to continue a tradition of service and volunteerism throughout their lives (Bowen & Mckechnie, 2002; Littlepage, Obergfell, & Zanin). Similarly, research on physical work and youth showed that working with parents or other adults contributed to a transferring of positive values (Conger & Elder, 1994).

Physical Work in Adolescence

Very little research examines physical work in adolescent development. Literature addressing the concept of work ethic was examined, as well as a small amount of research regarding youth and farm work (Conger & Elder, 1994; Larson & Dearthmont, 2002). In addition, family work literature contains some work regarding youth learning to value physical work (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995; Bahr & Loveless, 2000; Manwaring & Bahr, 2003; Palmer, 2005).

Youth and work ethic. Researchers have shown that teaching work ethic values to youth has positive benefits. A higher quality of life, development of self-discipline, job satisfaction, and internalization of values are among the benefits of a strong work ethic (Cherrington, 1980). A strong work ethic was also found to decrease delinquent behavior in youth (Axelsson, Andersson, Hakansson, & Ejlertsson, 2005).

Giving adolescents opportunities to participate in menial and difficult tasks are integral in helping them learn the importance of work and develop a work ethic that will help them succeed in future vocations (Cherrington, 1980). Today, many youth are lacking in these types of experiences and are at a disadvantage when it comes to reaping the benefits of a strong work ethic. Geoffrey Canada (1998), observed that many boys have, "...no real understanding of what hard work means. This is a tremendous handicap" (pp. 27-28). Canada admonished parents and other youth leaders to give youth real jobs that will teach them the value of hard work. In former times, children were introduced to work in the home early on, usually in an agricultural setting.

Youth and farm work. At the turn of the 20th century, farm work was a part of

8 Work is Fun

most children and adolescents' lives. Today, very few children grow up on a farm and the general stereotype for those who do is that they are at a disadvantage in terms of social, academic, and extracurricular activities (Canada, 1998; Cherrington, 1980; Conger & Elder, 1994). In a longitudinal study looking at adolescents in rural farming communities, however, Conger and Elder argued that farm life did not limit youth but rather supplied them with unique experiences that separated them from their urban peers. They asserted that youth in farming communities gained strong work ethics, determination, and often, religious, or ethical values as a result of their participation in the family farm. They also found that real and challenging tasks, with real consequences, increased resiliency and self-efficacy (Conger & Elder).

Larson and Dearthmont (2002) found that farming parents often trusted their adolescent children's opinions, and counseled with them about real issues and decisions concerning the farm. The responsibility and trust given to farm children helped build strong values of hard work, self-reliance, responsibility, and commitment to family and community (Conger & Elder, 1994; Larson & Dearthmont).

Family work. Since the turn of the century technological advances have replaced necessary household tasks such as gardening, washing dishes by hand, cooking from scratch, etc. with easier options. Lee (1960) stressed the importance of finding ways to replace the valuable components that were inherent in household work, (such as industry, time spent together, family responsibility, and skills learned), which have been neglected due to modern conveniences. She advocated finding ways to compensate for the meaning of simple tasks through other family work.

More recently, Manwaring and Bahr (2003) differentiated between a “moral” (family members exhibit altruism through their concern for the well-being of each other) and an “economic” (autonomy and self-interest dictate inter-familial relationships, which are based on principles of exchange and profit) approach to family work (p. 3). In an economic approach, work was viewed only as a means to meeting an end, and was done for exacting trades of money or reward. Researchers found that when family work was approached from the economic vantage point the “invisible household production” (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995, p. 26) was missed. This invisible production occurred in conjunction with the performance of physical tasks and yielded “more important family-building and character development” (Ahlander & Bahr, p. 26). This is where the real value of family work was found; in the links between family members that were forged through joint effort and cooperation, as they helped one another through daily tasks that sustained the family (Ahlander & Bahr). Family work that involves the combined effort of all members, has a real and meaningful result (like building a new fence, cleaning windows, or harvesting and eating vegetables from the family garden), and strengthens relationships through cooperation and communication (Ahlander & Bahr; Goodnow, 1988; Palmer, 2005).

The literature showed that positive outcomes for youth have been linked to elements found in areas of service and volunteerism, and work. These positive benefits help in understanding components that may be important in PYD programs. The review of literature served to sensitize me to the phenomenon I was researching and promoted theoretical sensitivity (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This sensitization helped me better

10 Work is Fun

understand the data and give meaning to them through analysis (Palmer, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Methods

Rationale for Qualitative Approach

The Positive Youth Development Movement is driven by a need to assess the wide range of youth programming in America today, both those with and without theoretical underpinnings, and to determine outcomes that are related to various types of programs (Berman & Davis-Berman, 2000a; Duerden, 2006). Currently, there is little, if any research on positive, preventative programs that integrate physical work activities, service projects and recreation; nor is there a guiding theory based on such programs. Therefore, a grounded theory approach, based on in-depth interviewing, was employed to investigate this program.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) stated that grounded theory is, “theory that was derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process” (p. 12). Grounded theory moves beyond mere description and attempts to give “a conceptual theory abstract of time, place and people” (Strauss & Corbin, p. 12). Grounded theory is intended to create concepts, conceptually label the data, assign interpretations to the data, and construct explanatory frameworks from the data. Specific steps are employed in grounded theory, similar to those used in a quantitative study including: (a) determining the research problem and question, (b) becoming sensitive to salient theories through a review of literature, (c) coding data, and (d) analyzing the coded data (Henderson, 1991; Palmer, 2005).

Program Description

Birch Creek Service Ranch (BCSR) was founded in 2003 as a non-profit summer camp program for youth, ages 12-15. Birch Creek Service Ranch patterns its programming and objectives after Bennion's goals and values with the aim of helping youth develop into hard-working, well-rounded, service-oriented, competent individuals (Peterson & Bateman, 2006). Up to 25 campers voluntarily attend one of the two three-and-a-half week summer sessions. Each day the same daily schedule is followed. Campers participate in work crews (3-6 boys per crew) for four hours in the morning. Approximately one-third of the projects take place on the ranch and consist of anything from lodge crew (which includes doing breakfast dishes, cleaning, and cooking) to helping build a pigpen. The remaining two-thirds of the work projects are comprised of work done for members of the local community. These jobs range from bucking bales of hay, building fences, moving pipe, or helping a widow clean out her old barn. In the afternoons, the boys choose one of several options of activities that include both outdoor recreational activities and arts and crafts. In the evenings, the campers have a group activity that usually involves a guest performer, speaker, or artist who leads them in a discussion or project. On weekends, they go backpacking in various wilderness areas in Utah.

Selection of Participants

Boys and parents who participated in BCSR during the summers of 2007 and 2008 were invited to participate in the study. The participants self selected, and as they volunteered, they were contacted to schedule an interview. Because participants self-

12 Work is Fun

selected, it may be that only boys who had a positive experience volunteered. Those who had a bad experience may not have chosen to participate. The implication of this is that results of this study may not represent an accurate sample of the population.

A total of 10 boys and 10 parents participated in this study. Specific criteria for boys and their parents were (a) they had participated in either the first or second session of BCSR in the summer of 2007 or 2008 for the full three-and-a-half weeks, and (b) either one or both parents were willing to participate. The campers were between the ages of 12 and 15. There were two sets of brothers in the study and they were interviewed separately. Of the parents, seven were mothers and three were fathers. In three instances, both parents of the campers were interviewed. Out of the 10 boys, three had attended BCSR once, five had attended twice, and the remaining two had attended three times. A high percentage of campers return each year, so these campers were not unusual in having come more than once. Participants were of white ethnicity and from a middle- to upper-middle class economic background. Pseudonyms are used in the reporting the results.

Data Collection and Analysis

Semi-structured interviews using open-ended and standardized questions were conducted to collect data (Henderson, 1991; Palmer, 2005). The interviews were done face-to-face and lasted approximately 45 minutes. Questions were asked about all aspects of the BCSR program. As interviews were conducted they were transcribed and coded so as to inform the subsequent interviews and to determine when saturation was achieved. In this study, saturation occurred when no new themes or descriptive codes emerged from

new data entering the analysis. Saturation in the data was achieved with ten campers and ten parents.

QSR NVivo computer program was used to organize and code the data. The transcribed interviews were analyzed using line-by-line coding to conceptualize the observed phenomenon and establish specific categories and subcategories. Next, categories were combined and then compared to each other through the process of axial coding. This process helped identify connections between codes and helped in drawing larger categories and conclusions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Through this process of open and then axial coding, a central category emerged. Various techniques were employed to facilitate the emergence of a central category such as seeking to move the data from description to conceptualization and writing the data and codes out in a diagram or chart. Strauss and Corbin assert that the core variable does not have to be a “basic psychological process” (p. 123), but rather is “at the heart of the integration process. It is the essential cement in putting together . . . all the components of the theory” (p. 124).

Trustworthiness of the data was established through meeting the criteria for evaluation of the data. Strauss and Corbin (1998) outlined these criteria as the validity, reliability, and credibility of the data. Validity, reliability and credibility were addressed through a prolonged engagement with the data, cross-checking codes with the interviews, and member checking (Henderson, 1991). Member checking took place as participants were provided with copies of the results section and asked if the insights accurately reflected their experience (Fetterman, 1998).

Results

One of the main core variables that emerged from the data was the importance and influence of enjoying the physical work component of camp. As the data were coded and analyzed, it was somewhat surprising and interesting to note how often work was referred to and with such emphasis and positive sentiment. Greg emphatically stated, “The working is my favorite!” Mark felt that “without the work there’s no, there’s really no point.” Another commented, “It [the ranch] wouldn’t be the same [without work]. I think that that’s the point, why you go. Otherwise it would just be another summer camp. The working I think is maybe what is the more meaningful part of the ranch” (Bobby). Work even seemed to be the draw of the program, “The work is really what got me to go in the first place and probably the biggest reason why I came back was because I like it and I just really like the work and it wouldn’t be the same without it.” “Fun,” “my favorite,” “gratifying,” “enjoy,” and even “love” were words used by campers to describe their feelings for the work projects. Parents also commented on the importance of the work. Mr. and Mrs. George reported that for their son “work was the number one thing” that he talked about and enjoyed during his experience.

The term ‘enjoying work’ was adopted to describe this phenomenon that was central to the boys’ experience. This name synthesized the core experience the participants reported. Enjoying work goes beyond the emotion of fun, to a deeper and more gratifying level. When the campers used words like fun and enjoy to describe the work, they were describing a feeling different from the kind of fun they have at home playing video games, or even the fun they described in the recreational and other

activities at the ranch. The enjoyment they experienced came from a deep sense of satisfaction and accomplishment that seemed to be long lasting in its effects. Peter stated, “When I’m down there [the ranch] I work harder and when I come home I have the same passion for work . . . it’s [work at the ranch] made work more enjoyable.” Therefore, the idea of enjoying work connotes both learning to work hard, and the enjoyment that springs from the deep satisfaction, sense of accomplishment and ‘good feeling’ the campers described; or as Lowell Bennion put it, “The joy of honest labor” (Bradford, 1995, p. 201). Enjoying work takes place when the work is meaningful and gratifying.

These results seem almost oxymoronic in light of the usually negative association between teens and physical work. In this study the negative comments made about work had only to do with a particular project someone did not like doing; or environmental challenges such as being out in the hot sun. Parents commented that when their children came home they were physically exhausted. None of these comments, however, derailed the over-riding enjoyment of and value placed on the work experience.

The overwhelming sentiments in regards to work were positive. One participant acknowledged the seeming paradox of teens enjoying work in saying, “I think it’s kind of weird cause when I’m down there I enjoy working hard” (Peter). It was difficult for the participants to describe why work was enjoyable, or fun, to them. Mark described trying to tell his friends about the ranch:

It is really hard to describe because you know, you’re describing it as work that is fun, and that’s the simplest way to describe it. A lot of my friends are kind of

16 Work is Fun

confused when I describe it to them because . . . they don't understand how that could be fun, waking up at six to go work.

Upon further examination of the data, several key mechanisms, or attributes, emerged that explained the phenomenon of enjoying work. Through the process of axial and selective coding, seven mechanisms that contributed to enjoying work became apparent: (a) the work produced something and skills were learned, (b) the work was challenging, (c) the work was intrinsically rewarding, (d) the work made a difference for someone else, (e) there was a social element to the work, (f) the work was physical and outdoors, and (g) the boys participated in doing work for an extended period of time and was not over-structured or supervised. In conjunction with these attributes, both campers and parents also discussed the benefits they perceived as resulting from aspects of enjoying work.

The Work Taught Skills and Produced Something

When asked to describe their favorite work projects, participants would often list jobs in which they learned specific skills; such as framing a room, digging fence post holes and making a fence, chopping wood, building rock walls, driving a tractor, or bucking hay. Jim said, "I liked building the fence . . . I got to learn all these different things about building."

Producing visible outcomes was also described as enjoyable or meaningful, and was most commonly linked to work done on the ranch property. The participants found producing something that would be there for years to come was a compelling and meaningful experience. Ben said:

I really like working on the ranch . . . like later on they'd use it. Like I came back second year and the stuff we'd made last year was still there it was like 'yeah cool, I worked on that.'

Another camper talked about how he had helped put the first straw bale in the straw bale lodge and how, "you can look back at the ranch in like 20 years from now . . . and say 'Hey I put that first straw bale in, and that lodge changed a bunch of lives'" (Bobby). Being able to produce something that contributed to the ranch community gave campers a sense of belonging and loyalty.

Learning new skills and participating in productive work contributed to participants enjoying work. In addition to being productive, many of the work projects they did were difficult and challenging.

The Work Was Challenging or Hard

Campers often described the work as challenging, hard, and difficult. Throughout the interviews, campers described hard work as enjoyable. In fact, they seemed to thrive on doing things that were challenging or hard. One camper admitted, "I didn't really like the easy jobs." Parents also commented on the value of having their children participate in types of work that were challenging, that they were not able to provide for them at home. Mr. and Mrs. George said, "At home . . . work is kind of 'Hey make your bed' and that's it . . . we don't have a farm where they can really work." Campers learned not only to do hard, challenging, productive work at BCSR, but also to enjoy it. This helped the work become intrinsically rewarding.

18 Work is Fun

Work was Intrinsically Rewarding

It seemed there was an intrinsic reward for the boys in participating in hard work that required skill and was productive. They expressed a sense of accomplishment, and learned to value and enjoy the feeling of being productive. Mark stated, “You just felt good you know. It’s like you know you didn’t waste your morning. You did something worthwhile.” He also observed: “At the ranch you really do what you’re wanting to do, like you accomplish the things that you want to do. And I think that you kind of get satisfied in a different kind of way . . . a good way.” Other campers said they learned to work for work’s sake, instead of a reward of money or goods at the end.

This sense of accomplishment and satisfaction was different from what the campers experienced at home. Mr. and Mrs. Woods talked about how when their son came home he was frustrated and somewhat depressed. They reported him as saying, “I hate being home, I just want to go work, to do things, I want that routine.” They observed, “It was really a hard thing for him” and that he missed, “Not just the routine, but the feeling that he had of accomplishing something every day.”

Having the opportunity to learn work skills, and use them in challenging and productive ways, gave campers a sense of accomplishment that made the work intrinsically rewarding. This contributed to their enjoying work. Another aspect of work that was intrinsically rewarding was the attribute of making a difference for others.

The Work Made a Difference

Participants described how doing service made them feel good and that this made the work meaningful and enjoyable. When asked point blank what made the work enjoyable, Bobby said it was:

The spirit of good working and doing something good. Just that feeling that, “Hey I helped someone out today, if we hadn’t come it probably would have taken them three weeks to build that fence and we did it in four hours.” It’s just kind of knowing that.

Mark expressed that meaningful service made even boring jobs enjoyable, “That [service work projects] was always fun cause even if you got stuck with the boring stupid one you know that you are helping someone so it doesn’t even matter.”

Coming to know the people they served helped make service work more enjoyable. Peter explained:

I really liked the service projects. Um, it’s really cool that you get to know the people you are serving . . . you are actually interacting with the people you are doing service for. It’s not like at EFY (his church sponsored summer youth program) where you have a service project and you just do it there and you never meet who it’s benefiting. It feels impersonal there. But at Birch Creek it’s really personal and it’s really cool.

Learning to enjoy work done for someone else bolstered and drove home principles of altruism or service for the boys. Many of the participants were from a strong religious background, and had done service projects at home through their church youth

20 Work is Fun

groups. They claimed the service done at the ranch, however, was more authentic and enjoyable. As Ian put it, “I’ve always liked service because of the ranch, it’s taught me to just love it.” Peter explained how service at the ranch helped him increase his selflessness, “Cause [my] church leaders are teaching that [service is important] all the time, but until the ranch I’d never actually believed it and now it’s just kind of something that I try to do.”

The boys felt gratification when they saw the difference their work made by how grateful people were. This made them want to serve to help others rather than doing it for what they would get in return. Ben said, “You don’t really do it for yourself, like, you get something in return, but you just come and do it cause it makes everything better.” Others talked about how they realized doing service that they don’t need to get a reward for everything they do, the good feeling they got was more valuable. Bobby told how prior to the ranch he did not want to do service, “But you go to the ranch and you realize how meaningful it is for the people you do it for, and you realize how little a problem it is to do and how easy it is just to get it done and you wonder why you don’t do it more.” He then told how after the ranch he came home and started helping his elderly neighbor pick up the apples in his yard. He noted, “Just little stuff like that I’ve been noticing [since being home from the ranch] and helping out with.”

Service was an important part of enjoying work as it increased positive feelings in the campers and solidified their sense of altruism and desire to help others. The good feelings they gained from serving contributed to enjoying work. The social element of getting to know the people they served was also an important part of their enjoyment.

The Work Was Done With Others

Working for others was an important aspect of enjoying work, similarly working with people also contributed to enjoyment. Grant commented that work was, “fun with other people, it’s not as fun when you are doing it by yourself.” He talked about how working with others helped make difficult jobs fun, “When we were thistle digging and building the pig pen, we’d play various word games, and ask each other questions.” Ben commented, “It was fun work and you got to do it with other kids so it wasn’t just work, work, work.” Many campers commented that lively discussions on a variety of topics would be carried on amongst the crew as they worked. Counselors would bring up issues presented in evening activities and campers would continue to debate while they worked.

Working with others contributed to enjoying work, and helped increase social skills. Working with different people each day helped campers get to know a variety of people and learn to relate to them and see things through other’s eyes. It also taught them patience, as they had to learn how to do difficult tasks together. Mark told how, “It was really frustrating when you got put with kids who didn’t want to work or that just like couldn’t work as hard . . . you’d have to be patient with them.” Mrs. Thompson talked about how learning patience at the ranch helped her son’s relationship to his siblings. She said he has, “More patience for the differences in how they [his siblings] approach things.” While other aspects of the BCSR program affected social skills, work provided a unique setting to learn to get along with different people, and as they did so it contributed to enjoying work.

22 Work is Fun

In addition, learning to cooperate and work together helped foster a strong community bond. Greg described the ranch community as “A second family” who you worked with and spent concentrated time with. Peter observed, “We just developed a camaraderie doing hard work together.” Close friendships and a collective bond were formed as boys enjoyed working together.

The Work Was Physical and Outdoors

Two inherent qualities of the work done at the ranch were that the work was physical, and was mainly done out-of-doors. These two mechanisms seemed to set the stage for enjoying work. Many campers commented that doing the work made them physically stronger. One camper happily exclaimed that by working outside he, “Got muscles and got tan!” (Bobby). Learning to work with their bodies gave campers a sense of satisfaction and enjoyment. One camper said, “Work is more enjoyable like when I’m doing things with my hands and stuff.”

Bobby said that doing physical work, “Helped me build confidence in my physical ability.” His mom talked about how prior to the ranch he, “was kind of a little couch potato . . . he’d kind of given up sports . . . and we didn’t quite know how to get him out of his little space and be physical.” She commented that one of the biggest changes she noticed in Bobby was that he had lost weight at the ranch and gained physical confidence. Ms. Turner stated, “The importance of working with your physical body, there’s just something to it that you can’t gain access to in other ways . . . and you can’t get it just by going out for an afternoon.”

Linked to the physical nature of the work, was the outdoor element. Sam said, “Just being outside working is fun.” Another commented, “I like that we work outdoors. At home I’m mainly inside, but when I’m at Birch Creek I’m mostly outdoors all the time.” One camper described how much he loved going up in the nearby mountains to help a farmer divert a waterway. His mother described the impact that had on him, and her:

When Ben told me about the water and going up in those mountains . . . It just really mattered to me . . . There was a tie back to the ways his families have lived their lives for several generations . . . I’ve tried to give him that experience myself, but just the pressure of other things [hasn’t allowed for it], and he just devoured this experience.

Campers also talked about how spending so much time outdoors working helped increase their appreciation and love of nature. Being physical and outdoors were two important aspects of enjoying work, however, the benefits of increased physical confidence, and an appreciation of nature may not have taken root if they had not happened over the course of three and-a-half weeks.

The Work Occurred for an Extended Period of Time and Was Not Over-Supervised

Another inherent aspect of the work was the breadth and depth of the experience. Prior to coming to the ranch, most of the campers had not had prolonged experiences working. During the three-and-a-half weeks of camp, the boys worked four hours each day. Bobby said, “It’s a lot of work. You look back and four hours every day five days a week. . . that’s quite a bit of work.” Mrs. Thompson observed, “I think that’s part of the

24 Work is Fun

need for the length of it, they need that time to really be there and get connected to it.”

Learning how to work is not something that takes place in a few hours. Learning to work hard every day over a prolonged period of time helped the campers garner a new perspective on work, and become responsible for their attitude.

In addition to the length of time, campers were given a certain amount of autonomy in work projects that helped foster a sense of responsibility. Campers were encouraged to work hard, but never forced. Mrs. Allen commented, “I have no idea how to ‘make’ someone do something. They don’t do that at the ranch, they don’t have to do things just because the counselor said you have to do it.” Ben talked about this as well saying, “They won’t like force you to like work there, they won’t force you to work harder, but they’ll help you.” Campers worked on crews with one or two counselors who would encourage campers to work through their own examples and verbal affirmations.

Campers realized through working everyday that they were in control of how they approached the work. Sam observed, “Doing it [work] a lot was what helped me learn a good attitude.” Bobby said that he learned to, “Just make decisions for myself about what I’m going to do . . . like my attitude. Am I gonna complain or not, or am I gonna work the hardest I can or am I going to just sit around and hammer a nail every ten minutes. Kind of being responsible for your own actions.” As they learned to have a positive attitude towards work, they really came to enjoy it and even have fun. Chris said, “Before I went to Birch Creek I always thought work was kinda stupid but now work is really fun for me.” Mr. and Mrs. George were pleased to observe in their son that, “For him it isn’t work, it’s truly fun.”

Perceived Benefits

In the process of learning to enjoy work, parents and campers listed several benefits that they perceived were a result of learning to work. Doing productive, physical, challenging outdoor work that served others for an extended period of time seemed to help increase campers self-confidence, build a strong work ethic, and improve their willingness and responsibility at home.

Doing challenging work increased self-confidence. One of the most salient benefits of being challenged through work, was the campers learned to work hard, which seemed to increase their self-confidence. Campers and parents alike commented on an increased confidence in their ability to work hard, face challenges, and do difficult things after the ranch. Mr. and Mrs. Woods told how their son, “Gained so much confidence in himself and his abilities . . . he came home so confident that first year, it was incredible. It was a huge change.” Bobby stated, “That first year pretty much everything [all work projects] challenged me.” But he learned to face the challenges and persevere. He said, “Knowing that you can just do, and learn something—and that you don’t have to be afraid to ask how to do something” helped him feel confident that if and when the time came he needed to use the work skills he’d learned, or other types of work, he’d be able to. “It [the work] increased my confidence.” His mother corroborated this in her interview when she said, “He was proud of the fact that he’d done these things he never imagined he’d do, and survived and he was okay and he had fun . . . now I think he feels really capable.” Mrs. Thompson observed, “I just think it gives him a sense, ‘I’ve done hard things before and I can do it again and this is a hard thing for me, but if I just get in

26 Work is Fun

and do it, or find a way to break it down I can do it.' I think the ranch experience has helped him with that."

The confidence participants gained seemed to translate into other activities and aspects of their lives. Mrs. Brown said, "I think he's just more sure of himself" and told how "He came back and he wanted to do a Tai Kwan Do belt and he did it just like that. He did the belt testing by himself, and he, you know, he did a really great job."

Ms. Turner gave a similar account of how her son's confidence in school increased after the ranch:

Really the most remarkable change in him is his confidence in school . . . He seems to have gained an understanding of his own capacity . . . He just seems to believe he can do well in school . . . the best report card I have ever seen from him came the other day, and I know it's because of the ranch.

Doing hard work developed a strong work ethic. The development of a strong work ethic came from learning to work, and enjoy working. Almost every camper and parent said something to the effect that the participants had "learned to work"; Jim asserted, "I have a better work ethic now." Both parents and campers felt that learning how to work and developing a good work ethic, were meaningful and valuable traits that helped them in a variety of ways. Peter stated that although the skills may be different, the work ethic he learned at the ranch remained in other settings:

I've learned that I can do the work, like, I can lift a bale of hay, but that's not something I use too much. But I've learned that I can get myself to actually work hard, and that I can be a hard worker in school and at home and stuff like that.

Mrs. Brown explained her son, “Works really well now. He’s a really good worker. Just today for a party we had, this room was a complete disaster and he really pitched in and he organized things. It was really great.”

Chris tells how the work ethic he gained at the ranch affected his schoolwork:

I learned to be a better worker, I learned to like get all my work done on time in school and like . . . This year I’ve been doing a lot better at school and um, I’ve always thought that’s because at Birch Creek, I worked so hard and I learned to work harder with stuff like school projects and stuff.

This work ethic also translated to other work projects. Mr. George admitted that he was not fully aware of his son’s developed work ethic until they participated together in helping a neighbor put on a new roof. He commented:

I noticed he knew how to work . . . not necessarily what he was doing, but the ethics of working . . . he was the youngest person there [at the roofing project], and he was working hardest . . . clearly there must be some lasting effect that we don’t see until we are in the same situation.

Developing a work ethic included learning to be persistent and get the job done. Greg said, “I learned that I can do hard things if I keep trying and don’t give up and then it just comes easier and easier the more you do it.” This seemed to carry over into life after the ranch. Peter told about helping a friend rip out his uncle’s tree stump:

We went down to his uncle’s house and we just got to work and I don’t remember how long it was, but we worked till we got the stump ripped out . . . we just kept going, and most my friends that were there had been to the ranch, so it was just

28 Work is Fun

kind of like “we know what to do.” The work ethic was “get it done.” We really pushed to get it completed. It was fun project!

Willingness and responsibility. As campers learned to work they learned to take responsibility for their own attitude and enjoying of the work. The sense of responsibility for their own success that campers gained seemed to translate into other areas of their lives. Campers and parents commented that they had a more willing attitude about work at home. Jim observed, “I think I’ve been a lot more willing to work . . . I’ve been more happy to work and maybe do stuff that I’m not being told to do.” Mrs. Sheets talked about the willingness her boys exhibited after the ranch and how she explains that to other parents, “Your boys will never complain again about anything you ask them to do around the house, anything you ask them to do around the house is just no big deal.” Mrs. Brown talked about how her son became a more conscientious and responsible member of the family:

I think all in all he’s more responsible about doing his jobs. Like, if I say Tuesday’s your laundry day, he starts the load before school and then he folds it when he gets home. He sort of gets that it’s a pattern now where before he would just sort of blow it off.

Mrs. Kelly talked about how her sons increased responsibility affected her relationship to him. She said: “I expect more of him . . . and I think he expects more of himself . . . I don’t have to say a lot to him, I just have to ask him.” The campers realized that in the future, they would be increasingly more independent and responsible for themselves and their attitudes. Bobby said, “I think I’d be a brat if I didn’t go to the

ranch. It kind of teaches you you're in the real world and it's not always going to be really easy for you . . . I'm glad I went . . . It was a nice shock to come and be put in that mindset."

As parents and campers discussed the work, and explained what elements contributed to enjoying it, the overall benefit they talked about was becoming more responsible and gaining perspective. Ian talked about the overall effect the ranch work had on him:

I just became like a better, stronger, and more service oriented person. I don't think I would have learned these things just growing up. You definitely learn to be a harder worker at the ranch. You just, I mean you can learn that throughout life, but being there for three and-a-half weeks definitely teaches you a lot faster and a lot better than what life throws at you.

Mrs. Kelly asserted that, "It just completely turned him around . . . he wasn't a bad kid . . . but he had no motivation to help out around the house or do any work . . . or to think outside of himself in terms of helping other people." Mrs. Brown summed it up by saying, "In some ways he seems like the same kid, but more mature, more mature more faster . . . more mature all the way around in a really, really nice way." It seemed that enjoying work and the mechanisms of that process had many benefits that had lasting effects on the campers.

Discussion

The findings of this study explain the process of enjoying work for adolescent boys in a summer camp that included physical work, combined with service, as a core activity. Seven salient mechanisms, or attributes, were identified as part of enjoying work. Each mechanism clearly contributed to the process of enjoying work, and seemed to have positively impacted the participants' lives in a number of ways. These attributes, and their perceived benefits will be discussed in the context of flow theory and Positive Psychology's character strengths.

Enjoying Work and Flow Theory

The idea of enjoying is relevant to research in flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Kimiecik & Harris, 1996). Flow theory explains the process of optimal experience, or enjoyment. Csikszentmihalyi, the author of flow theory, often uses the terms flow and enjoyment interchangeably, suggesting enjoyment is the emotion of flow (Csikszentmihalyi). Flow is defined as the state of being in which one is wholly concentrated and absorbed by an activity; challenge and skill are present, as well as clear goals, and immediate feedback is given. When experiencing flow, one loses self-awareness and has a sense of control of oneself and activity at hand; in addition, time becomes irrelevant as one is lost in the moment (Csikszentmihalyi). Flow can occur in many settings, and is determined more by the mindset or approach one takes, than by the activity itself. Through the process of flow, the individual gains a greater sense of integration with others, the natural world, and society at large (Csikszentmihalyi).

Interestingly, research has shown that flow is experienced more often in work than leisure settings. This occurrence happens in many work settings from surgery to factory assembly lines (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989; Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000; Seligman, 2002). In a study examining youth's transition into adulthood, researchers found that high levels of flow, and subsequent enjoyment, were experienced in activities that were viewed as work (such as schoolwork, jobs, or active leisure) rather than at play or relaxing activities (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider). Flow theory asserts that enjoyment often takes place in settings that seem contrary; in activities that require hard work and may not even be considered enjoyable in the moment.

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) claimed that:

Playing a close game of tennis that stretches one's ability is enjoyable, as is reading a book that reveals things in a new light, as is having a conversation that leads us to express ideas we didn't know we had. Closing a contested business deal, or any piece of work well done, is enjoyable. None of these experiences may be particularly pleasurable at the time, but afterward we think back on them and say, "that was fun," and wish they would happen again.

Like flow, the process of enjoying work seems to yield a sense of gratification that goes beyond pleasure. Optimal experience, or enjoyment in flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), seems akin to the feelings of enjoying work expressed by participants in this study. While not all work projects were in themselves pleasurable in the moment, participants deemed the overall process enjoyable.

32 Work is Fun

Upon comparing the attributes of flow, and the attributes of enjoying work, there are some seeming similarities. Skill and challenge are apparent in both processes, and are important to both. In flow theory, high skill is meaningful when it is matched with high challenge (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Although the level of skill acquired by the boys while working at the ranch was not determined in this study; challenge was present in most of the work projects and seemed to be important in the process of enjoying work. It may be that the skills the boys obtained while working were matched with equal or slightly greater challenges, helping produce an enjoyment of work akin to flow.

Productivity is another attribute of enjoying work, and may be comparable to having clear goals and receiving immediate feedback in flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The boys usually had a clear goal of what they wanted to accomplish while working (whether it was dishes done, or a shed built), and feedback was received as they progressed in a project. Additionally, serving others is an important attribute of enjoying work, and may contribute to a loss of self-awareness that takes place in flow (Csikszentmihalyi). As the boys focused on how their work would help others they stopped worrying about their personal pleasure or comfort. Other attributes of flow at work were not shown in this data. Further studies need to be done to determine if flow does occur for participants of BCSR, and to explore the relationship between flow and enjoying work.

Csikszentmihalyi and Schneider (2000) found that youth who regularly experience high levels of flow have a higher positive affect, experience a better quality of life, are more motivated and optimistic, and have better self-esteem. Even though not all

of these same benefits were ascertained in the findings of this study, enjoying work did suggest an increased self-confidence and helped contribute to a strong work ethic.

Perceived Benefits from Enjoying Work in Relation to Character Strengths

It seems that enjoying work is akin to optimal experience, and is a deeper feeling than that of pleasure. This suggests a connection to the concept of authentic happiness presented by Seligman (2002) in the field of Positive Psychology. Seligman asserts that authentic happiness is linked to increased gratification in life. He distinguishes gratification as deeper and more meaningful than pleasure, and links it to the optimal experience of flow (Seligman). However, he explains that Csikszentmihalyi (the developer of flow) follows a European descriptive tradition and “hopes that by describing flow eloquently and then stepping aside, the creative reader will invent his own ways to build more flow into his life” (Seligman, p. 121). Seligman, on the other hand, comes from an American interventionist tradition and therefore, presents a theory of character strengths as a means of increasing the amount flow, or gratification (which he views as closely related), in a person’s life (Seligman).

Seligman’s basic theory presents the idea that gratification comes as a result of exercising personal character strengths through hard work and determination. Identifying and cultivating character strengths is paramount for achieving happiness and promoting positive development (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2002). Seligman identified six virtues that consistently and unanimously appeared in major world religions and philosophies: wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence; in addition he identified 24 corresponding character traits (Peterson & Seligman). The

findings in this study show a likely connection between several of these character strengths and some of the perceived benefits of enjoying work.

Perceived benefits, as reported by both campers and parents in this study, were: an increase in self-confidence, the development of a strong work ethic, an enhancement of altruism, the development of social skills (including patience), more willingness to help, and a perspective on and sense of responsibility for their attitude towards work. In addition, an appreciation of nature appeared to result from working outdoors. It is likely that these perceived benefits are linked to character strengths. For example work ethic may be related to the character strength of persistence; an increased sense of altruism could be associated with the characters strengths of love and citizenship. Enhanced social skills might be connected to strengths of social intelligence and kindness, while learning to be patient perhaps enhanced the strength of forgiveness and mercy.

The benefits participants perceived in this study seem to have contributed to lasting, positive changes in the youth akin to character strengths. Enjoying work seems to be closely related, if not synonymous with, gratification. The perceived benefits appear to strengthen particular character strengths in the youth.

The Theorizing of Enjoying Work

The process of enjoying work, however, is not entirely matched with either flow, or the character strengths theories. Enjoying work may contain the beginnings of a theory that draws together aspects of both flow and character strengths, but is ultimately distinct. While flow has been shown to occur more in productive settings, the theory of enjoying work takes place during work done in a recreation setting. Flow studies have shown that

youth who spent more time in productive activities (such as homework, music lessons, housework) experienced more flow. However, high flow youth still saw youth who hung out at the mall as having the more desirable situation, even though the mall youth reported lower flow levels and less over-all life satisfaction (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000; Seligman, 2002). A theory of enjoying work may help youth experience gratification in a work setting and realize the connection between the two. This might have a positive effect on their future plans, and work opportunities. Additionally, the perceived benefit of increased self-confidence found in this study is not listed as a character strength. Increased confidence seemed to have a positive impact on campers in situations beyond the ranch. Confidence, therefore, may be an important aspect of gratification to be examined.

Hederson, Presley, and Bialeschki (2004) stated that grounded theory can be either substantive (directly relating to the data and providing a foundation for further research) or formal (results from the data support already established theories). In this study, a case could be made that enjoying work seems to support the formal theories of both flow and character strengths. However, there may be a case for a substantive theory, which may, through further research, become a clearly defined theory.

Exploratory studies, such as this one, are often “devalued because they are perceived as preliminary” (Henderson et al., 2004, p. 413). But, it must be remembered that these preliminary, inductive (generalizations drawn from data) theories can give way to further deductive (existing theory applied to a situation) research (Henderson et al., 2004; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The full value of these findings will continue to unfold as

further studies are conducted and the substantive theory of enjoying work is explored and refined.

Implications for Enjoying Work

While the exact theoretical role of enjoying work deserves further exploration, there are valuable implications for the field of PYD from the findings of this study. The aim and purpose of PYD is to develop youth who not only endure through adversity, but show continual development towards a life of authentic happiness (Larson, 2000). In addition, PYD seeks to identify and evaluate existing youth programs to determine their outcomes and the components that foster positive development (Catalano et al., 2004). The findings of this study suggest that the youth who participated in BCSR (with the unique component of physical work) reported a number of positive effects. The preliminary, substantive theory of enjoying work provides a foundation for future research to confirm and further the perceived benefits of this study. In addition, the findings of this study show that some of the benefits of flow and character strengths theories may be present in this unique setting. Further exploration of this type of program could lead to using physical work in youth recreational settings to help foster character strengths and optimal experience—both of which have been found to have positive impacts on youth's lives (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000; Park, 2004a). The implications of this are that physical work in a recreational setting may be a powerful tool to help create positive effect and strengthen youth.

Recommendations for Future Research

It is not clear at this point which of the seven attributes of enjoying work are most important in producing positive outcomes for participants. The interrelationship between the various mechanisms and what effect that has on their functioning in the process has not been determined. Further studies are needed to better understand the mechanisms of enjoying work and subsequent benefits, as well as clarify the relationship between specific mechanisms and benefits.

Further studies are needed to determine if the other elements of flow can be found in enjoying work, and if the two theories are congruent. Future research needs to explore the presence of character strengths in the perceived benefits of enjoying work and determine which aspects of the BCSR program increase which strengths.

The process of enjoying work took place within the context of a youth summer camp that combined physical work with service, and recreational activities. It is undetermined whether the theory of enjoying work could be applied to other settings (such as an urban environment) or programs (such as after school or even in family activities). Additional qualitative and quantitative studies are needed to further develop and test this theory in a variety of settings and programs.

Participants in this study were from white, middle class families. Further research needs to apply this theory to diverse populations to determine if the same benefits and perspectives on working can be achieved amongst participants of different ethnic or socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, this study was limited to adolescent

participants; it is not known if the process of enjoying work would have the same outcomes with other age groups.

As additional studies are conducted new mechanisms within the process of enjoying work may emerge. This is characteristic of grounded theory techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Further research will help clarify and expand the theory of enjoying work.

Conclusion

The idea of enjoying work runs counter to cultural stereotypes that assume for adolescents, work is negative (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995; Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989; Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). Researchers pointed out a negative view of work may be detrimental to youth as they enter adulthood where they will spend far more time in work than in play over the course of their lives (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre; Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider). Clearly, the enjoyment of both work and leisure is important for well-being over the life course (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre; Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider; Haworth, 1997; Haworth & Lewis, 2005). Csikszentmihalyi (1989) proposed, “If people admitted to themselves that work can be very enjoyable—or at least, more enjoyable than most of their leisure time is—they might . . . improve the quality of their own lives.” (p. 821)

References

- Ahlander, N. R., & Bahr, K. S. (1995). Beyond drudgery, power, and equity: Toward an expanded discourse on the moral dimensions of housework in families. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 57*(1), 54-68.
- Arai, S. M., & Pedlar, A. M. (1997). Beddington communities through leisure: Citizen participation in a healthy communities initiative. *Journal of Leisure Research, 29*(2), 167-182.
- Axelsoon, L., Andersson, I., Hakansson, A., & Ejlertsson, G. (2005). Work ethics and general work attitudes in adolescents are related to quality of life, sense of coherence and subjective health- a Swedish questionnaire study. *BioMed Center Public Health, 5*(103), 1-10.
- Bahr, K. S., & Loveless, C. A. (2000). Family work. *Brigham Young Magazine, 54*, 25-34.
- Bennion, S.D. (1995). *Summary history of the Bennion Teton Boys Ranch*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Berman, D. S., & Davis-Berman, J. (2000). Therapeutic uses of outdoor education. Charleston, WV: ERIC Publications; ERIC Digests in Full Text.
- Bowen, P., & Mckechnie, A. J. (2002). *Family volunteering: A discussion paper*. Toronto: Volunteer Canada.
- Bradford, M. L. (1995). *Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, counselor, humanitarian*. Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books.

- Canada, G. (1998). Work. *American Educator*, 22(3), 24-29, 44.
- Catalano, R. F., Berglund, M. L., Ryan, J. A. M., Lonczak, H. S., & Hawkins, J. D. (2004). Positive youth development in the United States: Research findings on evaluations of positive youth development programs. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591(98), 98-124.
- Cherrington, D. J. (1980). *The work ethic: Working values and the values that work*. New York: Amacon.
- Conger, R. D., & Elder, G. H., Jr. . (1994). *Families in troubled times: Adapting to change in rural America*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & LeFevre, J. (1989). Optimal experience in work and leisure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56(5), 815-822.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Schneider, B. (2000). *Becoming adult: How teenagers prepare for the world of work*. New York: Basic Books.
- Damon, W. (2004). What is positive youth development? *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591, 13-24.
- Duerden, M. (2006). *An examination of the relationship between adventure recreation and adolescent identity development*. Unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, Provo UT.
- Fetterman, D. (1998). *Ethnography: Step by step*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Goodnow, J. J. (1988). Children's household work: Its nature and functions. *Psychological Bulletin, 103*, 5-26.
- Goodnow, J. J., & Warton, P. M. (1991). The social bases of social cognition: Interactions about work and their implications. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 37*, 27-58.
- Haworth, J. T. (1997). *Work, leisure and Well-being*. London: Routhledge.
- Haworth, J. T., & Lewis, S. (2005). Work, leisure and well-being. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 33*(1).
- Henderson, K. A. (1991). *Dimension of choice: A qualitative approach to recreation, parks, and leisure research*. State College, PA: Venture Publishing, Inc. .
- Johnson, M. K. (1998). Volunteerism in adolescence: A process perspective. *Journal of Research on Adolescence 8*(3), 309-332.
- Johnson, M. K., Beebe, T., Mortimer, J. T., & Snyder, M. (1998). Volunteerism in adolescence: A process perspective. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 8*(3), 309-332.
- Kimiecik, J. C., & Harris, A. T. (1996). What is enjoyment? A conceptual/definitional analysis with implications for sport and exercise psychology. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 18*(3), 247-263.
- Larson, N. C., & Dearmont, M. (2002). Strengths of farming communities in fostering resilience in children. *Child Welfare League of America, LXXXI* (5), 821-835.
- Lee, D. (1960). The individual in a changing society. *Journal of Home Economics, 52*(2), 79-82.

Lerner, R. M., Dowling, E. M., & Anderson, P. M. (2003). Positive youth development:

Thriving as the basis of personhood and civil society. *Applied Developmental Science*, 7(3), 172-180.

Littlepage, L., Obergfell, E., & Zanin, G. (2003). *Family volunteering: An exploratory study of the impact of families*. Perdue, Indiana: Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, School of Public and Environmental Affairs.

Louv, R. (2008). *Last child in the woods* (Revised and Updated ed.). Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill.

Manwaring, K. C., & Bahr, K. S. (2003). *Cultural contradictions of children, chores, and money*. Paper presented at the 33rd Annual National Council on Family Relations, Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Palmer, A. (2005). *Family deepening: A qualitative inquiry into the experience of families who participate in service missions*. Unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

Park, N. (2004). Character strengths and positive youth development. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591, 40-54.

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. Washington, DC, New York: American Psychological Association; Oxford University Press.

Peterson, E. S., & Bateman, J. A. (2006). Birch Creek Service Ranch Website retrieved September 7th, 2007 from www.birchcreekranch.org.

- Smith, D. S. (1997). Strengthening family values in the twenty-first century-home-centered recreation. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*, 68(8), 39-41.
- Staff, J., Mortimer, J. T., & Uggen, C. (2004). Work and leisure in adolescence. In R. M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 429-450). New York Wiley.
- Straus, J. A. (1962). Work rules and financial responsibility in the socialization of farm, fringe, and town boys. . *Rural Sociology*, 27, 257-274.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. .
- ter Bogt, T., Raaijmakers, Q., & van Wel, F. (2005). Socialization and development of the work ethic among adolescents and young adults. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 66, 420-437.
- Wilson, J. (2000). Volunteering. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, 215-240.

44 Work is Fun

Appendix A

Prospectus

Chapter 1

Introduction

In 1922, when Lowell Bennion was 14, he spent the summer working for his uncle Teddy on a ranch in the Utah desert. As part of his duties, he and his brother were assigned to clear 15-acres of sage brush so the land could be farmed. After several days of working in the hot sun with little success, Lowell and his brother became discouraged, and determined the task was too difficult. They told their uncle they were quitting, expecting a scolding. Uncle Teddy didn't get upset, but told them about a man with a cognitive disability who had done the same task in less than a week. The story profoundly impressed the boys, and they decided to try clearing the land again. With the story in mind, Lowell and his brother approached their job with fresh vigor and worked diligently, completing the task in a few days. Lowell Bennion recounted this as a pivotal experience in his youth. He said the confidence he gained from this and other experiences he had working on his uncle's ranch made him believe that he could accomplish almost anything he put his mind to as he grew into adulthood, thus providing a strong foundation for his future successes (Bennion, 1992, 1995a).

In Bennion's generation, experiences like this were not unusual. Physical work with its inherent challenges and rewards, was often part of a young person's life, whether daily, or during visits to extended family (Conger & Elder, 1994). Work around the house was a typical part of family life in gardens, cooking from scratch, cleaning, animal care, or a host of other chores. Also, many adolescents were expected to work to contribute to the family income/subsistence, and many of these jobs included physical labor. Although

household chores are still expected of children in many homes today, the types and extent of labor have changed significantly, and often do not include any challenging physical work participation (Goodnow, 1988).

Bennion himself noticed this change, and as a father he worried his sons and their peers, growing up in an urban environment, would miss the benefits of challenging work and recreational activities. He dreamed of having a ranch where adolescent boys could come and participate in hard physical work like he had enjoyed on his uncle's farm. In 1960, Bennion's dream was realized and during the last 40 years, over a thousand boys, ages 12-15 have come to work, play, and grow at the Bennion Teton Boys Ranch (BTBR) located in Victor, Idaho. Bennion's self proclaimed purpose of his ranch was "building boys into self-respecting and self-reliant men" (Bradford, 1995). In 2003 another program, Birch Creek Service Ranch (BCSR), based on Bennion's philosophy was established in Spring City, Utah. The aim of this program is to improve character, self-confidence, physical ability, pro-social behavior, work and outdoor skills through community service, ranch work, and recreational activities (Bennion, 1995a; Peterson & Bateman, 2006).

Although many youth have enjoyed such programs, no known studies have been conducted to identify the outcomes from this type of youth programming with the specific and somewhat unique combination of work, service, and recreation. Aspects of youth outdoor recreation, volunteerism, and work have been studied individually, and research indicates that there are many benefits for youth in each area. Outdoor recreation programs for youth have increased self-efficacy, promoted identity formation (Duerden,

2006), built resiliency (Eckhart, 1998; Larson, 2000) and enhanced positive youth development (Caldwell, 2005). Additionally, volunteerism and service learning have been shown to improve academic performance and goals, social relationships, and work ethic amongst adolescents (Johnson, Beebe, Mortimer, & Snyder, 1998). Furthermore, physical work, studied within the context of family work, shows increased communication and enhanced values (Manwaring & Bahr, 2003; Palmer, 2005a; Smith, 1997) as subsequent benefits.

Given the individual benefits that youth gain from outdoor recreation, volunteerism, and work, it is likely that outcomes will be similar for youth who participate in a program that combines all three. There may also be even more positive youth development that occurs within this unique combination.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to examine the perceptions of participants from a three-week youth ranch program. Specifically, this study will gather data regarding the perceptions from youth and their parents, who participated in BCSR summer camp, which is comprised of work, service, and outdoor recreation activities. A qualitative approach based on in-depth face-to-face interviews with youth and their parents will be used to address the problem.

Guiding Research Question

Do the combined elements of physical work, service, and outdoor recreation have an affect on youth in a program setting?

Purpose of the Study

If the perceived outcomes from a recreation program for youth that includes physical work and service are better understood, then these elements could be incorporated into other youth programming such as camps, after school programs, or therapeutic settings. This study will help youth program developers, researchers, and practitioners better understand the perceived outcomes from this type of program, that can lead to future quantitative measures. In addition, using grounded theory techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), the researcher will seek to determine either an emerging theory from the data, or link the findings to an existing theory in order to establish a theoretical foundation that could guide program evaluation, replication, and creation.

Need for the Study

Since the 1950s there has been an influx of youth development programs in private, public, and government sectors. Although many of these programs have produced some positive outcomes, there is a concern of the real (measured) effectiveness of these programs. Without a unifying theoretical foundation, and measures to assess outcomes, it is difficult to assess the efficacy of these varied programs (Park, 2004b; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

This need for a clearer understanding of program outcomes and the theoretical basis is echoed in the field of Positive Youth Development (PYD) at large. There is a call for more outcome studies in order to better understand the possible benefits and results from a variety of types of programs, as previously little was done in terms of systematic theory based programming or evaluation. In the last three decades many youth

preventative programs emerged based primarily on preventing a single, specific problem behavior (i.e. drug use, premature sexual activity, delinquent behavior) (Catalano et al., 2004). Few of these programs were based on theory or research related to child or adolescent development. Gradually, program providers and investigators began using information gained from longitudinal studies that determined predictors of youth delinquency to shape their programming.

As the single issue focus of many programs came under criticism, more holistic efforts to promote positive development rather than simply preventing bad behaviors began (Catalano et al., 2004; Seligman, 2002). Seligman and others in the field of Positive Psychology began to draw attention to the need to create preventative interventions and programs to help develop healthy, happy youth, and provide buffers against the challenges they may face (Catalano et al., 2004; Larson, 2000; Park, 2004b, 2004c).

Subsequently, the efforts of government officials, practitioners and leading research scientists has resulted in the advent of PYD, focused on finding systematic ways for evaluating positive youth programs, and identifying their key components (Mahoney & Lafferty, 2003; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Witt & Caldwell, 2005). PYD in it's operational definition describes programs that seek to promote at least five areas of youth functioning, including cognitive, emotional, social, moral and behavioral competencies (Catalano et al., 2004). The goal of PYD is aiding youth in not just surviving, but growing through life (Park, 2004b).

Programs with a recreational focus have been found to serve as a useful setting for PYD. Witt and Caldwell (2005) state “recreation is a powerful context for youth development” (Peterson & Seligman), and that:

Deliberate, well-planned programs based on achieving healthy developmental outcomes are essential . . . we must move beyond simply counting the number of participants in our programs to a fuller understanding of why programs work (or not), for whom they work, and under what conditions they work. (p. xii)

There is a need to identify and evaluate the impact of all types of positive youth programming to increase knowledge about these programs. Although benefits of outdoor recreation and service programs have been investigated, little is known regarding physical work in a recreational setting, or the combination of all three factors in a youth program.

In a conversation with BCSR director Eric Peterson, Peterson commented that while it is assumed good things are happening for the youth as a result of the BCSR program, the exact outcomes have not been clearly identified or articulated. The outcomes need to be assessed and evaluated in order to determine the efficacy of this type of program. In addition, the programming is not based on a specific theory, and it would be useful to determine either an existing or emerging theory in this program. This knowledge will not only benefit BCSR, but may provide information that could influence and benefit other programs. This study will examine the perceived impact of a PYD program that involves outdoor recreation, service, and work.

Delimitations

The scope of the study will be delimited to

1. At least 10 male adolescents, between the ages of 12 to 15 years from the United States who attended a three-week service learning ranch program (BCSR) June-August, 2006 and 2007.
2. At least 10 parents, (father or mother, or both parents), of the adolescents who participated in BCSR.
3. Interview questions in Appendix A
4. Data will be collected from October 9, 2007, to December 1, 2007.

Limitations

The study will be limited by the following:

1. The perceptions of the coder.
2. The wording of the questions (Henderson, 1991; Palmer, 2005a).
3. The language used by respondents (Henderson, 1991; Palmer, 2005a).
4. The amount of openness in response from participants (Henderson, 1991; Palmer, 2005a).
5. The relationship between interviewer and participants.
6. A nonrandom sample.

Assumptions

The following assumptions of the study will be

1. The interviewer will not guide or influence the interviewee in their response to questions.

2. The interviewee will answer the questions honestly.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined clearly as they are used in the study:

Adolescence. The pivotal developmental period that occurs between the ages of 10 to 20 (Lerner & Steinberg, 2004).

Character Strengths. Seligman and Peterson (2004) define character strengths as: “the psychological ingredients- processes or mechanisms- that define the virtues (p. 13). They are observable ways of showing one or more of the virtues, or the strengths by which the virtues are achieved. There are 24 character strengths that correspond with the six virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Outdoor Recreation. Activities which are socially constructed and morally acceptable that take place in a natural outdoor setting. i.e., rock climbing, mountain biking, back packing, soccer, canoeing, etc. (Huff, 2002; Kraus, 1997)

Positive Youth Development (PYD). An interdisciplinary field that views youth as resources to be developed (Larson, 2000; Lerner et al., 2003). PYD centers on the individual child’s distinctive strengths, talents, potential, and interests rather than the approaches that focus on problems youth often encounter (Damon, 2004).

Service. Work done on behalf of another individual or organization. Examples of service performed in this study are: farm work done for others, meals provided for those in need, visiting widows and widowers, etc. (Peterson & Bateman, 2006).

Work. Physical labor performed individually or in a group usually in an outdoor setting. Examples of types of work performed in this study include moving hay, putting

up fence, digging thistles, gardening, meal-preparation, building construction, moving water pipe, animal care, and moving equipment. (Bennion, 1995a; Peterson & Bateman, 2006)

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

The problem of this study is to examine the perceptions of youth who participated in a summer youth development program, Birch Creek Service Ranch (BCSR), and the perceptions of their parents. In an effort to provide a conceptual foundation for this study, specific literature will be reviewed in this chapter. This literature review will help establish theoretical sensitivity (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The literature review is therefore divided in the following seven categories: (a) BCSR philosophy and programming; (b) Positive psychology and character strengths (c) Positive youth development (PYD); (d) Service/volunteerism in youth; (e) Physical work in adolescence; (f) Youth and outdoor recreation, (g) summary.

BCSR Philosophy and Programming

The Birch Creek Service Ranch (<http://www.birchcreekranch.org/>) was founded in 2003 as a non-profit summer program for youth, ages 12-15. The purpose of the ranch is to provide a rural, character building experience through community service, ranch work, outdoor recreational activities, discussions, and artistic endeavors. Each of the activities a youth participates in while at BCSR is designed to help that person grow by challenging them to do something new, serve another person, or dedicate themselves to an area in which they would like to improve. Through these challenges the youth experiences growth in character as they achieve success in an activity (Peterson & Bateman, 2006).

BCSR is based on the mission and philosophy of The Bennion Teton Boys Ranch (BTBR), a similar program, founded by Lowell Bennion in 1961 in Victor, Idaho. Bennion's objective was to provide an opportunity for young boys to experience hard ranch work, service and other recreational activities with the aim of increasing their work ethic, self-efficacy, and other character strengths (Peterson & Bateman, 2006). Bennion (1978) defined the strengths and virtues that he felt were most important in his personal life in *The Things That Matter Most*. He listed these in sequence of least to greatest importance: (a) health and economic sufficiency; (b) sensuous satisfactions; (c) human relationships; (d) learning; (e) integrity; (f) love; (g) freedom; (h) creativity; and (i) faith (Bennion, 1978).

BCSR has patterned its programming and objectives after Bennion's goals and values with the aim of helping youth develop into hard-working, well-rounded, service-oriented, competent individuals (Peterson & Bateman, 2006). To this point, there have been no systematic measures applied to the program to assess its efficacy in producing the anticipated goals. There has been, however, a recent growth in the area of character development in the field of positive psychology, and much research has been done concerning youth and the impact of various types of service, work, and outdoor recreation experiences on character development (Park, 2004b).

Positive Psychology and Character Strengths

Six years ago, the millennial issue of *American Psychologist* was devoted to the science of Positive Psychology, marking the inception of positive psychology as an emerging movement in psychological and social science research (Seligman, Steen, Park,

& Peterson, 2005). Positive psychology developed from a recognized need to counter an imbalance in the world of psychological study. For decades researchers have focused primarily on the study of mental illness, and how to assuage it (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Seligman, 2002; Seligman et al., 2005; Simonton & Baumeister, 2006). While this work is valuable, and great progress has been made in diagnosing and treating mental illness, it is myopic in focus (Gable & Haidt, 2005). Seligman and others felt a need to provide research and theory that would work to prevent mental illness, not just alleviate it (Seligman, 2002). They also found that being able to successfully treat a patient did not necessarily lead to happiness, or an improved quality of life. A patient treated for depression may be freed from the symptoms, but the outcome may be emptiness, rather than happiness.

In its essence, positive psychology is “the study of conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions” (Gable & Haidt, 2005, p. 104). It does not deny unpleasant, difficult or painful aspects of human life, nor does it try to see them through rose-colored glasses. Instead, it seeks to create a more integrated, holistic understanding of the full human condition—the highs and lows, the good times, the bad, and the in-between. It seeks to examine the flip side to depression, dysfunctional families, anxiety and other ailments, in hopes of providing an understanding to how humans feel joy, experience hope, and altruism to provide prevention that not only alleviates suffering, but increases happiness (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Seligman, 2002; Seligman et al., 2005).

In *Authentic Happiness*, Seligman (2002) outlined the three pillars of positive psychology: first, the study of positive emotion; second, the identification and study of character strengths and virtues (positive traits); and third, the study of positive institutions that enable and support positive traits, and in turn positive emotions. Seligman argued that studying these interrelated pillars is key in helping people find a road out of the difficult places in life by identifying character strengths, enhancing them through positive institutions and thus increasing positive emotion (Seligman, 2002).

Character strengths. Seligman (2002) stated: “renewing the notion of good character is a core assumption of Positive Psychology” (p. 125). Seligman argued that authentic happiness is not comprised as much of pleasure, but of gratification. Gratification comes as a result of exercising personal strengths through hard work and determination. Happiness that is attained via gratification is not only a much stronger antidote for depression, but serves as a buffer when difficulties arise, and promotes the attainment of a fulfilled life. Identifying and cultivating character strengths through positive institutions, is therefore paramount for achieving happiness and providing positive development (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2002; Steen, Kachorek, & Peterson, 2003).

One of the biggest challenges in unifying the disparate studies of positive emotion and promoting character traits prior to 2000 was a lack of clear definitions and measures for character and virtue. The ability to accurately describe, catalogue, and classify character has been one of the most important contributions thus far in forwarding the study of Positive Psychology. In 2004, Peterson and Seligman presented *Character*

Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification, a rigorous and extensive examination of both historical and modern texts to create a classification of character strengths similar to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) which catalogue mental illness (Dahlsgaard, 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman et al., 2005; Steen et al., 2003). With the aid of other noted scholars, they explored the writings, philosophies, and teachings from Aristotle and Plato, the Old Testament and Talmud, Buddha, Confucius, the Koran, Augustine, Benjamin Franklin and many others.

Across these vastly different traditions, and broad range of time and space, six virtues consistently and unanimously appeared: wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. The handbook gives a consensual definition of each of these virtues, and also outlines 24 corresponding character strengths (Dahlsgaard, 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Peterson and Seligman defined the virtues as “the core characteristics valued by moral philosophers and religious thinkers” (p. 13), whereas character strengths “are the psychological ingredients—processes or mechanisms—that define the virtues” (p. 13).

Character strengths and youth. One of the driving motives behind the entire Positive Psychology movement and the subsequent classification of character strengths is a concern for youth and youth development. Seligman (2002) cited an experience watching his young daughter Nikki that illuminated to him the need for the development of Positive Psychology:

Raising children . . . is far more than just fixing what was wrong with them. It is about identifying and amplifying their strengths and virtues, and helping them

find the niche where they can live these positive traits to the fullest . . . The vast psychological literature on suffering is not very applicable to Nikki. A better psychology for her and children everywhere will view positive motivations . . . as being just as authentic as the darker motives . . . it will ask how children can acquire the strengths and virtues whose exercise leads to positive feelings. It will ask about the positive institutions that promote these strengths and virtues. It will guide us all along better paths to the good life. (pp. 28-29).

Positive Psychology emerged to provide information, measures, and programs that teach children and adolescents the tools to improve their lives by helping them identify, acquire, and increase character strengths (Park, 2004b; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2002; Steen et al., 2003). Positive Psychology researchers have spent much time seeking to understand and apply character strengths to youth and youth development in the field of Positive Youth Development (PYD) (Dahlsgaard, 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Steen et al., 2003).

Positive Youth Development

Parallel to the development of Positive Psychology, is the emergence of Positive Youth Development (PYD) (Steen et al., 2003). The interdisciplinary field of PYD centers on the individual child's distinctive strengths, talents, potential, and interests rather than the approaches that focus on problems youth often encounter (e.g. substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, learning disabilities, etc.) (Damon, 2004; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The primary goal of PYD is developing youth (Larson, 2000); youth who experience more positive than negative effect in their lives, who have high life

satisfaction, and who know their personal strengths, and use them to contribute to society (Peterson, 2004).

Since the 1950s, major federal funding initiatives have been developed to intervene in a large range of specific problems youth encounter. Three decades ago, the first preventative measures were introduced with a focus on helping youth before the problem occurred. However, these efforts lacked a theoretical basis and both treatment and prevention programs usually focused on a single issue. Over time, drawing from increasing longitudinal studies that indicated predictors for negative behavior, practitioners, policy makers, and prevention researchers began to realize the interrelatedness of many negative issues, and realized that single-issue behavior focus would not suffice in research or programming. They also found that focusing on positive development programs inherently reduced the risk of problem outcomes. They realized a successful transition to adulthood involved more than an avoidance of negative behaviors (drugs, violence, failure in school, etc.), and saw that attention to a child's emotional, cognitive and social development was key to prevention and promotion (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004).

Subsequent to these observations and the rising concern for America's youth, came an influx of youth development programs in private, public, and government sectors. Although many of these programs have produced some positive outcomes, there is a concern of the real (measured) effectiveness of these programs. Without a unifying theoretical foundation, and measures to assess outcomes, it is difficult to determine the efficacy of these varied programs (Park, 2004b; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

In an effort to provide unification and promote effective programs, leading scientists met with government planning and evaluation staff to create the operational definition of Positive Youth Development (PYD). PYD programs are those that seek to promote bonding, resilience, social/emotional/cognitive/behavioral/moral competence, foster self-determination, spirituality, self-efficacy, clear and positive identity, hope for the future, and promote and provide recognition of positive behavior, prosocial involvement, and prosocial norms (Catalano et al., 2004).

Character strengths and PYD. The stated aim of PYD is to develop youth who not only endure through adversity, but show continual development towards a life of authentic happiness (Larson, 2000; Park, 2004b). This goal is also at the heart of Positive Psychology with its threefold mission to promote positive emotion, positive traits (character strengths) and positive institutions; asserting that the best life is not simply the life free of dysfunction, but one replete with subjective-well being, or happiness (Park, 2004c; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2002; Steen et al., 2003). The relationship of these two fields is strong and the two have been intertwined in a cause and effect congruous growth since their inceptions. In fact, the initial reasons for creating *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* (2004) arose out of two questions: how are concepts of character, strength, and highest potential defined, and how can it be determined whether a PYD program is meeting its goals? These questions, and the research that has developed from them, are attempts at understanding exactly what aspects need to be developed if the goal is to develop youth (Larson, 2000; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Researchers have shown that there is still much to be learned about the mechanisms of positive development and how they may prevent dysfunction and other psychological problems. Park (2004) stated there is a need for a “systematic empirical study of the mechanisms by which various strengths have effects on outcomes” (p. 50). Currently many researchers are examining what types of programs help build character (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Studies indicate that youth programs that include service learning and other community service components help to build character strengths of altruism, kindness, and responsibility (Park, 2004b).

Service/Volunteerism in Youth

Youth volunteerism and various service activities play an important role in the field of PYD. Elements of service have been used in a variety of types of programming and a number of positive outcomes have been evaluated. A qualitative study by Arai and Pedlar (1997) examined volunteerism as a leisure activity. Their study showed five emergent themes that identified perceived benefits of participating in volunteerism: (a) acquiring and improving skills; (b) having a voice in the community; (c) creating balance and experiencing renewal in life through volunteering; (d) making an observable difference through group cooperation and work; and (e) being a part of community development (Arai & Pedlar, 1997; Palmer, 2005a; Wilson, 2000). Wilson (2000) found that “positive effects are found for life-satisfaction, self-esteem, self-rated health, and for educational and occupational achievement, functional ability, and mortality” (p. 215).

Another key benefit of volunteering is that youth often gain an appreciation for what they have. In serving others who may have less or live in more difficult

circumstances, youth gain perspective on what they do have, and become more grateful as their own problems are put in perspective (Littlepage et al., 2003). In addition, youth who participate in volunteerism or service are also less likely to engage in problem behaviors such as drug abuse or deviant behavior (Johnson, 1998). A recent study by Killen (1998), found a positive correlation between volunteerism and higher academic achievement in youth who regularly volunteered.

Serving with others, especially adults, has proven to help deepen the service experience for youth. Research shows that in volunteering, especially with family members or other adults, adolescents values are strengthened as they see parents or adults as positive, active role models. They see real life examples of values in action and become more likely to continue a tradition of service and volunteerism throughout their lives (Bowen & Mckechnie, 2002; Littlepage et al., 2003).

At BCSR, youth are continually serving with their adult counselor counterparts, and are actively engaged in helping those in the community who cannot always help themselves. They are exposed to a variety of types of service and see both immediate rewards, such as the gratitude of the individual served, and long term benefits, such as returning the next year to see the fence they built still standing and being used. Key to the service BCSR participants render is the aspect of physical work, as most projects involve hard work, and the sacrifice of their own physical comfort and ease.

Physical Work in Adolescence

Very little research has been done concerning physical work in adolescent development. Most literature focuses on the effects of paid employment in adolescent

behavior, and the transition into the adult workforce (Staff, Mortimer, & Uggen, 2004). The type of work done at BCSR, and discussed in this study is not closely related to paid employment as it is done voluntarily and is physically demanding in nature. This type of physical work and its benefits is related to the issue of developing work ethic in youth (Cherrington, 1980). It is also related to a small amount of research regarding youth and farm work that is applicable (Conger & Elder, 1994; Larson & Dearthmont, 2002). Physical work is touched on also in some family work literature, (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995; Bahr & Loveless, 2000; Cherrington, 1980; Manwaring & Bahr, 2003; Palmer, 2005a).

Family work. Family work research examines the role of youth in the context of family responsibility and work, such as basic chores and helping out with the daily functioning of the family and household, and how values can be transmitted through these avenues. In 1960, Lee gave the example of the value transferences that took place as she shelled peas with her oldest child, a typical family work chore. As time went on Lee began buying her peas already shelled and frozen. This saved her time, and the frozen peas had the same nutrition content. Lee pointed out, however, that getting a bowl of peas was not all she gained when she shelled peas with her daughter. Rather, it was a process in which she and her daughter spent time together, she taught her daughter food production skills, and together they contributed to the well-being of their family. Lee stressed the importance of replacing these valuable components as we trade in forms of family work for the ease of modern convenience. She advocated finding ways to compensate for the meaning of that simple task of shelling peas through other family work (Lee, 1960).

In more recent studies, the issue of value transference has been addressed in terms of the way family work is viewed within the family system, whether it is seen as an economic arrangement, or one of moral importance (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995; Bahr & Loveless, 2000; Manwaring & Bahr, 2003). Manwaring and Bahr describe the difference between a “moral” and an “economic” family realm (p. 3). In a moral family realm, family members exhibit altruism through their concern for the well-being and development of each other. They are willing to sacrifice and are willing to respond to the needs of others. In an economic family realm autonomy and self-interest dictate inter-familial relationships, which are based on economic principles of exchange and profit. Work is done with the sole purpose of economic reward or individual benefit/status (Manwaring & Bahr, 2003). In an economic setting, paid work is seen as more valuable and housework is seen as degrading, boring, and menial. The way to avoid such unpleasant tasks is to buy goods that greatly lessen or eliminate the task (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995).

Researchers (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995) have found that families who approach work in the home from the economic vantage point of the measurable product, be it laundry done, a meal cooked, or a room picked up, miss the “invisible household production” (p. 26). This production takes place parallel to the physical tasks, but yields “more important family-building and character development than the economic products” (p. 26). This is where the real value of family work is found, as links between family members are forged through joint effort and cooperation, and continual opportunities to help one another are provided through daily tasks that sustain the family, just as Lee

(1960) found as she shelled peas with her daughter (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995).

When family work is approached from a moral viewpoint, and the invisible household production takes place, it can be a key component in the maintenance of a family in physical, mental and spiritual terms (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995). Palmer (2005) stated: “As the family becomes less involved with daily work tasks they lose the connections and bonds that are formed in working together and caring for others” (p. 73). Family work involves the combined effort of all members, has a real and meaningful result (like a new fence put up, clean windows, or vegetables to eat from the family garden), and strengthens relationships through cooperation and communication (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995; Goodnow, 1988; Palmer, 2005a). Also new skills are gained as family work provides “an area of teaching and learning that is part of everyday life, salient to parents and children alike” (Goodnow & Warton, 1991, p. 30).

While work at BCSR does not take place within the family of the participants, many of the principles and benefits of family work are applicable. The work at BCSR is not done for any economic benefit of the individual participants, or the organization as a whole. Many of the work tasks are done for the well-being of the group, such as cooking, doing dishes, building structures, or gardening. Other projects are done as service to members of the larger community whether it is local farmers, widows, or others with a specific need. Working together may cause the boys to strengthen their skills to cooperate, communicate and work as a team. New skills are taught and learned, and participants may learn to value more menial tasks and learn, as Lowell Bennion put it,

“the joy of honest labor” (Bradford, 1995, p. 201). A transference of values, and the value of work that takes place in family work, may also take place in work projects at BCSR.

Youth and work ethic. The classic study, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, asserts that work is a central and legitimate fact of life. Weber felt the main concept of work ethos is that each person needs to work in order to have a purposeful life (Bradford, 1995, p. 201). While the Protestant work ethic has long since departed as the norm in the American workplace, it can still be distinguished in the roots of social work value. A good work ethic is still valued, and considered a key to success (ter Bogt, Raaijmakers, & van Wel, 2005). Teaching youth to have a good work ethic may, therefore, be important in their character formation, and transference of other values.

Researchers have shown that teaching work ethic values to youth has many positive benefits. Cherrington (1980) gave six justifications for the need of teaching work ethic to youth: (a) it is a religious principle; (b) work brings success; (c) strong work ethic will create character and happiness; (d) work improves health; (e) learning to work improves quality of education; and (f) work benefits society (p. 82-83). He stated: “Children should be given opportunities to work” (p. 86), and there need to be opportunities for “teaching work values to youth in the home as well as on the job. Young workers needed to learn the dignity of labor and pride in craftsmanship” (p. 86). Cherrington listed the benefits of a strong work ethic as (a) higher quality of life; (b) job satisfaction; (c) development of discipline and self-control; and (d) internalization of values and values transference. Another benefit of a good work ethic is a decrease in delinquent behavior. Youth who are unwilling to engage in hard work, self-denial or

delayed gratification are prone to delinquent behavior (Axelsoon et al., 2005; Cherrington, 1980; Conger & Elder, 1994). In a more recent study, researchers found that quality of life, sense of coherence, and good health were each positively associated with a high work ethic (Agnew, 1984).

It is clear that the teaching of work ethic can be very beneficial to youth, and researchers have sought to distinguish how this takes place. Work ethic is primarily formed during childhood and adolescence and is shaped by a variety of factors. Much of a person's internalization of work values comes from observing parent's work ethic and parenting style be it authoritative or permissive (Axelsoon et al., 2005). In addition to observing positive work examples, youth need to be given opportunities to have their own positive work experiences (Cherrington, 1980; ter Bogt et al., 2005). Giving adolescents opportunities to participate in menial and difficult tasks is integral in helping them learn the importance of work, and develop a work ethic that will help them succeed in future vocations (Cherrington, 1980). Today many youth are lacking in these types of experiences, and are, therefore, at a disadvantage when it comes to reaping the benefits of a strong work ethic.

Geoffrey Canada (1998), founder of Rheedlen, a program that teaches inner city youth to work, concluded that many boys who come to their first job are unprepared to work hard.

I have found that many boys come . . . with no real understanding of what hard work means. This is a tremendous handicap . . . There is often a set of responsibilities and expectations placed on girls at home that helps prepare them

for other work experiences. But much too often nothing of the sort is expected of boys. We know that much of being able to understand and excel in the workplace has to do with the attitudes, habits, and experiences we have had before we ever arrive at that first paying job. Many boys are unprepared for this new experience (pp. 27-28).

Canada continued admonishing parents and other youth leaders to give youth real jobs that will teach them the value of hard work. In former times children were introduced to work in the home early on, but in today's society parents sometimes seem to avoid giving their children any real work. Canada feels his work ethic was formed in hard work done for no pay with his grandmother (Canada, 1998).

This sort of hard work, done for no pay, and balanced with recreation and service is done at BTBR and BCSR. Youth are taught skills for a variety of work tasks and are able to see the effects of their hard work such as building a pond, eating vegetables they helped grow, or seeing the appreciation of a farmer they move hay for. Strong work ethic is also learned through the example of the counselors. A counselor from BTBR recalls how Lowell taught the youth to respect every type of job (Canada, 1998).

He would take time to explain how to use the tools, how to get them ready, how to put them away. It seemed just as important to him as anything else. This reverence for manual labor inspired many of us. He spoke of the three characteristics of a job well done: (1) Be functional; i.e., a post hole should withstand the winter; (2) Be sound; and (3) Be aesthetically pleasing (a fence post should be well placed) (p. 184).

Modeling good work ethic and providing boys opportunities to learn to work hard

are integral in adolescent work ethic formation (Bradford, 1995). Hard work experiences were readily available to most youth a century ago in the form of farm work (Conger & Elder, 1994). Many benefits and principles related to farm work can be related to the transference of work values and work ethic.

Youth and farm work. At the turn of the 20th century, farm work was a part of many children and adolescents lives. Today, very few children grow up on a farm and the general stereotype for those who do, is that they are limited by the work they do on the farm in terms of social, academic, and extracurricular activities (Canada, 1998; Cherrington, 1980). However, in a longitudinal study looking at adolescents in rural farming communities, Conger and Elder (1994) argued that farm life did not limit a child, but rather supplied them with unique experiences that separate them from their urban or rural peers who do not participate in farm work. Conger and Elder (1994) identified several benefits for youth who work on family farms. First, farming communities have strong and unique characteristics such as hard work ethic, determination, and often religious values that shape the lives of their children. These community values influence the way youth view work as a way of life, not just a means for economic support (Larson & Dearthmont, 2002).

Larson and Dearthmont (2002) found that youth who are given real work responsibilities on a farm have a strong sense of belonging because they are making a real contribution to the well-being of their family. Real and challenging tasks, with real consequences, increase resiliency and self-efficacy (Conger & Elder, 1994). Farming parents often trust their adolescent children's opinions, and counsel with them about real

issues and decisions concerning the farm. The responsibility and trust given to farm children help build strong values of hard work, self-reliance, responsibility, and commitment to family and community (Conger & Elder, 1994; Larson & Dearthmont, 2002). While the boys at BCSR are not working on a family farm, similar values or lessons may be gained as they are given real, challenging work projects, and real responsibilities that affect the whole group, and often the larger community. In addition to learning these lessons from the physical work done at BCSR, the boys are also given opportunities to face challenges and work hard in recreational pursuits.

Youth and Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreational experiences have been considered a viable catalyst for meaningful educational experiences throughout the ages. Plato argued that physical outdoor activities accomplish far more than the simple obtaining of physical skills, and that there is a higher educational and moral value that surpasses the physical aspects (Conger & Elder, 1994; Larson & Dearthmont, 2002). More recent scholars have cited the virtues of outdoor experience as related to the types of responses that are required when dealing with the natural environment, such as cooperation, resourcefulness, persistence, planning, and in the moment thinking and decision making (Hattie, Marsh, & Neill, 1997; Hattie, 1997).

Because of these inherent virtues, there has been a marked increase in the number of outdoor recreation programs for youth during the last century (Hattie, 1997). This is evidenced by the presence of over 2,000 outdoor recreation camps registered with the American Camping Association, and over 700 wilderness based experiential programs

that have been identified in the United States. These programs range in purpose from therapy, intervention, and rehabilitation, to education, leadership, growth, and/or organizational development (Caldwell, 2005). With the advent of PYD there has been a subsequent push to provide a more systematic appraisal of the effectiveness of these programs, and to determine the theoretical underpinnings of their design. As a result, numerous studies have been conducted trying to determine the outcomes of these programs.

Research indicates that adventure programs positively impact youth in a variety of ways: emotional, social, and even physical development. Increased emotional well-being, self-esteem, leadership skills, academic performance, and identity formation, are some known outcomes from various outdoor recreation programs (Berman & Davis-Berman, 2000b). New skills are often learned in outdoor recreation programs and adolescents often develop new hobbies such as rock climbing, sailing, or hiking. As they encounter new experiences in a new environment youth become more open to trying new things and less inhibited both physically and socially (Berman & Davis-Berman, 2000b; Duerden, 2006; Ewert, 2001).

Prosocial behavior is encouraged in the setting of outdoor recreation. By working in groups youth can develop greater ability to participate with peers and become more socially comfortable (Berman & Davis-Berman, 2000b). Like volunteering, outdoor recreation programs provide youth with the opportunity to meet people that may be different from them in background, culture, or situation, learning to respond differently and broaden their scope of thinking (Ewert, 2001).

At BCSR, youth participate in a host of outdoor recreational activities such as rock climbing, mountain biking, canoeing, back packing, and various sports. These activities may provide the benefits of outdoor recreation as they challenge the boys and provide them with opportunities to learn new skills, work as a team, increase in self-efficacy, or become better leaders. Understanding the outcomes and/or benefits of outdoor recreation at BCSR will be beneficial in assessing the program, and in understanding how outdoor recreation works in combination with service and physical work.

Summary

BCSR is a three and a half week youth program that consists of physical work projects, service, and outdoor recreation. The inherent goals and objectives of the program are to provide experiences that will challenge the youth and contribute to their character development by teaching them the value of hard work, serving others, and the enjoyment of outdoor activities (Berman & Davis-Berman, 2000b). While the hope is that these goals are met, there have been no systematic studies done on the outcomes of this program.

Positive Psychology is the study of optimal experience and seeks to understand and promote all facets of the human condition- both the good and the bad- in order to promote and aid in achieving authentic happiness (Peterson & Bateman, 2006). Seligman (2002) asserts that a key to authentic happiness, or gratification, lies in the identification and use of personal character strengths (Seligman, 1991, 2002). There is a need to create or identify institutions or programs that help identify and cultivate character strengths in

order to promote positive development in individuals (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2002).

In an effort to identify and evaluate programs that contribute to the promotion of optimal experience the field of PYD has emerged to unify and provide systematic cataloguing of existing and new youth programs. PYD seeks to provide programming that helps youth develop and experience more positive than negative effects in their lives, have high life satisfaction, and know and use their character strengths to contribute to society (Steen et al., 2003). There are many researchers examining existing programs and creating new ones that help build character (Catalano et al., 2004; Larson, 2000; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Youth service and volunteerism have been examined, and found to play an important part in the field of PYD (Park, 2004b). A number of studies have identified various benefits of youth participating in volunteerism as a leisure activity including: acquiring and improving skills; community connection and voice; making a difference in a group or community; improved academic performance; increased life-satisfaction, self-esteem, and mortality (Park, 2004b). Other benefits include youth developing an increased appreciation for what they have and a newfound perspective on their own problems and challenges as they encounter those who may have more difficult life circumstances (Arai & Pedlar, 1997; Palmer, 2005b).

Benefits that may contribute to character formation have also been found in the little research regarding physical work and youth. While no direct research in found specifically regarding programs that include physical work and youth, the literature on

family work, work ethic, and farm work offers some valuable insight. Family work research shows that youth participating in family chores and work learn the value of work, co-operation and communication skills, and experience a strengthened connection to their family through contributing through meaningful work to the well being of the unit (Littlepage et al., 2003). Similarly studies on farm work and youth show that by being given real responsibilities and work youth experience a strong sense of belonging and increase in resiliency and self-efficacy (Ahlander & Bahr, 1995; Bahr & Loveless, 2000). Research regarding youth and work ethic formation show that internalization of work patterns and habits are formed during adolescence and are greatly influenced by positive examples and role models found in parents, teachers, and leaders (Conger & Elder, 1994; Larson & Dearmont, 2002). It is evident from these various fields of research that there are many positive outcomes linked with physical work and youth, especially within the context of a family or community setting.

Additionally, a variety of benefits have been shown in the research regarding youth and outdoor recreation. The outdoor setting encourages and creates opportunities for youth to develop skills such as cooperation, resourcefulness, persistence, planning and spontaneous decision making and thinking (Cherrington, 1980; ter Bogt et al., 2005). Other studies have shown positive impacts from outdoor programming such as increased emotional well-being, self-esteem, leadership, academic performance, identity and pro-social behavior (Hattie et al., 1997).

Chapter 3

Methods

The problem of this study is to examine the perceptions of participants from a three-week youth ranch program. Specifically, this study will gather data regarding the perceptions from youth and their parents, who participated in Birch Creek Service Ranch (BCSR) summer camp, which is comprised of work, service and outdoor recreation activities. A grounded theory approach based on in-depth face-to-face interviews with youth and their parents will be used to address the problem. This chapter will address the following: (a) rationale for a qualitative approach, (b) the selection of study participants, (c) arrangements for conducting the study, (d) the interview schedule, and (e) data collection and analysis.

Rational for Qualitative Approach

The Positive Youth Development movement is driven by a need to assess the wide range of youth programming in America today, both those with and without theoretical underpinnings, and to determine which outcomes are related to which types of programs (Berman & Davis-Berman, 2000a; Duerden, 2006). Currently, there is no research on positive, preventative programs that integrate physical work activities, service projects and recreation, nor is there a guiding theory based on such programs. Therefore, a grounded theory approach, based on in-depth interviewing, will be employed to investigate the research question. Interviewing is one of the most effective ways for understanding a subject in depth and gaining an understanding into the experience of an individual (Park, 2004b; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Understanding an individual's

perceived reality is important in helping researchers more fully explain and predict behavior. Situations viewed as real produce real consequences (Henderson, 1991). Interviews can not only provide description and details from the participants, but also provide needed data that is used to render hypotheses into grounded theory (Maruna & Butler, 2005).

Strauss and Corbin (1998) state that grounded theory is “theory that was derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process” (p. 12). Grounded theory differs from a straight descriptive study in that grounded theory is intended to create concepts, conceptually label the data, assign interpretations to the data, and construct explanatory frameworks from the data. Specific steps are employed in grounded theory, similar to those used in a quantitative study including: (a) determining the research problem and question, (b) becoming sensitive to salient theories through a review of literature, (c) coding data, and (d) analyzing the coded data (Henderson, 1991; Palmer, 2005a).

Grounded theory moves beyond mere description and attempts to give “a conceptual theory abstract of time, place and people” (Palmer, 2005a; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In this process the data is moved beyond the state of simple findings, descriptions or facts and into “conceptualizations integrated into theory- a set of plausible, grounded hypothesis” (B.G. Glaser, 2004, p. 11) In order to better understand the phenomenon of BCSR and its programming, the methodology of grounded theory will be used.

Selection of Participants

At least ten boys and their parents will be selected from BCSR 2006 and 2007 and invited to be interviewed. If saturation is not achieved after ten then further participants will be contacted and interviewed until saturation is reached. For the purpose of this study saturation will occur when no new themes or descriptive codes emerge from the data analysis.

Boys selected will include those who were new to BCSR in 2006 or 2007, as well as those who were returning participants. Specific criteria for boys and their parents will be (a) they have participated in either the first or second session of BCSR in the summer of 2006 for the full three weeks, and (b) either one or both parents are willing to participate.

Arrangements for Conducting the Study

Letters via email or postal service will be sent to participants from BCSR 2006 and 2007 asking them to participate in the study. Participants will be chosen from those who respond with an effort to create a representative sample of ages, and new or returning campers. Once participants have been determined, boys and their parents will be contacted via telephone. They will be instructed as to study design, and face-to-face, one-to-one interviews will be scheduled with both parents and boys. All of the interviews will be tape-recorded and transcribed.

Each participant will sign a consent form indicating their willingness to participate in this study voluntarily, and permission to be tape recorded (see Appendix B). No real names of participants will be used in order to ensure anonymity. After the

interviews have been conducted the researcher will transcribe the interviews, and the tapes will be kept in a locked office accessed only by the researcher (B.G. Glaser, 2004, p. 11).

Interview Schedule

At the beginning of each interview, the interviewer will give an explanation of the purpose of this study to discuss with participants their perceptions and experience about BCSR. The researcher will also give information about how they became interested in this project and qualitative methodology (Henderson, 1991). A list of questions is in Appendix A.

The questions will be divided according to type of participant being interviewed, boy or parent, and will be organized in three main sections. The first section for all participants, will ask questions dealing with demographic issues such as age, income, family size, vocation etc. in order to ease them into the interview process (Palmer, 2005a). For the boys, the second section will ask about their perceived experience and/or changes at BCSR, and the third section will address their reactions to the work and activities at the ranch. For the parents, the second section will ask what their children reported to them either during (via letter) or after the program of their perceived experience. The third section will have to do with the changes (positive or negative) perceived by the parents in months following the program. The questions will be arranged so that more general questions are towards the beginning of the interview, with more direct and specific questions coming after. Questions will be open-ended, clear, singular, and neutral (Henderson, 1991; Palmer, 2005a).

Data Collection and Analysis

Semi-structured interviews using open-ended and standardized questions will be conducted to collect data. In addition, entries from journals, letters home, and other information may be analyzed to further understand the phenomenon. Trustworthiness will be established through meeting the criteria for evaluation of that data. Strauss and Corbin (1998), outline these criteria as the validity, reliability, and credibility of the data, as well as examining the adequacy of the research process and the overall empirical groundings of the research.

Validity, reliability and credibility will be addressed through a process of triangulation, prolonged engagement, cross-checking, and member checking (Henderson, 1991). Triangulation will be used to examine consistency in findings and improve validation and verification as sources are tested against one another at various points in the analysis (Fetterman, 1998; Henderson, 1991; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Member checking will take place as participants are provided with copies of the interview transcripts that include questions, interpretations and insights the coder has assigned. Participant will be asked to review the transcript and asked if they agree or disagree with the interpretations, if the insights accurately reflect their experience, and will be asked to answer any clarifying questions (Fetterman, 1998). The research process and empirical groundings will be examined in terms of the major categories that emerge and the concepts generated from those categories. These categories and concept will emerge through data analysis.

To promote honest and accurate responses from the participants, rapport will be established between the interviewer and interviewee (Palmer, 2005a). The researcher will have established a relationship of trust with the boys through one-on-one personal interaction throughout the ranch program in work, service, and recreational activities, as well as daily camp living (eating meals together, campfire talks, etc.). The questions will be standardized and open ended to allow for individualized responses to the same questions. This will allow for greater comparability amongst results, while still allowing for personalized answers (Henderson, 1991). The interviewer will take notes, in addition to tape recording the interview, that will include detailed memos of the interview, thoughts the interviewee had during the interview, thoughts of the researcher, and any other pertinent comments (Henderson, 1991; Palmer, 2005a).

QSR NVivo computer program will be used to organize and code the data. The recorded interviews will be fully transcribed and then rechecked against the recording to ensure accuracy. The notes taken by the interviewer will be entered into the program as memos, and the demographic and background information on participants will be put into an organization table.

The interview data gathered in this study will be analyzed using a grounded theory approach. Through a process of constant comparison, the data will be read and open, line-by-line, coding will be used to identify the overall purpose of the data, conceptualize the observed phenomenon and establish specific categories and subcategories. In order to maintain the rich and detailed information of the data, the codes will be descriptive, interpretive, and explanatory (Palmer, 2005, Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Each interview will be coded after it takes place in order to identify what phenomenon, categories and ideas emerge from the data. This emerging information may help reframe or direct future interviews and create a deeper sensitivity to emerging themes (Palmer, 2005a; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

In constant comparison, the data will first be coded using open descriptive coding, with meaning being attached to codes based on the original questions. Then the data will be analyzed at a deeper level through interpretive and explanatory coding (Henderson, 1991; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) After data has been coded for general categories and subcategories, axial coding will be employed to further develop categories. In axial coding, the data will be reviewed to identify connections between subcategories and the main category through a paradigm model. This process will help to further understand the data through deepening the categories and analyzing data through in-depth questioning and comparing data to categories for verification (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Next, categories are combined and then compared to each other through the process of axial coding. This process may identify connections between codes and help in drawing larger categories and conclusions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The final step in constant comparison is to refine the emerging themes, locate disconfirming evidence, and seek to identify any diversity in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Through this process of open and then selective coding, a central category will emerge as various categories are tested through axial coding. Various techniques will be employed to facilitate the emergence of a central category such as writing down a story line, seeking to move the data from description to conceptualization, writing the data and

codes out in a diagram or chart, and sorting through coding notes and memos. During this process theory will emerge from this central idea or category, as other categories are related to it and explained. Once this theoretical scheme is in place it can be refined, trimmed, and poorly developed areas filled out. The theory can then be validated by comparing it to the raw data, and having independent reviewers do the same (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

References

- Agnew, R. (1984). The work ethic and delinquency. *Sociological Focus*, 17(4), 337-346.
- Ahlander, N. R., & Bahr, K. S. (1995). Beyond drudgery, power, and equity: Toward an expanded discourse on the moral dimensions of housework in families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 57(1), 54-68.
- Arai, S. M., & Pedlar, A. M. (1997). Beddington communities through leisure: Citizen participation in a healthy communities initiative. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 29(2), 167-182.
- Axelsoon, L., Andersson, I., Hakansson, A., & Ejlertsson, G. (2005). Work ethics and general work attitudes in adolescents are related to quality of life, sense of coherence and subjective health- a Swedish questionnaire study. *BioMed Central Public Health*, 5(103), 1-10.
- B.G. Glaser, J. H. (2004). Remodling grounded theory. *The Grounded Theory Review: An International Journal*, 4(1), 1-24.
- Bahr, K. S., & Loveless, C. A. (2000). Family work. *Brigham Young Magazine*, 54, 25-34.
- Bennion, L. L. (1978). *The things that matter most* (1st ed.). Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, Inc. .
- Bennion, S. D. (1992). *Summary history of the Bennion Teton Boys Ranch*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Bennion, S. D. (1995). *Summary history of the Bennion Teton Boys Ranch*. Unpublished manuscript.

- Berman, D. S., & Davis-Berman, J. (2000a). Therapeutic uses of outdoor education.
- Berman, D. S., & Davis-Berman, J. (2000b). Therapeutic uses of outdoor education.
Retrieved April 20, 2006
- Bowen, P., & Mckechnie, A. J. (2002). *Family volunteering: A discussion paper*.
Toronto: Volunteer Canada.
- Bradford, M. L. (1995). *Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, counselor, humanitarian*. Salt Lake
City, UT: Signature Books.
- Caldwell, L. L. (2005). Recreation and youth development. In P. A. Witt & L. L.
Caldwell (Eds.), *Recreation and youth development* (pp. 169-191). State College,
PA Venture Publishing, Inc. .
- Canada, G. (1998). Work. *American Educator*, 22(3), 24-29, 44.
- Catalano, R. F., Berglund, M. L., Ryan, J. A. M., Lonczak, H. S., & Hawkins, J. D.
(2004). Positive youth development in the United States: Research findings on
evaluations of positive youth development programs. *The Annals of the American
Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591(98), 98-124.
- Cherrington, D. J. (1980). *The work ethic: Working values and the values that work*. New
York: Amacon.
- Conger, R. D., & Elder, G. H., Jr. . (1994). *Families in troubled times: Adapting to
change in rural America*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York:
Harper Perennial.

- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & LeFevre, J. (1989). Optimal experience in work and leisure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56(5), 815-822.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Schneider, B. (2000). *Becoming adult: How teenagers prepare for the world of work*. New York: Basic Books.
- Dahlsgaard, K. K. (2005). *Is virtue more than its own reward? Character strengths and their relation to well-being in a prospective, longitudinal study of middle school-aged adolescents*. Unpublished Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Hold.
- Damon, W. (2004). What is positive youth development? *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591, 13-24.
- Duerden, M. (2006). *An examination of the relationship between adventure recreation and adolescent identity development*. Brigham Young University, Provo UT.
- Eckhart, A. S. (1998). *Benefit-based leisure programming: An analysis of the usage of risk and protective factors for resiliency development with recreation participants*: Ohio Parks and Recreation Association.
- Ewert, A. W., McCormick, B.P., & Voight, A.E. (2001). Outdoor experiential therapies: implications for TR practices. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 35(2), 107-122.
- Fetterman, D. (1998). *Ethnography: Step by step*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Gable, S. L., & Haidt, J. (2005). What (and why) is Positive Psychology? *Review of General Psychology*, 9(2), 103-110.
- Goodnow, J. J. (1988). Children's household work: Its nature and functions. *Psychological Bulletin*, 103, 5-26.

- Goodnow, J. J., & Warton, P. M. (1991). The social bases of social cognition: Interactions about work and their implications. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 37, 27-58.
- Hattie, J., Marsh, H., & Neill, J. (1997). Adventure education and outward bound: Out-of-class experiences that make a lasting difference. *Review of Educational Research*, 67(1), 43-87.
- Hattie, J., Marsh, H.W., Neill, J. . (1997). Adventure education and outward boun: Out-of-class experiences that make a lasting difference. *Review of Educational Research*, 67(1), 43-87.
- Haworth, J. T. (1997). *Work, leisure and Well-being*. London: Routhledge.
- Haworth, J. T., & Lewis, S. (2005). Work, leisure and well-being. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 33(1), 67-79.
- Henderson, K. A. (1991). *Dimension of choice: A qualitative approach to recreation, parks, and leisure research*. State College, PA: Venture Publishing, Inc. .
- Huff, C. (2002). *The influence of challenging family outdoor recreation on parent-adolescent communication*. Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- Johnson, M. K. (1998). Volunteerism in adolescence: A process perspective. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 8(3), 309-332.
- Johnson, M. K., Beebe, T., Mortimer, J. T., & Snyder, M. (1998). Volunteerism in adolescence: A process perspective. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 8(3), 309-332.

- Killen, M. (1998). Adolescents' and young adults' evaluations of helping and sacrificing for others. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 8 (3), 355-375.
- Kimiecik, J. C., & Harris, A. T. (1996). What is enjoyment? A conceptual/definitional analysis with implications for sport and exercise psychology. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 18(3), 247-263.
- Kraus, R. (1997). *Recreation and leisure in modern society* (5th ed.). Reading, Massachusetts: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc. .
- Larson, N. C., & Dearmont, M. (2002). Strengths of farming communities in fostering resilience in children. *Child Welfare League of America*, LXXXI(5), 821-835.
- Larson, R. W. (2000). Toward a psychology of positive youth development. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 150-183.
- Lee, D. (1960). The individual in a changing society. *Journal of Home Economics*, 52(2), 79-82.
- Lerner, R. M., Dowling, E. M., & Anderson, P. M. (2003). Positive youth development: Thriving as the basis of personhood and civil society. *Applied Developmental Science*, 7(3), 172-180.
- Lerner, R. M., & Steinberg, L. (2004). The scientific study of adolescent development: Past, present, and future. In R. M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 1-12). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Littlepage, L., Obergfell, E., & Zanin, G. (2003). *Family volunteering: An exploratory study of the impact of families*. Perdue, Indiana: Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, School of Public and Environmental Affairs.

- Louv, R. (2008). *Last child in the woods* (Revised and Updated ed.). Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill.
- Mahoney, C. A., & Lafferty, C. K. (2003). Special issue: Positive youth development. *American Journal of Health Behavior, 27*, S3-S5.
- Manwaring, K. C., & Bahr, K. S. (2003). *Cultural contradictions of children, chores, and money*. Paper presented at the 33rd Annual National Council on Family Relations, Vancouver, BC, Canada.
- Maruna, S., & Butler, M. (2005). Phenomenology. In K. Kempf-Leonard (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of social measurement* (1st ed., Vol. 3, pp. 49-52). Amsterdam; Boston: Elsevier Academic Press.
- Palmer, A. (2005a). *Family deepening: A qualitative inquiry into the experience of families who participate in service missions*. Unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.
- Palmer, A. (2005b). *Family deepening: A qualitative inquiry into the experience of families who participate in service missions*. Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.
- Park, N. (2004a). Strengths of character and well-being. *Journal of Social & Clinical Psychology, 23*(5), 603-619.
- Park, N. (2004b). The role of subjective well-being in positive youth development. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 591*, 25-41.
- Peterson, C. (2004). Preface. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 591*(6).

- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. Washington, DC, New York: American Psychological Association; Oxford University Press.
- Peterson, E. S., & Bateman, J. A. (2006). Birch Creek Service Ranch Website.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (1991). *Learned optimism*. New York: A.A. Knopf.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). *Authentic happiness: Using the new Positive Psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment* (1st ed.). New York: Free Press.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive Psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist, 60*(5), 410-421.
- Simonton, D. K., & Baumeister, R. F. (2006). Positive Psychology at the summit. *Review of General Psychology, 9*(2), 99-102.
- Smith, D. S. (1997). Strengthening family values in the twenty-first century-home-centered recreation. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 68*(8), 39-41.
- Staff, J., Mortimer, J. T., & Uggen, C. (2004). Work and leisure in adolescence. In R. M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 429-450). New York Wiley.
- Steen, T. A., Kachorek, L. V., & Peterson, C. (2003). Character strengths among youth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 32*(1), 5-16.
- Straus, J. A. (1962). Work rules and financial responsibility in the socialization of farm, fringe, and town boys *Rural Sociology, 27*, 257-274.

- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc
- ter Bogt, T., Raaijmakers, Q., & van Wel, F. (2005). Socialization and development of the work ethic among adolescents and young adults. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 66*, 420-437.
- Wilson, J. (2000). Volunteering. *Annual Review of Sociology, 26*, 215-240.
- Witt, P. A., & Caldwell, L. L. (2005). 10 principles of youth development. In P. A. Witt & L. L. Caldwell (Eds.), *Recreation and youth development* (pp. 3-24). State College, PA: Venture Publishing, Inc. .

Appendix A - 1a

Consent to be a Research Participant

Informed Consent

Consent to be a Research Participant

Introduction

This research project is designed to help understand and improve recreation programming. The research study is being conducted by Zina Bennion, a Recreation Management Youth Leadership graduate student at Brigham Young University. Dr. Patti Freeman a RMYL professor at BYU, Dr. Mark Widmer RMYL professor at BYU, Dr. Staci Tanniguchi professor at Brigham Young University are consultants of this research.

The purpose of this research is to identify the perceived outcomes from participating in the three and a half week program of Birch Creek Service Ranch.

Procedures

As a research study participant, you will be interviewed one to two times. All interviews will be recorded, and the recordings will be transcribed.

Risks

This study carries no potential risks.

Benefits

The benefits of participating in this study will include contributing to the field of leisure studies.

Compensation

As compensation for your participation in this study you will be given a gift certificate for a free movie rental.

Confidentiality

Signing this consent form indicates your willingness to participate in this study voluntarily and to be tape recorded. No real names of participants will be used in order to ensure confidentiality of participants. After the interviews have been conducted the researcher will transcribe the interviews, and the tapes will be kept in a locked office accessed only by the researcher. Your identity as a subject of this study will be kept confidential to all outside of this study, but the researchers. You will not be personally identified in any publications, text, presentations, or conversations dealing with this study. In addition do not write your name on any questionnaires associated with this study.

Confidentiality will be maintained by the researcher concerning personal information given out, by you, in this study.

Questions about the Research

If you have any questions about this research study, you may contact: Zina Bennion, Department of Recreation Management and Youth Leadership, Brigham Young University, 273E Richards Building, Provo, Utah 84602, telephone number: (801) 367-8475, email: zbennion@gmail.com

Questions about your Rights as a Research Participant

If you wish to speak to someone regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact: Dr. Christopher Dromey, Chair of the Institutional Review Board of Human Participants, Brigham Young University, 133 TLRB, Provo, Utah 84602, telephone number: (801) 422-6461, email: christopher_dromey@byu.edu

Participation

Your participation as a subject of this study must be of your own volition and understanding that you are under no obligation to participate. You may withdraw from this study at anytime during the study without any penalties and that you may request to have your input be completely or partially removed from the collected data of this study.

“I will not disclose personal information discussed during this research study to anyone other than the researchers of this research study. I will not openly discuss information received during the study with other potential study participants. My signature below indicates that I have read, understood, and willingly comply with this consent form and have also received my personal copy of it. I desire of my own free will to participate in this research study.”

NAME: _____
(Please print your full name)

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Consent to be a Research Participant (Youth)

Introduction

This research project is designed to help understand and improve recreation programming. The research study is being conducted by Zina Bennion, a Recreation Management Youth Leadership graduate student at Brigham Young University. Dr. Patti Freeman a RMYL professor at BYU, Dr. Mark Widmer RMYL professor at BYU, Dr. Staci Tanniguchi professor at Brigham Young University are consultants of this reserach.

The purpose of this research is to understand your experience from participating in the three and a half week program of Birch Creek Service Ranch during the summer.

Procedures

As a research study participant, you will be interviewed one to two times. All interviews will be recorded, and the recordings will be transcribed.

Risks

This study carries no potential risks.

Benefits

The benefits of participating in this study will include contributing to helping improve programs for youth.

Compensation

As compensation for your participation in this study a gift certificate for a free movie rental will be given to your family.

Confidentiality

Signing this consent form indicates your willingness to participate in this study voluntarily and to be tape recorded. No real names of participants will be used in order to ensure confidentiality of participants. After the interviews have been conducted the researcher will transcribe the interviews, and the tapes will be kept in a locked office accessed only by the researcher. Your identity as a subject of this study will be kept confidential to all outside of this study, but the researchers. You will not be personally identified in any publications, text, presentations, or conversations dealing with this study. In addition do not write your name on any questionnaires associated with this study.

Confidentiality will be maintained by the researcher concerning personal information given out, by you, in this study.

Questions about the Research

If you have any questions about this research study, you may contact: Zina Bennion, Department of Recreation Management and Youth Leadership, Brigham Young University, 273E Richards Building, Provo, Utah 84602, telephone number: (801) 367-8475, email: zbennion@gmail.com

Questions about your Rights as a Research Participant

If you wish to speak to someone regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact: Dr. Christopher Dromey, Chair of the Institutional Review Board of Human Participants, Brigham Young University, 133 TLRB, Provo, Utah 84602, telephone number: (801) 422-6461, email: christopher_dromey@byu.edu

Participation

Your participation as a subject of this study must be voluntary and you understand that you are under no obligation to participate. You may withdraw from this study at anytime during the study without any penalties and that you may request to have your input be completely or partially removed from the collected data of this study.

“I will not disclose personal information discussed during this research study to anyone other than the researchers of this research study. I will not openly discuss information received during the study with other potential study participants. My signature below indicates that I have read, understood, and willingly comply with this consent form and have also received my personal copy of it. I desire of my own free will to participate in this research study.”

NAME: _____
(Please print your full name)

SIGNATURE: _____

PARENT: _____
(Please print your full name)

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Appendix A - 1b

Interview Prompt Questions

The question administered to the boys will be:

2. Tell me a little bit about your family.

How many siblings do you have?

Are they older or younger than you?

3. Why did you want to go to BCSR?

What did you expect it to be like?

Was it like your expectations or different? How?

What were your favorite aspects of the ranch?

What were your least favorite aspects of the ranch?

4. How did you feel about the work projects?

Did you enjoy them? Not enjoy them? Why?

Did you learn anything from the work projects? If yes, what? If no, why?

5. How did you feel about the service aspect of the work?

Enjoy/Not enjoy? Why? Which ones. . .

Did you learn anything from doing service? If yes, what?

6. How did you feel about the recreational activities?

What were your favorite recreational activities? Why?

What were your least favorite recreational activities? Why?

Did you learn anything from the recreational activities? If yes, what?

7. What was the most memorable aspect/thing about the ranch? Why?

What made it most memorable?

8. Did you have any meaningful experiences at the ranch? If yes, what were they?

And why were they meaningful?

9. Did you change at all during the ranch? If so, how? What influenced those changes?

10. Did your future goals change during the ranch? If so, why and how?

11. Would you participate in the BCSR summer program again? Why or why not?

12. Has your experience at BCSR influenced any aspect of your life? If so, how?

13. Have you noticed any changes in your behavior, thinking, or family relationships since the program? If so, what changes?

14. If you were telling your friends about the ranch, how would you describe it? If they were thinking of coming, what things would you tell them to encourage them?

15. Do you still think about the principles you learned at BCSR? Do they still affect the decisions you make? How?

16. Is there anything you learned at BCSR that is still relevant in your life today? Skills? Lessons? Principles? Etc?

The interview with the parents will consist of the following questions:

1. Have you observed any changes in your child's behavior, either positive or negative, since the BCSR program? Have you observed any changes in your child's attitude since BCSR? If so, what changes?

How have these changes affected your relationship with your child? If so, how?

How have these changes affected your family?

How have these changes affected sibling relationships?

2. Tell me what you perceive the benefits have been for your child in participating in this program. What about any negative outcomes?

3. What were the immediate changes you noticed? How long did they last? What are the long lasting changes you've observed?

4. Which activities or aspects of the program does your child talk about the most?

What were the immediate stories? What came out over time?

5. Which activities or aspects of the program do you perceive have had the most lasting affect on your child? What sort of affect have they had?

6. Have you noticed a change in your child's attitude about family work/chores? Schoolwork? Service? Recreation?

7. Would you send your child again to participate in the BCSR program?

8. How would you describe BCSR to other parents thinking of sending their children?