Identifying the Importance and Performance Perceptions of Positive Youth Development Features in Camps Worldwide

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IDENTIFYING THE IMPORTANCE AND PERFORMANCE PERCEPTIONS OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FEATURES IN CAMPS WORLDWIDE

A Thesis
Presented to
The Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
Community Recreation Management

by
Chelsea Marie Schwabe
May 2015

Accepted by:
Dr. Gwynn Powell, Committee Chair
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Dr. Teresa Tucker
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine international camp professionals’ perceptions of the importance and performance of Eccles and Gootman’s (2002) *Eight Features that Maximize Positive Youth Development*. Members of the International Camping Fellowship, ages 18 and older and of different demographic backgrounds, were asked for their perceived importance and performance ratings of the eight features on a five point Likert scale. The data were used to create importance-performance matrices using Martilla and James’ (1977) Importance-Performance Analysis technique in order to create visual depictions of the recorded perceptions. This cross-cultural, cross-sectional study utilized Importance-Performance Analysis to create a snapshot of perceptions of positive youth development worldwide. Overall, worldwide perceptions of the positive youth development features turned out to be positive, with some differences based on the respondents’ region of origin. Survey participants’ age, level of education, and gender (with one feature exception) were found to have no effect on the perceptions of positive youth development.
DEDICATION

I dedicate my thesis work to my wonderful family. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, Scott and Jan Schwabe, who have been my constant cheerleaders from softball to theater to higher education. Thank you for always being in my corner. And to my sister Tiffany, whose significant life triumphs continue to push me towards my goals and remind me that nothing is impossible.

I also dedicate this thesis to my dear friend and mentor, Dr. Jeff Martin, and his wife, Cheryl, who have been an extreme source of support and encouragement throughout this process. Thank you for always welcoming me into your home and caring for me as one of your own children.

Lastly, I would like to give special thanks to my Committee Chair, Dr. Gwynn Powell, who always knew how to talk me off the many ledges of graduate school. I sincerely appreciate you literally walking me through this process and showing me grace along the way.
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I would like to thank the International Camping Fellowship for sharing their membership database with me in order to collect my data. They have played an integral part in bringing this research to life.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This study explored youth camp professionals’ perceptions of positive youth development (PYD) worldwide. This chapter will provide (1) an introduction to the world of camp and current challenges faced worldwide, (2) an overview of the method by which perceptions of PYD will be discovered, and (3) a short explanation of the research question and purpose of the study.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The word camp is defined by the American Camp Association (ACA) (1998) as “a sustained experience which provides a creative, recreational and educational opportunity in group living in the out-of doors. It utilizes training leadership and the resources of the natural surroundings to contribute to each camper’s mental, physical, social, and spiritual growth,” (p. 3). Although this is the formal definition for camp, according to former Executive Vice-President of the ACA, John Miller (1997), camp is a word best defined by the experiences offered by the program and, therefore, can mean many things. Camp programs offer varying activities, to different age groups, in many countries. In America, the most common type of camp program is offered to youth during the summer time, or school-off-season (Bennett & Bialeschki, 2012). These camps can provide a wide variety of programmatic experiences and often contribute to
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PYD. The research question is, how are specific youth development features contributing to PYD perceived among camp professionals worldwide and are there differences in perceptions based on demographic identifiers?

Established more than 100 years ago, the ACA has been creating an environment of shared knowledge and experience among more than 2,400 accredited camps and 9,000 individual members in the United States and beyond. This shared knowledge and experience focuses on the improvement of program quality, safety, and PYD outcomes. In a parallel effort to create continuity and provide shared camp and youth development knowledge on an international level, the International Camping Fellowship (ICF) has begun to develop their camp and membership databases. But, as a newer organization, founded in 1987, ICF is still learning about the triumphs and challenges each world region experiences in terms of PYD. Therefore, ICF seeks information to best support its members. Using a pre-existing tool to assess their perceptions of PYD would increase the association’s ability to understand and serve its members.

The pre-existing definitions of PYD come from Eccles and Gootman’s (2002) *Eight Features that Maximize Positive Youth Development*. With a specific charge from the Committee on Adolescent Health and Development, Eccles and Gootman (2002) extensively researched the theories of positive developmental processes as well as the many types of settings that American youth experience and established a provisional list of eight features that maximize PYD: physical and psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms,
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support for efficacy and mattering, opportunities for skill building, and integration of family, school and community efforts. These eight features are considered, “...’active ingredients’ that community programs could use in designing programs likely to facilitate positive youth development” (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 86). Examination of these eight defining features and the lack of knowledge of PYD on an international scale, as well as reinforcing literature on youth development and international camps, lead to the idea of a survey to assess ICF member perceptions of the importance and performance of these eight youth development features.

The purpose of this study was to provide insight into individual perceptions of the importance and performance of the PYD features among the professional camp community worldwide and to see if results vary based on cultural and social norms. This study is the first documented effort towards identifying perceptions of PYD in camps worldwide and could propel future research to hopefully better PYD efforts in camps worldwide and ultimately better the lives of youth on an international level.

Summary

Camps provide experiences to participants that offer creative, recreational and educational opportunities (ACA, 1998). Specifically, youth camps aim to provide these experiences to adolescents and are an integral part of PYD. Eccles and Gootman (2002) have identified the Eight Features that Maximize Positive Youth Development, which act as active ingredients to foster PYD through youth programming. This study sought to identify international camp professionals’ perceptions of the importance and
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performance of these eight features, to better understand international perceptions of PYD and to see if results vary based on demographic identifiers.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Before researching the topic of the worldwide perceptions of the importance and performance of positive youth development (PYD), it was important to note the related research already conducted as a baseline of understanding. This chapter will provide an overview of research on (1) PYD and the common methods used to study it, (2) the effects of camp on PYD, (3) international youth and their free time, and (4) the universal knowledge of youth camps worldwide. The knowledge and understanding of these ideas highlights the importance of this study.

*Positive Youth Development Measurement Methods*

Developmental psychology is the study of inner behavioral changes across a lifespan and seeks to describe and explain how these changes occur (Baltes, Reese, & Nesselroade, 1977). This inner development is affected by multiple levels of individual and contextual changes throughout a lifespan, and there are too many of them to count (Lerner, 2011). PYD is a developmental science concerned specifically with those individuals eighteen years and under and focuses on the, “...strengths of youth and the positive qualities and outcomes (youth development professionals) wish youth to develop,” (Bowers, 2010, p. 720; Lerner, 2011). PYD has been defined by several different models and evaluated by many different methods. The models and methods discussed in this section are: the 5 C’s (Lerner et al., 2005), the 40 Developmental Assets
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(Scales & Leffert, 2004), the Camp Program Quality Assessment Short Form (Weikart Center, 2011), the Youth Outcomes Battery (ACA, 2006), and the Eight Features that Maximize PYD (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Although varied, “...all models reflect ideas associated with relational, developmental systems conceptions of human development,” (Lerner, 2011, p. 2). These methods all come in the form of defined and measureable outcomes. The following are a few common methods of measuring PYD in terms of internal and external factors.

The first PYD measurement model, The 5 C’s (Lerner et al., 2005), classifies PYD by five constructs:

  Competence (positive view of one’s actions in domain specific areas),
  confidence (an internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy),
  character (respect for societal and cultural rules and integrity), connection
  (positive bonds with people and institutions), and caring (a sense of sympathy and empathy for others). (Bowers, 2010, p. 721)

These are considered the five best outcomes for youth in a youth development program. Initially the 5 C’s of PYD were 4 C’s (Little, 1993), but caring was added in 2005 by other developmental psychologists (Henderson, 2007; Jones, 2011; Eccles and Gootman, 2002). According to Jones (2011), the 5 C’s model is a culmination of PYD, where higher scores on each of the C’s results in a higher score for PYD. The higher the score, the better the perceived potential for youth development outcome. The 5 C’s are
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An internal measurement of participating youth and are thought to emphasize the strengths of youth and, consequently, points to youth as resources to be developed (Bowers, 2010).

Commonly utilized by the YMCA to measure PYD, Scales and Leffert (2004) offer the 40 Developmental Assets method to, “...reflect those crucial categories of influence that time and again have been shown to meaningfully shape young people’s developmental pathways,” (p. 13). They are identified as building blocks to healthy development and help youth grow into healthy caring, and responsible human beings (Scales & Leffert, 2004). These assets are split into two categories, external and internal assets, each with four subcategories. The external assets have to do with relationships with adults and opportunities provided: support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time (Scales & Leffert, 2004). The internal assets have to do with, “...competencies and values that youth develop internally that help them become self-regulating adults,”: commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity (Scales & Leffer, 2004, p. 5). According to Scales and Leffert (2004), “This research has shown that the more of these assets young people have, the less likely they are to engage in negative risk taking behavior,” (p. 7) and has been found to hold across diversities in age and race/ethnicity. These assets, unlike the 5 C’s method, measures traits and circumstances of a program, which lead to PYD outcomes, not just the individual’s internal character outcomes themselves.
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Commonly utilized by the ACA, the *Camp Program Quality Assessment Short Form* (Camp PQA Short Form), was a method developed by the David P. Welkart Center for Youth Program Quality in 2011 and seeks to assist camp management examine, discuss, and plan to improve their programs in a self-assessment format. Developed from High/Scope’s (2004) *Youth Program Quality Assessment*, the *Camp PQA Short Form* provides users with, “...an introduction to the best practices of positive youth development,” (Weikart Center, 2011, p. 2), which are highlighted in eight qualitative assessment sections. These best practices are measurable outcomes that can be produced by a program and will foster PYD traits in participants: staff friendliness and circulation, emotional safety, support for belonging, high expectations and good challenge, active and cooperative learning, camper voice, planning and reflection, and nature. Each of the best practices sections contains a short description of the feature as well as two open columns dedicated to personal observations and reflections and recommendations. Unlike the previous two methods, the *Camp PQA Short Form* is a qualitative tool and strictly assesses external factors hindering the outcome of PYD in a program.

Another method developed by the ACA is the *Youth Outcomes Battery* (YOB). Originally developed in 2006, the YOB has developed and grown over time and, “...offers data-gathering measures that focus on common camp outcomes related to skills that build successful contributing members of our society,” (ACA, 2013). Customizable questionnaires were developed to help camps document that they meet specific youth
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development and programmatic goals. The YOB questionnaire topics that are most directly related to youth (as opposed to programmatic structure) include: camp connectedness, friendship skills, perceived competence, problem-solving confidence, and youth camper learning. The 2011 model has eleven subscales. Each questionnaire contains questions that ask if the provided camp experience has helped campers to develop the previously stated topics. Data is analyzed through developed Microsoft Excel templates available to those who purchase the YOB. Unlike the previously discussed models, the YOB is single-topic-specific. That is, each evaluation tool is a separate model for each individual topic.

Similar to the Camp PQA, Eccles and Gootman’s (2002) method of measurement highlights Eight Features that Maximize PYD. These features are, “...a provisional list...of daily settings that are important for adolescent development,” (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 88). This method addresses features in a youth development program that have been shown to have the most positive impact on youth. Eccles & Gootman also highlight the process of interaction between the youth and their programmatic surroundings (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). These eight features are: physical and psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering, opportunities for skill building, and integration of family, school and community efforts. Eccles and Gootman (2002) also provide detailed descriptors of each feature as well as opposing descriptors (SEE APPENDIX A). According to Powell and Scanlin (2002), “Applying these features directly
to the process of evaluating camp programs can improve the level of quality and potentially increase the ability to support youth development,” (p. 14). A typical program evaluation using these eight features would rank each feature on a Likert scale based on program performance of each individual feature. Some researches, such as Henderson, Powell, and Scanlin (2005) have taken a mixed methods approach and qualitatively assessed previously collected qualitative data using the Likert scale. These sources state that this approach provided complementary data while utilizing an internal self-report approach (Henderson, Powell, & Scanlin, 2005). Due to the eight features being external and easily experienced, this method could be used to study the perceptions of youth participating in the program, the workers running the program, or an outside observer.

**Effects of Camp on Youth Development**

Academic programs have traditionally been positive factors in the development of youth (Ozier, 2009; Leather, 2009; Cammarota, 2011). Educationally, economically, cognitively, socially: the list of positive outcomes goes on, in addition to the mentor-type relationship built between a teacher and a student. It is true that academic settings can be conducive to PYD, but, at times, classroom situations can be constricting environments. While schools have most often been charged with academic enhancement, “...camps are gaining recognition as vital summer learning venues,” (Ozier, 2009, p. 18). Youth development professionals agree that there is a positive
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relationship between recreation and PYD (Caldwell, 2011; Thurber, 2007; Coakley, 2011; Jones, 2011) and providing these alternate opportunities for youth is the best way to multiply growth in PYD.

Unfamiliar outdoor settings, such as camp, provide a unique opportunity for youth to get out of their ‘element’ while also teaching youth to grow through, “...the arts, media, music, sport, and a range of other activities,” (Ozier, 2009, p. 18). A study conducted by the Boy Scouts of America (2001) reflects that camp provides a unique youth development opportunity and correlates the PYD outcomes directly to the environment and activities incorporated at camp. Although some are still skeptical, parents are starting to recognize that camp is not just a place to play; it’s a place to grow. According to Henderson (2007), “Many parents see camp, especially a residential camp, as a step toward helping their children to become independent,” (p. 988). Well-designed and well-implemented youth camps increase self-esteem, develop more social skills, build friendships, and foster leadership qualities, all-the-while allowing children to become more adventurous and willing to try new things (Henderson, 2007; ACA, 2005). Education and development can occur during any point in life, camp is merely one of the settings where a great deal of teaching and learning occurs (Ozier, 2009).

Along with environments that facilitate PYD, camps also help to reduce and prevent unhealthy risk-taking behaviors (Caldwell, 2011; ACA, 2005). As previously stated, unhealthy risk-taking behaviors can be any behavior that creates long-term loss for the participant (Leather, 2009). Among youth, there are six main risk-taking
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behaviors: violence, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors, unhealthy dietary behaviors, and physical inactivity (Eaton, Kann, Kinchen, & Ross, 2006). Adolescents most in danger of succumbing to these unhealthy risk-taking behaviors are found in low-income households (Carnegie Counsel on Adolescent Development, 1992). These behaviors, carried on through adulthood, can have serious repercussions for youth in the long run. There has been an increasing effort by park and recreation departments to have a preventative focus towards these behaviors (Caldwell, 2004; Godbey & Mowen, 2010), and by providing PYD opportunities like camp, youth development and recreation professionals are taking steps in the right direction to reach their primary goal: to promote PYD (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1992).

By reducing unhealthy risk-taking behaviors during a youth’s free time, camps introduce and fill free time with new ways for youth to be productive and make decisions. Caldwell (2004) states, “Leisure pursuits are ideal contexts for autonomy development given that they are characterized by self-determination,” (p. 18). With the increased confidence and competence introduced by these unique camp situations, youth seize the opportunity to make decisions about their recreation for themselves and gain an internal locus of control (Buckner, 2005, p. 202), which happens to be “…one of the most frequently listed objectives of camping institutions, including sports camps,” (Kishton & Dixon, 1995, p. 136). And while they have this new found power to make decisions for themselves, youth seem to be repeating their camp experiences on their own. After polling parents, the ACA (2005) noted that 63% of children continue to
recreate and participate in activities learned at camp. Not only are many camp experiences new for youth, but they are also repeatable and are desired to be repeated.

*Young People and Their Free Time: A Global Perspective*

On a global scale, Caldwell (2010) states that, “...all youth have hours in the day that can be considered discretionary or free,” (p. 203). By some estimates, this free time fills about 40 percent of a youth’s day (Caldwell, 2011). But the number of hours and the typical use of free time can vary from country to country. In the United States, youth have large amounts of discretionary free time filled with media usage, organized activities, and “hanging out” (Larson, 1999; Caldwell, 2011). In contrast, East Asian postindustrial youth have much less discretionary time, due to their extreme devotion to schoolwork (Larson, 1999). Similar to the East Asian youth population, European youth are also very education focused, but with a much more free-form approach (du Bois-Reymond, 2004). Learning in Europe is viewed as life-long and extends outside the classroom to extracurricular activities. In nonindustrial populations, such as Peru, Botswana, and Kenya, youth do not have to attend school; therefore, youth from nonindustrial populations have a considerable amount of discretionary time, which is devoted to household labor (Larson, 1999; Mueller, 1984). According to Larson, in nonindustrial populations, “…household labor starts young and becomes considerable with age, especially for girls,” (Larson, 1999, p. 705). Although youth in the United States do their weekly chores, these do not compare to the raising of younger siblings or the
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gathering and cooking of food for the entire family that the youth of nonindustrial populations are used to in daily life. While youth in the United States have leisure time, and the East Asian youth study, nonindustrial populations labor.

The act of playing and recreating is widely practiced by youth during free time. It can be defined in many ways: kicking a soccer ball, jumping rope, or dressing up like a princess. It is the act of self-expression for its own sake. According to Larson (1999), “Playing is a universal activity among younger children; nonetheless, cultural variations occur in the amount of time spent in play,” (p. 719). As previously stated, Western, European and Eastern cultures spend their free time differently; therefore, these cultures view play differently. Western societies believe that play is essential for children and is culturally sanctioned (Larson, 1999). Also, in his study, Larson (1999) found that the least time spent in play was found for children from a rural village in Kenya, reaffirming the fact that children from nonindustrial populations are the most devoted to household labor (Larsen, 1999). Although the value of play varies from culture to culture, there is an increasing number of studies that document its all-encompassing value and the presence or lack-of play in various cultures.

International Camps

Since the inception of the International Camping Fellowship (ICF) in 1987 at the Second International Camping Congress in Washington, D.C., ICF has, “…cosponsored Congresses in Canada, Russia, Japan, and Australia- with 200-700 participants at each
event, representing as many as twenty countries,” (Pulliam, 2005b, p. 54). With the help of ICF, in partnership with the ACA, the understanding of international camps is growing, but there is little information on the varying types of camp, specifically camp activities and structure. Although international camp activity and structure specifics are not well known, the ICF (2014) membership database does provide some statistics, such as member email and residing country. ICF is currently working to develop their membership database further in order to provide a larger body of knowledge and eventually create a more fluent network. For the purpose of this study, we will classify countries into seven world regions: North America, South America, Europe, Russia, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

In North America, the countries of Canada and the United States both have camp associations which act as accrediting bodies. The Canadian Camping Association has a network of about 800 camps (ICF, 2013). In the US, “More than 11 million children and adults benefit from a camp experience at approximately 12,000 camps,” (ICF, 2013). The ACA accredits over 2,400 of those camps, which, “…meet up to 300 standards for health, safety, and program quality,” (ACA, 2013). Mexico does not have an accrediting camp body, but the Asociación Mexicana de Campamentor acts as a network among organized camps (Asociación Mexicana de Campamentor, 2013). The approximate number of camps in Mexico is unknown, but many camps throughout the country are private and serve the upper class, with the Mexican government participating in standards development (ICF, 2013).
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Not much is documented about camps in South America. From the ICF database, we do know that Venezuela’s camping congress, the Asociacion Venezolana de Campamentos (ASOVENCAMP), was established in 1989 (ICF, 2013). ASOVENCAMP is an accrediting body that enacts standards on more than 30 camps around Venezuela (ASOVENCAMP, 2013). ASOVENCAMP’s mission is to, “…promote campamentil activity across the country, sharing best practices, providing training, rescuing the human interaction with nature and adding special value to its partners,” (ASOVENCAMP, 2013).

Based on information on ICF’s website (2013), camps in Central and Western Europe are relatively small in number, have very specific programming (linguistic, cultural, athletic, etc), and are old in tradition. Europe is comprised of several different camp associations from many different countries. Greece, Turkey, and Ukraine all have their own accrediting camp associations. According to Pulliam (2005b), “The concept of camping in Greece began in the early part of the twentieth century with the government-established camps designed to give children a chance to be in a healthy environment and with proper nutrition,” (p. 54). To date, more than 100,000 children, ages six to fourteen, attend camp in Greece (Pulliam, 2005b). Turkey has a short history of camping, with a popular culture of inbound and outbound camping experiences (ICF, 2013). Camps in Turkey are, “…sponsored and run by government and municipal youth organizations, as well as privately on rented sites,” (ICF, 2013). Ukraine has over 650 resident camps and 17,000 day camps (ICF, 2013).
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In 2010, Russia had more than 50,000 camps in operation, which makes Russia the world-wide leading camp provider (ICF, 2013). It is this large, historical role that lends it to serve as a separate geographic region for this study. Russia has a long history and tradition of camping (ICF, 2013). During Soviet times, all youth attended camp as a way to educate youth about the goals of the Communist ideals. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, positive transformation for camps and other youth programs were profound (Pulliam, 2004). Russian camps, “...originally created as recreation and health development institutions, are not offering more [political] educational programs, with greater attention to character development,” (Pulliam, 2004, p. 48).

Like Europe, Asia is home to several different camp associations, along with the all-encompassing Asia Oceania Camping Fellowship, which was founded in 2004 (ICF, 2013). Japan, and Mongolia each have their own camping associations. Initially in Japan, Western camp culture was used as a model, but today, Japanese culture is more integrated (ICF, 2013). School camping is also becoming more popular in Japan (ICF, 2013). The Mongolian Camp Association was formed to support international and educational programs (ICF, 2013) and, according to Pulliam (2005b), “Mongolian children attending summer camp are fully subsidized by the government and are selected by their schools or local governments,” (p. 50).

Although there is not much documented about camps in Africa, we do know that, “Many church and mission youth programs are camp-like in nature,” (ICF, 2013).
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Many nonprofits and NGO’s, like Global Camps Africa, show a recognition for the value of camp as an HIV/AIDS prevention and education technique (Global Camps Africa, 2013). Camp Sizanani is an example of a program that offers these services multiple times a year to hundreds of South African youth.

The Australian Camps Association was founded in 1983. Their motto is, “Encouraging excellence in the provision of the outdoor experience,” (Australian Camps Association, 2013). The Australian Camps Association reports that there are over 400 camps in Australia, 240 of those in Victoria, one of Australia’s largest cities (ICF, 2013). Education is a year-round endeavor in Australia, so most camps are education based in order to add to the educational atmosphere. Programs will occasionally stray away from the educational side of things and offer, “...a variety of activities similar to those of North American camps...” (Pulliam, 2005c, p. 49).

To date, there is no data documenting a baseline of international camp activity. There is also very little known about youth development on a worldwide scale; therefore, the needs of international camps are less known and more difficult to support.

Summary

This literature review provided a baseline of understanding of the background of PYD, camp and PYD, international youth and their free time, and the universal knowledge of camps worldwide. PYD has many measurement models, all reflecting
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developmental concepts of human development (Lerner, 2011). The literature also revealed a similarity between camp and PYD that shows that camps are an excellent environment for PYD facilitation and youth growth. Lastly, through the literature discussed about international camps and youth, a gap is seen in the knowledge of youth development practices worldwide. This study sought to highlight this gap.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Overview

This cross-cultural, cross-sectional study utilized Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) to create a snapshot of and explore perceptions of the importance and performance of Eccles and Gootman’s (2002) positive youth development (PYD) features in camp settings worldwide. This chapter will highlight (1) the survey instrument, (2) the data sample and collection, and (3) the data analysis procedure.

Survey Instrument

In order to explore the perceived levels of importance and performance of PYD worldwide, the survey was based on Eccles & Gootman’s (2002) Eight Features that Maximize PYD, a common way to examine PYD (See Appendix A). This approach was chosen because the features highlight daily program atmospheres that lead to PYD and they can be individually addressed with the flexibility of a mixed methods option. Previous studies have also utilized this examination method in a way that is similar to this study (Borden, Wiggs, & Schaller, 2012). Also, the program settings outlined by Eccles and Gootman (2002) can be experienced and perceived differently by various people at camp, which means this study could be recreated to examine the perceptions of campers, their parents, etc. It is important to note that, for the purposes of collecting more specific information in this study, physical and psychological safety and the
integration of family, school, and community efforts were split into their own categories. Descriptors and examples, adapted from a survey developed by Borden, Wiggs, and Schaller (2012), were added to the survey to better understand PYD features (See Appendix B).

Participants were asked four questions about each of the eleven features (See Figure 1). Three of the questions were quantitative and based on a five-point Likert scale. Anchors of perceived importance were used for questions A and C, and anchors perceived performance were used for question B. The fourth was an open-ended, qualitative question used to better understand the survey participants’ perceptions of each PYD feature in their camp environment. To view the entire survey, see Appendix C.

![Figure 1. Example of five-point importance-performance scales and survey questions.](image)

Participants were also asked to provide specific demographic information in order to analyze if their perceptions of the importance and performance of PYD varied based on those demographics. Participants were asked to provide their country, gender,
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age, and level of education. Country was an open-ended question and would later be coded to reflect the seven world regions previously outlined: North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Russia, Africa, and Australia. Age was a multiple-choice question and would later be coded to reflect generations: Generation Y (18-30), Generation X (31-45), Baby Boomers (46-60), and Traditionalists (60+).

This survey was originally written in English, but in order to reach a more diverse group of camp professionals, the survey was translated into Russian, Japanese, and Spanish with the help of bi-lingual ICF members. The quality of the translation was checked and confirmed with Google-Translate.

Data Sample and Collection

Participants of the survey were members of the International Camping Fellowship above the age of 18 and varied in demographic identifiers, including: region of origin, gender, age, and level of education. The ICF Membership Chair sent out an introductory email in early April 2014. The email included a call to action by the ICF Membership Chair, survey instructions and confidentiality assurance, and the links to the online survey (created using Qualtrics.com). The survey took participants approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The survey was closed late August 2014. Of the 2,375 members of ICF that the survey was sent to, 360 surveys had been started by that time, 259 were considered usable for analysis purposes (11% response rate).
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Usable surveys were defined as those that contained any information provided by the respondent beyond demographics.

Data Analysis

Following data collection, analysis occurred in several stages. The Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) approach was used to examine the differences and similarities of PYD perceptions and practices among camp professionals worldwide. The IPA technique, typically considered as a widely used marketing research technique (Lee & Lee, 2009; Wu, Tang, & Shyu, 2009; Siniscalchi, Beale, & Fortuna, 2008; Arbore & Busacca, 2011), was originally developed by Martilla and James (1977). They found consumer satisfaction to be a, “...function of both expectations related to certain important attributes and judgments of attribute performance,” (Martilla and James, 1977, p. 11). IPA produces a two dimensional matrix that plots survey respondent’s perceptions of the importance and performance of PYD features. Using SPSS, the means of the importance perceptions and performance perceptions for each PYD feature were calculated using a descriptive analysis of the means. Answers to question A were used to measure importance perceptions, while the answers to question B were used to measure performance perceptions. Once the paired means were determined, an IPA matrix was constructed to plot each pair (eleven altogether) to create a visual representation of the worldwide perceptions of PYD features.

The two-dimensional matrix yields a four-quadrant grid, where the x-axis measures perceived importance and the y-axis measures perceived performance (See
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Figure 2). The caption on the upper right quadrant of Figure 2 reads, “keep up the good work,” and represents those PYD features that have high importance and performance perceptions. The second quadrant is named “concentrate here.” The PYD feature points that fall into this quadrant are those that are viewed as important but are perceived as under performed. PYD features falling into this quadrant are perceived as those that should be improved. The last two quadrants, “low priority” and “possible overkill” reflect a low importance perception and either a low or high performance perception. Quadrant titles and meanings mirror Martilla and James’ (1977) original IPA matrix. Once plotted, eleven points revealed the importance-performance perceptions of PYD features worldwide.

![Figure 2. Importance-performance grid. Reprinted from “Importance-Performance Analysis” by J.A. Martilla and J.C. James, 1977, Journal of Marketing, 41(1), 77-79.](image)

After the importance-performance plot was made for the eleven PYD features, the data were grouped several different ways to yield IPA matrices comparing perceptions among the different demographic identifiers discussed. The data were
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coded to reflect perceptions based on region of origin, gender, age, and level of education (See Table 1). These demographics served as independent variables. One-Way ANOVAs (two-tailed t-tests for the gender demographic) were run to compare perceptions, and a more conservative Tukey post-test was used to determine significance where it existed among independent variables with more than three categories. In order to protect against Type I errors among multiple comparisons, the Bonferroni Correction Method was used, yielding a p-value of .01 to determine significant differences. Those importance-performance perceptions that were equal or less than .01 were graphed according to the PYD feature they represented. If significance was not found, data were not graphed.

It was anticipated that most of the importance-performance perceptions of this study would be positive and produce positive response bias, therefore skewing plot points to the top right, “keep up the good work”, quadrant. In order to maximize visual representation of variability and to more easily see the differences among the plotted points, all graphs were transformed and centered at the mean of the points, instead of at the x-3, y-3 center point.

It is important to note that data collected from questions C and D were not analyzed or used in this study and can be used for future studies. The answers to question C can be used in future research to look more in-depth at specific country perceptions of PYD. The answers to question D can be used to strengthen the findings of this study and provide real life examples of PYD in international camp settings.
Summary

This study utilized Martilla and James’ (1977) IPA to better understand international perceptions of Eccles and Gootmans’ (2002) Eight Features that Maximize PYD and to see if results vary based on demographic identifiers. In order to collect more specific information, physical and psychological safety and integration of family, school, and community efforts were split to create eleven features. Surveys were collected from 259 members of the International Camping Fellowship. Survey participants were asked to provide several demographic identifiers as well as asked to answer four questions for each positive youth development feature. Data were then tested for significance and plotted on transformed importance-performance matrices to determine importance-performance perceptions worldwide and based on demographics.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Overview

SPSS was used to find frequencies and means based on the positive youth development (PYD) features and the respondents’ demographics. These means were used to plot the importance-performance matrices to better understand international perceptions of PYD features. This chapter provides (1) the survey respondents’ demographic frequencies, (2) the transformed importance-performance matrix of the perceptions of the eleven PYD features worldwide, and (3) the transformed importance-performance matrices based on region of origin, and (4) the transformed importance-performance matrix based on gender.

Demographic Frequencies

Survey respondents were asked to answer four questions that would categorize them into separate demographics: region of origin, gender, age, and level of education. These four demographic identifiers might influence perceptions of camp professionals worldwide. Table 1 depicts the frequencies of each demographic identifier from the 259 respondents.

Out of the 259 respondents, 44% identified as North American, 7% identified as South American, 4% identified as European, 15% identified as Asian, 8% identified as Russian, 3% identified as African, and 11% identified as Australian. Eight percent (8%) of respondents did not provide their region of origin. Fifty-four percent (54%) identified as
male, 45% identified as female, and 1% did not identify their gender. The age of the respondents has been categorized as 17% Generation Y (ages 18-30), 37% Generation X (ages 31-45), 29% Baby Boomers (ages 46-60), 16% Traditionals (60+), and 1% as unknown. Lastly, the level of education of the respondents has been identified as 6% high school graduates, 51% university graduates, and 34% graduate degree recipients, while 8% of respondents indicated their level of education as other and 1% did not indicate their level of education.

Table 1
Demographic Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region of Origin</th>
<th>Response (n=259)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Response (n=259)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<td>Unknown</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response (n=259)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Generation Y (18-30)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X (31-45)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers (46-60)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional (61+)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>1%</td>
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<th>Level of Education</th>
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<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
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<td>High School Grad</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>University Grad</td>
<td>131</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
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<td>34%</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
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<td>1%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
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Matrix of PYD Perceptions Worldwide

Following demographic questions, survey respondents began to answer questions asking their importance and performance perceptions of PYD. Martilla and James’ (1977) Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) was then conducted on the entire data set, where means of the worldwide importance and performance perceptions of the eleven PYD features were formed.

Figure 3 depicts each of the eleven PYD features plotted on a transformed importance-performance matrix to maximize visual representation of variability. Points 1 through 8 fall into the “keep up the good work” quadrant. Those PYD features are: physical safety, psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for competency and significance, and opportunities for skill building. Points 9 through 11 fall into the “low priority” quadrant. Those PYD features are: integration of family, integration of school, and integration of community efforts. The visual representation of points varies in Figure 3, with diamond points being those features that were found to have significant differences based on the demographic identifiers previously discussed in Table 1 and the cross points being those PYD features of which no significant difference was found among those demographic identifiers.
Results for the importance-performance perceptions of the eleven PYD features worldwide were found to be generally positive, with a notable difference seen in the features of the integration of family, school, and community efforts. This means that the integration of family, school, and community efforts are perceived as lower in importance and performance, unlike the other eight PYD features, and could use some attention by camp professionals. These results are based on answers from the total dataset.
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PYD Features with Significant Differences Based on Region of Origin

Once the worldwide perceptions of importance and performance for each of the eleven PYD features were graphed, the demographic data were used to see if there were any differences in perception of the PYD features based on the demographic identifiers. Through the produced matrices, perceived strengths and weaknesses of the PYD features were shown based on those demographics.

The first set of demographic variables that yielded significant differences in perception among the 11 PYD features were the survey participants’ region of origin. As previously stated, the matrices were transformed in order to maximize visual representation of variability and more easily view the differences in perceptions among the different regions of origin. It is important to note that not all of the PYD features were found to have significant differences in perception based on region of origin, and were therefore not graphed. Table 2 depicts the F value, degrees of freedom, and P value for each graph.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F value</th>
<th>P value</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Safety</td>
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<td>Importance</td>
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<td>Performance</td>
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<td>7.231</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td>Appropriate Structure</td>
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<td>Opportunities to Belong</td>
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<td>4.423</td>
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<td>Opportunities for Skill Building</td>
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<td>Importance</td>
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<td>Performance</td>
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<td>Integration of Family</td>
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<td>Performance</td>
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<td>Supportive Relationships</td>
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<td>Importance</td>
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<td>.383</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.129</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The first PYD feature that yielded significant differences in perceptions based on region of origin was physical safety (performance $p=.001$). Figure 4 depicts two plot points. Point 1, North America, falls into the “keep up the good work” quadrant and point 2, Asia, falls into the “low priority” quadrant. This shows that North America puts higher importance and performance perception ratings on physical safety than Asia.

Figure 4. Physical safety – Significant regional perceptions – Axis intersection transformed.
The next PYD feature that yielded significant differences in perceptions based on region of origin was psychological safety (importance $p=.001$ and performance $p=.000$). Figure 5 depicts four plot points. Points 1 and 2, North America and South America, fall in the “keep up the good work” quadrant and points 3 and 4, Asia and Russia, fall in the “low priority” quadrant. This shows that North America and South America put higher importance and performance perception ratings on psychological safety than Asia and Russia.

Figure 5. Psychological safety – Significant regional perceptions – Axis intersection transformed.
The third PYD feature that yielded significant differences in perceptions based on region of origin was appropriate structure (importance $p=.000$ and performance $p=.001$). Figure 6 depicts four plot points. Points 2 and 4, South America and Russia, fall in the “keep up the good work” quadrant, point 1, North America, falls in the “possible overkill” quadrant and point 3, Asia, falls in the “low priority” quadrant. This means South America and Russia place higher importance and performance perception ratings on appropriate structure than Asia, and North America, although perceived to be performing well, does not place as high as an importance perception on appropriate structure.

Figure 6. Appropriate structure – Significant regional perceptions – Axis intersection transformed.
The fourth PYD feature that yielded significant differences in perceptions based on region of origin was supportive relationships (performance $p=.000$). Figure 7 depicts five plot points. Points 1, 2, and 4, North America, South America, and Africa, fall in the “keep up the good work” quadrant. The matrix also depicts point 3, Asia falling in the “possible overkill” quadrant and point 5, Australia, falling in the “low priority” quadrant. This means that North America, South America, and Africa place a higher importance and performance perception ratings on supportive relationships than Asia and Australia.

![Figure 7. Supportive relationships – Significant regional perceptions – Axis intersection transformed.](image-url)
The fifth PYD feature that yielded significant differences in perceptions based on region of origin was opportunities to belong (importance $p=0.002$ and performance $p=0.000$). Figure 8 depicts three plot points. Point 1, North America, falls in the “keep up the good work” quadrant and points 2 and 3, Asia and Australia, both fall in the “low priority” quadrant. This shows that North America puts a higher importance-performance perception rating on opportunities to belong than Asia and Australia.

![Figure 8. Opportunities to belong – Significant regional perceptions – Axis intersection transformed.](image-url)
The sixth PYD feature that yielded significant differences in perceptions based on region of origin was positive social norms (performance p=.000). Figure 9 depicts two plot points. Point 1, North America, falls in the “keep up the good work” quadrant and point 2, Asia, falls in the “low priority” quadrant. This means that North America puts higher importance and performance perception ratings on positive social norms than Asia.

Figure 9. Positive social norms – Significant regional perceptions – Axis intersection transformed.
The next PYD feature that yielded significant differences in perceptions based on region of origin was opportunities for skill building (performance p=.000). Figure 10 depicts three plot points. Point 1, North America, falls in the “possible overkill” quadrant, point 2, South America, falls in the “keep up the good work” quadrant, and point 3, Asia, falls in the “low priority” quadrant. This shows that South America puts a higher importance-performance perception rating on opportunities for skill building than North America and Asia.

Figure 10. Opportunities for skill building – Significant regional perceptions – Axis intersection transformed.
The eighth PYD feature that yielded significant differences in perceptions based on region of origin was integration of family (importance $p=.000$ and performance $p=.005$). Figure 11 depicts six plot points. Point 1, North America, falls in the “possible overkill” quadrant. It also depicts points 2 through 5, South America, Asia, Russia, and Africa, falling in the “keep up the good work” quadrant. Lastly, point 6, Australia, falls in the “low priority” quadrant. This means that South America, Asia, Russia, and Africa place a higher importance-performance perception rating on integration of family than North America and Australia.

![Figure 11. Integration of family – Significant regional perceptions – Axis intersection transformed.](image)

Eight of the eleven PYD features were found to have significant differences of importance-performance perceptions based on region of origin. These matrices depict
those differences and allow for a better understanding of those perception differences based on region of origin.

**PYD Features with Significant Differences Based on Gender**

The other demographic identifier that yielded a significant difference of perception for one of the PYD features was gender, in relationship to supportive relationships (performance, p=.009). Figure 12 depicts two plot points. Point 1, male, falls in the “low priority” quadrant and point 2, female, falls in the “keep up the good work” quadrant. This means that while there was no difference in importance, females placed a higher performance perception rating on supportive relationships than males did. See Table 2 for the F value, degrees of freedom, and P value for this graph.

![Figure 12. Supportive relationships – Significant gender perceptions – Axis intersection transformed.](image)
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Only one of the eleven PYD features was found to have a significant difference of importance-performance perceptions based on gender. This matrix depicts that difference and allows for a better understanding of that difference based on gender.

Summary

The results section of this study provided insight into the data set collected from survey participants as depicted by the importance-performance matrices to better understand international perceptions of PYD and to see if perceptions vary based on demographic identifiers. Ten importance-performance matrices were produced with an axis transformation to counteract positive response bias and maximize variability. The only demographic identifiers that produced differences in the perceptions of importance and performance of the PYD features were region of origin and gender.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Overview

After reviewing the results section and the visual representations of the data, it is important to discuss the matrices more in depth in order to fully understand the international perceptions of the PYD and the similarities and differences depicted by the plots. This chapter will highlight (1) a discussion of the study results, (2) implications for camp professionals worldwide, (3) the limitations of the study, and (4) recommendations for future research.

Discussion of Results

The ten matrices produced after the IPA of the data set provided several interesting insights into the perceptions of the importance and performance of PYD worldwide. The overarching theme of the matrices is that the worldwide perceptions of the importance and performance of the PYD features are generally positive (See Table 3). Most of the PYD features fell into the top right, “keep up the good work”, quadrant. This means that there are high importance and performance perceptions of: physical safety, psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for competency and significance, and opportunities for skill building. From these results it can be concluded that international camp professionals value these eight PYD features in their programs and are pleased with the overall performance of them. These positive perceptions are a
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good thing and at least show care and concern for active PYD in international camps.
Also seen in Table 3 are the three PYD features that fell into the “low priority” quadrant: integration of family, integration of school, and integration of community efforts. This means that international camp professionals have generally low perceptions of importance and performance of these three PYD features. Camp is typically a place where kids get to grow independently from their families (Henderson, 2007) and typical school or community environments and integrating these three factors into camps is a newer concept. International camp professionals may have never thought of these features as important which is why they may fall into the “low priority” quadrant.
Table 3
Summary of IPA Results – Axis Intersections Transformed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions of PYD Features Worldwide</th>
<th>Quadrant 1 “Keep up the good work”</th>
<th>Quadrant 2 “Concentrate here”</th>
<th>Quadrant 3 “Low priority”</th>
<th>Quadrant 4 “Possible overkill”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Safety</td>
<td>• North America</td>
<td>• Asia</td>
<td>• Integration of family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Safety</td>
<td>• North America</td>
<td>• South America</td>
<td>• Integration of School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Structure</td>
<td>• South America</td>
<td>• Russia</td>
<td>• Integration of Community Efforts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Relationships</td>
<td>• North America</td>
<td>• South America</td>
<td>• Asia</td>
<td>• North America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to Belong</td>
<td>• North America</td>
<td>• Africa</td>
<td>• Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Social Norms</td>
<td>• North America</td>
<td>• Asia</td>
<td>• Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for Skill Building</td>
<td>• South America</td>
<td>• America</td>
<td>• North America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of Family</td>
<td>• South America</td>
<td>• Asia</td>
<td>• Australia</td>
<td>• North America</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant Regional Perceptions

| Physical Safety                      | North America | Asia | North America |
| Psychological Safety                 | North America | South America | Asia | Russia |
| Appropriate Structure                | South America | Russia | North America |
| Supportive Relationships             | North America | South America | Africa | Australia |
| Opportunities to Belong              | North America | Asia | Australia |
| Positive Social Norms                | North America | Asia | North America |
| Opportunities for Skill Building     | South America | Asia | North America |
| Integration of Family                | South America | Asia | North America |

Significant Gender Perceptions

| Supportive Relationships             | Female | Male |

In terms of perceptions varying based on demographic identifiers, it can be seen in Table 3 that perceptions of certain PYD features vary based on region of origin and gender. Age and level of education were not found to be significant factors in the difference of PYD perceptions. The PYD features that were found to have significant differences in perceptions based on the participants’ region of origin are: physical
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safety, psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, opportunities for skill building, and integration of family. North America fell into either the “keep up the good work” or “possible overkill” quadrants, and frequently differed significantly from Asia’s perceptions. North America most likely falls into the “possible overkill” section with certain PYD features, as parents in North America are often referred to as “helicopter parents” or overcautious. Also, many North American camps follow ACA accreditation standards that focus on health, safety, and program quality (ACA, 2013). This may be another reason for the high importance and performance ratings from North American participants. Asia frequently falls into the “low priority” quadrant, which means those participants’ perceptions of both perceived importance and perceived performance of those PYD features is low. This pattern may be due to the high cultural devotion to education and not camp programming.

It is interesting to see that Asia switches in perception with North America in their perception of integration of family. This is most likely due to Asia’s cultural tendency to place importance on family and North America’s cultural tendency to become autonomous from one’s family (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999). Perceptions of Europeans did not show statistically significant differences and were therefore not graphed. This could be due to the small representation from the European region, which may be in part to the fact that Europe has a relatively small number of known camps (ICF, 2013).
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The other significant difference in perception of the PYD features based on the demographic identifiers was supportive relationships based on the gender of the survey participants (See Table 3). Perceptions of females of the importance and performance of supportive relationships were high and fell into the “keep up the good work” quadrant. This means that females viewed supportive relationships in youth programs as important and were pleased with their performance. Male perceptions of performance were lower. This significant difference in perception may be explained by traditional gender personality characteristics, where females are considered to be “feelers” more so than men (Sorenson, Hawkins, & Sorenson, 1995).

Implications for Camp Professionals Worldwide

The knowledge gained from the results of this study suggests ideas for camp professionals worldwide as to how to generate a more effective culture of PYD in their camps. As previously stated, the overarching theme of the matrices is that the worldwide perceptions of the PYD features are generally positive. This theme of positivity is a good sign, but is PYD actually being practiced in camps worldwide and how is it being accomplished? Camp professionals need to take their positive perceptions and make sure they are turn them into action. This means training staff on PYD and evaluating progress throughout the camp season.

There are several examples in the results where certain world regions perceived the importance and performance of specific PYD features as low, ultimately landing those features into the “possible overkill” or “low priority” quadrants. In general, this
suggests that evaluation is important to make sure those low perceptions with practice. Performance evaluation of the PYD features in camps worldwide would lead to better awareness, development of best practices, evidence-informed practice, and more positive youth development outcomes. Finally, the results based on the significant gender perceptions highlight gender awareness and how gender affects perceptions. Camp professionals need to keep this in mind when training and working with camp staff and campers throughout the summer. Staff may perceive the concepts of PYD features differently and those variables need to be taken into account when training and evaluating.

Limitations

After study completion, several limitations have been recognized, but can be addressed in order to enhance this study in the future. First, Eccles and Gootman (2002) originally developed the *Eight Features that Maximize Positive Youth Development* through their knowledge of youth and youth programs in the United States. Culturally speaking, these eight features are biased because they were developed through an American lens of youth and programs. These features may be important in the United States because they are practiced, but may not be normally practiced in other cultures and therefore viewed as less important. This may have led to confusion or misconceptions of PYD on an international level.

Second, during the survey writing process, the Likert scale for the importance perception questions was not evenly weighted on both sides of the scale. The scale is
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more heavily weighted to the right and is seemingly more positive: unimportant, a little important, medium importance, very important, and extremely important. This absence of balance may result in confusion for the respondent and cause them to share an incorrect, more positive, perception of importance.

Another limitation is that the response rate of the survey was very low (11%). A low response rate might be expected in a study such as this, given its scope and complexity. In the ICF database, there are 506 paid members, and while the survey was not directly linked to paid memberships, it is possible to predict that those with paid memberships would be more likely to complete a survey, so a 63% response rate of paid membership could be projected. In addition, the timing of the survey request, in relationship to the primary camp season in the Northern hemisphere was not ideal. This low response rate could lead to issues with generalizability of the results on a worldwide scale and the results should be interpreted with caution.

Another limitation that has been recognized is the survey dropout rate. As the survey went on, the dropout rate of participants increased and question responses decreased. This could mean the survey may have been too long and created respondent fatigue or that the survey was confusing or disinteresting to the camp professionals participating.

A fifth limitation is that slightly less than half of the respondents declared their region of origin to be North America (See Table 1). Although this mirrors the regional demographics in ICF’s database, this does not provide a balanced representation of the
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world as a whole. Again, this is another limitation that could lead to issues with generalizability and may skew the worldwide perceptions.

The survey was also only translated into four languages for this study: English, Spanish, Russian, and Japanese. Although many of the ICF members may speak one of these four languages, some may not have easily understood the survey if it was not in their native language. This language barrier is a limitation and may have led survey recipients not to complete the survey.

Lastly, it is important to note that the results of the international perceptions of importance and performance of the eight PYD features are just that, perceptions. The answers collected from the survey are extremely subjective and personal to each individual survey participant. This is a limitation because these findings can be mistaken for real life occurrences, when really they are opinions of the importance and performance of PYD internationally.

Future Research

This study is the first of its kind and has only scratched the surface of understanding PYD worldwide. The results suggest that there is more to be researched in order to better understand PYD on a worldwide scale. First, based on the fact that perceptions of PYD varied based on region of origin, perhaps it would be beneficial to understand how the actual practice of PYD was actually accomplished among the different regions. This can be examined using the qualitative information collected during this study’s data collection. This could also be examined by sending out a group
of evaluators internationally to examine PYD in camps and how exactly camps worldwide are creating a culture to promote these PYD features and tease regional differences that may be culturally based.

Another beneficial future research endeavor might be examining how exactly camp professionals are training for PYD in their camps. This would provide insight into how camp professionals are preparing their camps to promote these PYD features. From this information, best practices of training for PYD internationally could be developed.

Another recommendation for future research would be to look more specifically at each PYD feature in depth. Eleven separate surveys could be sent out over the course of a year to the same group of international camp professionals to really dig into the perceptions of the individual PYD features. More specific information could be collected which leads to better understanding of each feature on an international level. These surveys should be more succinct and specific than this study.

Finally, it might be interesting to collect the perceptions of youth who attend camp, parents of youth who attend camp, and season camp staff. Youth experience the environment first hand and parents are there, year after year, to watch their growth through these programs. Seasonal camp staff, such as camp counselors or lifeguards, are those employees that most often work with the youth and have an on-the-ground look at how these PYD features are practiced and how well they are performed and enforced. Therefore, these three demographic perspectives may lead to valuable insight into what is perceived to help youth grow positively.
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Summary

This study is the first step in the direction of discovery to better understand international camp professionals’ perceptions and practices of PYD features. Some significant differences and interesting insights were discovered during this study, which lead to implications for international camp professionals and suggestions for future research on this topic. More can be learned through further research partnerships with international organizations like ICF. This is only the first step in uncovering perceptions and practices of PYD worldwide and, with future research and understanding, this should eventually lead to more positive camp programs worldwide that are successful in developing youth into healthy, caring, and responsible human beings.
### Appendix A

**Features of Positive Developmental Settings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical and Psychological Safety</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Opposite Poles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safe and health-promoting facilities; and practices that increase safe peer group interaction and decrease unsafe or confrontational peer interactions</td>
<td>Physical and health dangers; fear; feeling of insecurity; sexual and physical harassment; and verbal abuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Appropriate Structure | Limit setting; clear and consistent rules and expectations; firm-enough control; continuity and predictability; clear boundaries; and age-appropriate monitoring. | Chaotic; disorganized; laissez-faire; rigid; overcontrolled; and autocratic. |

| Supportive Relationships | Warmth; closeness; connectedness; good communication; caring; support; guidance; secure attachment; and responsiveness. | Cold; distant; overcontrolling; ambiguous support; untrustworthy; focused on winning; inattentive; unresponsive; and rejecting. |

| Opportunities to Belong | Opportunities for meaningful inclusion, regardless of one’s gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disabilities; and integration; opportunities for sociocultural identity formation; and support for cultural and bicultural competence. | Exclusion; marginalization; and intergroup conflict. |

| Positive Social Norms | Rules of behavior; expectations; injunctions; ways of doing things; values and morals; and obligations for service. | Normlessness; anomie; laissez-faire practices; antisocial and amoral norms; norms that encourage violence; reckless behavior; consumerism; poor health practices; and conformity. |
| Support for Efficacy and Mattering | Youth-based; empowerment practices that support autonomy; making a real difference in one’s community; and being taken seriously. Practice that includes enabling, responsibility granting, and meaningful challenge. Practices that focus on improvement rather than on relative current performance levels. | Unchallenging; overcontrolling; disempowering, and disabling. Practices that undermine motivation and desire to learn, such as excessive focus on current relative performance level rather than improvement. |
| Opportunities for Skill Building | Opportunities to learn physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, and social skills; exposure to intentional learning experiences; opportunities to learn cultural literacies, media literacy, communication skills, and good habits of mind; preparation for adult employment; and opportunities to develop social and cultural capital. | Practices that promote bad physical habits and habits of mind; and practices that undermine school and learning. |
| Integration of Family, School, and Community Efforts | Concordance; coordination; and synergy among family, school, and community. | Discordance; lack of communication, and conflict. |

## PYD Features with Descriptors and Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PYD Feature</th>
<th>Descriptors and Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Safety</td>
<td>Young people do not hit or kick others; Young people do not keep others from being part of activities or groups; Young people protect others from bullies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Safety</td>
<td>Young people do not say mean things to others or call them names; Young people are discouraged from spreading rumors; If someone is being picked on, young people try to stop it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Structure</td>
<td>Adults make sure the rules are being followed; Schedule is planned out and predictable; Activities are age appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Relationships</td>
<td>Adults are eager to help young people; Young people are willing to help each other; Young people respect one another; Adults treat young people fairly; Young people treat each other fairly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to Belong</td>
<td>Young people and adults work together to plan activities; Young people are provided opportunities for meaningful program interaction, without discrimination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Social Norms</td>
<td>Provide rules and expectations for behavior; Young people understand rules of behavior; Clear vision of how things are done at camp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Competency and Significance</td>
<td>Young people are encouraged to be leaders; Young people learn to make good decisions; Adults provide activities and practices that focus on youth improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for Skill Building</td>
<td>Young people learn from activities that are challenging; Young people learn different ways to talk to one another; Young people learn to play different sports and games; Young people learn to work together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of Family</td>
<td>The program encourages family interaction and collaboration; Communication about the camp experience so there can be continuity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of School</td>
<td>The program encourages partnerships and collaborations with school and/or academic content; Communication about the camp experience so there can be continuity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of Community Efforts</td>
<td>The program encourages partnerships and collaborations with other agencies and organizations; Communication about the camp experience so there can be continuity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix C

Survey

Introduction: The International Camping Fellowship (ICF) needs your help. In partnership with Clemson University, we are collecting information about international camps and the importance and performance of the eight positive youth development factors established by youth development researchers in the USA. The following survey should take anywhere from 10-15 minutes.

Please provide us with the following individual membership information:

1. Country: ________________________________
2. Gender:
   a. Male
   b. Female
3. Age:
   a. 18-24
   b. 25-30
   c. 31-35
   d. 36-40
   e. 41-45
   f. 46-50
   g. 51-60
   h. 60+
4. Level of Education
   a. High School Graduate
   b. University Graduate
   c. Graduate Degree
   d. Other: ________________________________
Please share your opinion of the importance and performance of the eight factors of positive youth development in your country:

1-Unimportant/Poor 2-A Little Important/Fair 3-Medium Importance/Good 4-Very Important/Very Good 5-Extremely Important/Excellent

1. **Physical Safety** (Examples: Young people do not hit or kick others; Young people do not keep others from being part of activities or groups; Young people protect others from bullies)
   a) How important is this to your camp?  1  2  3  4  5
   b) How well does your camp do this?  1  2  3  4  5
   c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country?  1  2  3  4  5
   d) What are the top two best examples of physical safety at your camp?

2. **Psychological Safety** (Examples: Young people do not say mean things to others or call them names; Young people are discouraged from spreading rumors; If someone is being picked on, young people try to stop it.)
   a) How important is this to your camp?  1  2  3  4  5
   b) How well does your camp do this?  1  2  3  4  5
   c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country?  1  2  3  4  5
   d) What are the top two best examples of psychological safety at your camp?

3. **Appropriate Structure** (Examples: Adults make sure the rules are being followed; Schedule is planned out and predictable; Activities are age appropriate)
   a) How important is this to your camp?  1  2  3  4  5
   b) How well does your camp do this?  1  2  3  4  5
   c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country?  1  2  3  4  5
   d) What are the top two best examples of appropriate at your camp?

4. **Supportive Relationships** (Examples: Adults are eager to help young people; Young people are willing to help each other; Young people respect one another; Adults treat young people fairly; Young people treat each other fairly)
   a) How important is this to your camp?  1  2  3  4  5
   b) How well does your camp do this?  1  2  3  4  5
5. **Opportunities to Belong** (Examples: Young people and adults work together to plan activities; Young people are provided opportunities for meaningful program interaction, without discrimination)
   a) How important is this to your camp? 1 2 3 4 5
   b) How well does your camp do this? 1 2 3 4 5
   c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country? 1 2 3 4 5
   d) What are the top two best examples of opportunities to belong at your camp? ________________________________

6. **Positive Social Norms** (Examples: Provide rules and expectations for behavior; Young people understand rules of behavior; Clear vision of how things are done at camp)
   a) How important is this to your camp? 1 2 3 4 5
   b) How well does your camp do this? 1 2 3 4 5
   c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country? 1 2 3 4 5
   d) What are the top two best examples of positive social norms at your camp? ________________________________

7. **Support for Competency and Significance** (Examples: Young people are encouraged to be leaders; Young people learn to make good decisions; Adults provide activities and practices that focus on youth improvement)
   a) How important is this to your camp? 1 2 3 4 5
   b) How well does your camp do this? 1 2 3 4 5
   c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country? 1 2 3 4 5
   d) What are the top two best examples of support for competency and significance at your camp? ________________________________

8. **Opportunities for Skill Building** (Examples: Young people learn from activities that are challenging; Young people learn different ways to talk to one another; Young people learn to play different sports and games; Young people learn to work together)
   a) How important is this to your camp? 1 2 3 4 5
b) How well does your camp do this? 1 2 3 4 5

c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country? 1 2 3 4 5

d) What are the top two best examples of opportunities for skill building at your camp? ________________________________________________

9. Integration of Family (Example: The program encourages family interaction and collaboration; Communication about the camp experience so there can be continuity)

   a) How important is this to your camp? 1 2 3 4 5
   b) How well does your camp do this? 1 2 3 4 5
   c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country? 1 2 3 4 5
   d) What are the top two best examples of integration of family at your camp? ________________________________

10. Integration of School (Example: The program encourages partnerships and collaborations with school and/or academic content; Communication about the camp experience so there can be continuity)

   a) How important is this to your camp? 1 2 3 4 5
   b) How well does your camp do this? 1 2 3 4 5
   c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country? 1 2 3 4 5
   d) What are the top two best examples of integration of school at your camp?______________________________

11. Integration of Community Efforts (Example: The program encourages partnerships and collaborations with other agencies and organizations, Communication about the camp experience so there can be continuity)

   a) How important is this to your camp? 1 2 3 4 5
   b) How well does your camp do this? 1 2 3 4 5
   c) Do you feel this is an important issue to camps in your country? 1 2 3 4 5
   d) What are the top two best examples of integration of community efforts at your camp? ________________________________

Outro: Thank you for helping ICF and Clemson University. Your thoughtful contributions to this study will ultimately further positive youth development internationally.
REFERENCES


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