AN EXPLORATION OF FACTORS INVOLVED IN CHOOSING RECREATION AS AN ACADEMIC MAJOR

By

COLLEEN G. PLUMTON

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba
June 2005

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"An Exploration of Factors Involved in Choosing Recreation as an Academic Major"

BY

Colleen G. Plumton

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree

Of

MASTER OF ARTS

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Abstract

The decision to choose an academic major can be a defining moment in life. The factors that influence this decision include socio-demographic, personal (individual) and environmental factors. The purpose of this exploratory study was to understand these factors and how they contribute to and or inhibit students choosing recreation as a university major.

The focus of the study was on university level academic majors and degrees. In particular, the primary research was limited to the University of Manitoba. A non-probability sample of University of Manitoba students registered in the Recreation Management and Community Development degree courses was used to capture students who are undecided and decided (recreation and other) about their academic major. A self-administered questionnaire was designed to gather data on student's profiles, as well as, how information on academic majors is gathered during the decision making process. Questions were designed to gain knowledge on the image of recreation as an academic major.

There is not one factor that influences the decision to choose recreation as an academic major but many factors. It was evident in this study that all three factors, socio-demographic, personal (individual) and environmental played a role in choosing recreation as an academic major. Conclusions can be made based on significant relationships between recreation majors and factors influencing the choice of recreation as an academic major.

Findings from this research suggest that personal (individual) factors and environmental factors influenced choosing a university major in recreation more than the socio-demographic factors. While there are similar patterns of student composition and decision making surrounding choice of majors, some unique aspects were noted for recreation majors. Specifically, recreation students' image of a fun and exciting degree, their need to talk to people in one or more occupations, their volunteer experiences, the usefulness of the introductory courses in concepts of recreation and leisure and introduction to leisure travel, and the lack of importance of earning a high salary. Factors that discourage students from choosing a university major in recreation include: boring classes, lack of job opportunities, not seen as a profession, and lack of profile and prestige.

The findings from this research can directly impact recruitment strategies used by the University of Manitoba to attract students to the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program. The implications could be increased numbers of students applying to recreation degree program across Canada.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The decision to choose an academic major can be a defining moment in life. The factors that influence this decision include socio-demographic background, personal (individual) and environmental factors. These factors dominate the career development literature (Brown, 1990, 2000; Ginzberg, 1984; Hackett & Betz, 1981; Holland, 1996; Krumboltz, 1994; Super, 1990). The purpose of this study is to understand these factors and how they contribute to/or inhibit students choosing recreation as a university academic major.

The need to provide recreation services in Canada has been evident since the early 1900's when the playground movement gave way to planned public recreation programs. Since that time the field of recreation has grown to include public, not for profit, and commercial sector services. As the field grew, so did the need to develop skilled professionals to provide quality programs and services. Universities and colleges across the country began to develop and implement degree and diploma programs at their institutions. The first degree program began in 1947 at the University of Western Ontario with the introduction of an Honour's Bachelor of Arts in Physical Education, which offered a recreation option in the third and fourth years (McFarland, 1978). Today, recreation degree programs (under various names and titles) are offered in universities across Canada, including the University of Manitoba.

The University of Manitoba, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies currently offers a four-year undergraduate degree program in Recreation

Management and Community Development (RMCD). The goal of the Bachelor of Recreation Management and Community Development degree program is to "contribute to an enhanced quality of individual and community life in Manitoba, Canada and the world through personal and professional development of students in the field of leisure services" (Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies, 2002, p.5). The degree program was designed and implemented in 1981 by Dr. Don Hunter. The program was created originally as a generalist degree with emphasis options in administration, therapeutic recreation, outdoor recreation, and tourism. It is a limited enrollment program, with only 40 applicants being accepted each year.

According to University of Manitoba statistics (Institutional Analysis Student Enrollment Report, U of M, 2004) the Bachelor of Recreation Management and Community Development Degree program accepted its full quota of students until 1997 when enrollment began to fall below capacity. The lowest enrollment occurred in the 2003-2004 academic year with only 24 applicants being accepted. The total capacity of students over the three-year program is 120. The highest enrollment over the past ten years was in 1999 with 95 students or 79% capacity. The overall enrollment ranged from 79% in 1999 to 54% in 2004. This decrease in applicants is of concern considering the program has not been able to attract a full complement of students since 1998. As well, the number of full-time students graduating from the degree program has not been higher than 32 since 1999 (see Table 1.1). This enrollment issue raises questions about why students are opting out, how well the current program is promoting the value of recreation as a degree, and the overall societal need for recreation service providers.

Table 1.1

University of Manitoba, Institutional Analysis, Student Enrolment Report
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies
Recreation Management and Community Development Degree

Year	1st rec	2nd rec	3rd year	total
1995	27	39	19	85
1996	40	25	26	91
1997	42	23	21	86
1998	33	28	20	81
1999	36	27	32	95
2000	29	19	26	74
2001	36	21	17	74
2002	34	21	12	67
2003	32	20	16	68
2004	24	17	24	65
Total	**333**	**240**	**213**	**786**
Potential	**400**	**400**	**400**	**1200**
Difference	**-67**	**-160**	**-187**	**-414**

Note: these statistics show that the program on average enrolls 33 students in first year and carries an average of 78 students with a capacity for 120 (-42).

Significance of the Study

The success of university degree programs is dependent upon the demand for those academic programs within our community (McFarland, 1978). The decrease in enrollment in recreation programs across Canada has become an important issue to address within each specific university. Understanding career choice factors that influence selecting recreation as an academic major will assist with the recruitment of students in academic recreation programs. This study will add important information to help understand the factors that influence students to enroll in recreation degree programs. Furthermore, it will add to the knowledge base of career literature by expanding it to include the infrequently studied area of recreation.

Scope and Limitations

The focus of this study was university undergraduate level academic majors and degrees. In particular, the primary research was limited to the University of Manitoba.

Definitions

For the purposes of this study the term "recreation degree" was used to describe recreation degrees generally, regardless of formal titles, which may contain other terms (e.g., leisure studies, management, etc.). It should also be noted that in the case of the University of Manitoba, the degree name changed from Bachelor of Recreation Studies to Bachelor of Recreation Management and Community Development in September 2004.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The field of recreation has a richness that has evolved over time, depending on the cultural values and socio-economic engines driving society. In the first part of the chapter, an outline of major historical influences on recreation in Canada is presented. These influences include ancient cultures, religious movements as well as social and political influences, specifically, the women's movement. The impact of recreation on Canadian society is discussed in the section on the history of recreation in Canada. The influence of the development of a recreation delivery system in Canada on the need for academic programs is reviewed. The second part of the chapter considers career development theories culminating with a conceptual framework to guide the study.

Major Historical Influences of Recreation and Leisure in Canada

It is important to note that the "historical highlights" presented below were those that contributed to the development of academic leisure theory and the concept of modern leisure within western society. This western civilization perspective has been the primary historical influence and reference for teaching foundations of recreation and leisure in North America: however, it is recognized that it is not necessarily inclusive of minority populations or cultural diversity.

Ancient Greek and Roman Cultures

Historically, one of the most influential periods on modern conceptualization of leisure was the Greek period of leisure development known as the Golden Age of Pericles

(500 to 400 B.C.) where humans living in the western world reached a new level of philosophical and cultural development. The influence of philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle on this development of leisure had a great impact on western civilization's theoretical notion of leisure and recreation (Kraus, 2001). The Greek philosophy of recreation and leisure "believed strongly in the unity of mind and body and in the strong relationship of all forms of human qualities and skills.... Plato believed that education should be compulsory and that it should provide natural modes of amusement for children: Education should begin with the right direction of children's sports. The play of children has a great deal to do with the maintenance or non-maintenance of laws." (Kraus, 2001, p. 55). The Greek notion of leisure was a lifestyle rather than a period of time or activity. Unfortunately, leisure was a lifestyle of the upper class at the cost of many less fortunate. "Only the privileged were able to obtain leisure and it was this that entitled them to full citizenship" (Searle & Brayley, 2000, p.13). The slaves and people not included in the "upper classes" had limited opportunities to experience leisure and recreation and often became the vehicle of entertainment for the upper class.

Ancient Romans were another key influence on modern leisure; however, they had a different concept of leisure than did the Greeks. The military emphasis of the Romans valued strength over the philosophical ways of the Greeks. The type of leisure activities they engaged in defined social classes. The ruling classes engaged in the arts, culture and amusements that only they could afford while the commoners did what they could with limited financial resources and free time.

The Romans built the Coliseum to house the many holidays throughout the year that celebrated theatre, circuses, battles, races and festivals. Roman holidays were characterized

by increasingly perverse and morally deficient behaviors, and brutality, corruption and degradation became part of how the Romans experienced their "leisure" (Searle & Brayley, 2000). This view of leisure limited involvement by all by discriminating against women and people considered of the lower classes.

Religious Movements

With the defeat of the Roman Empire came the influence of religious movements on leisure. "Having suffered under the brutal persecutions of the Romans, the early Christians condemned all that their pagan oppressors had stood for – especially their hedonistic way of life" (Kraus, 2001, p.57). This disdain for the past influenced the development of what is known as the "Protestant Work Ethic". Leisure as an ideal was no longer promoted for the rich and the value of work was emphasized as the new ideal through the dominant religions.

This period was known as the Dark Ages due to the lack of enjoyment that was permitted within western society. Pleasurable activities were considered sinful, and being righteous involved self-denial, sacrifice and solemnity. Ironically, the nobility of the time made sure they had access to leisure (Karlis, 2004).

The movement of people from Europe to North America in the early 1800's brought with it "extreme" views of leisure, play, and recreation. Among the colonizers, the protestant work ethic was strong and ecclesiastical restrictions on leisure, slavery and the brutalization of Indigenous people served an important social control function for both church and civic leaders in the new colonies. In Canada, colonies became provinces and then a confederation, the ability to view leisure as important within society gained popular recognition (Searle & Brayley, 2000). Recreation within Canadian society went

through a number of important changes during the remainder of the late 1800's into the 20th century.

Social and Political Movements

The history of recreation in Canada can be traced to the original inhabitants of our country, the Indigenous people. For example, the Inuit and Algonquin populations had a positive influence on the development of recreation in colonized Canadian society. Aboriginal people enjoyed many activities that today, the dominant non-Aboriginal society, view as recreational in nature. The use of dance in celebrations and the creation of baggataway or lacrosse have been appropriated by Canadian culture as common recreational pursuits. Unfortunately, a number of the original activities of Indigenous people succumbed to acculturation (Karlis, 2004). This acculturation excluded Indigenous people in the development of recreation in Canadian society, which contributed to limited representation of Aboriginal people in recreation today.

The first recreation revolution took place during the Greek and Roman eras when participation ceased to be isolated to the privileged and became the right of many (Kraus, 2001). The second recreation revolution occurred due to the dramatic changes within the British and French colonies between 1700 and 1880 (Chubb & Chubb, 1981). In what is now known as Canada, this recreation revolution was having an impact prior to confederation. The building of the country became more important than recreation. The pursuit of happiness was less emphasized than developing new political and economic systems; however, after confederation there was a renewed enthusiasm for recreation (Karlis, 2004). The old system, presented by the Catholic Church which emphasized work

was being challenged by the public. Significant changes in the resources, structures and values surrounding leisure and recreation were becoming apparent. Canadians placed a higher value on fitness and social recreation during the mid to late 1800's (Searle & Brayley, 2000). There was time to celebrate the founding of a nation through festivals and community events.

During the late 1800's the development of open space, walks and gardens became popular in Upper Canada (McFarland, 1978). The move from rural to urban settings caused the public to look to their employers, government, and businesses for recreation. The commercial sector provided beer gardens, dance halls and amusement parks to meet public demand. Between 1880 and 1900 there was more involvement by the government in the development of recreation. Public recreation services offered increased opportunities for women including croquet, golf, and skating. Park authorities were developed with the Public Parks Act of 1882. This act allowed for populations of 25,000 people or more to obtain 600 acres of land for park development. Along with this increased development in open space came strict rules regarding its use. It was common to see stay off the grass signs to foster a passive and serene use of the spaces (McFarland, 1978).

According to McFarland (1978), one of the most important events in the history of recreation in Canada was the development of the National Council of Women in 1893 in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax. This group of women had a major role to play in the creation and initiation of supervised playgrounds in Canada. McFarland outlines this importance:

The concern of citizens for those who lived in over-crowded squalor, with resultant high incidence of crime, disease and drunkenness led to the establishment of supervised playgrounds for children, which were the forerunners, in Canada, of the extensive public recreation systems enjoyed today.

(McFarland, 1978, p.19)

Youth issues were predominant during this time. The playground movement emphasized these issues and provided play and physical development opportunities for youth using "sand gardens". This triggered the initial development of public parks and recreation systems in major Canadian centres. Work patterns changed to include blocks of available leisure time to pursue the opportunities offered by government, which precipitated a need for workers trained to provide it (Karlis, 2004). Table 2.1 outlines landmark dates of the 19th and 20th centuries in the development of recreation in Canada.

Public Recreation Development in Manitoba

In Manitoba, the recreation delivery system is comprised of a number of provincial and municipal government departments that provide recreation services to the public. The Manitoba Public Parks Act was passed by the Manitoba legislation on April 20th, 1892. The Act enabled municipalities to develop public parks boards. By 1914, the parks were providing spaces for activities such as cricket, football and baseball. Playgrounds became a major component to the recreation delivery system at this time as part of the playground movement sweeping the country. Charles Barbour, the first recreation director in Winnipeg, played a key role in creating "activity centres" to provide recreation programs to the community (McDonald, 1995). These centres gave way to the community centre system currently employed throughout the province today. At the local level, "the

Municipal Act (s.m. 1970 c. 100, s.378) allowed communities to create multiple authorities to oversee the development of recreation opportunities" (Searle & Harper, 1989, p.9). These opportunities included recreation, amateur sport and fitness.

The need for professional staff to provide these opportunities to the public became apparent in the mid 60's and early 70's. The Bachelor of Recreation Management and Community Development degree program was developed by Dr. Don Hunter to fill the need for recreation professionals within Manitoba. The lack of programs in Manitoba in comparison to other provinces led to the development of the current recreation degree program. The degree program was implemented in September, 1981 with its first graduating class in May, 1983.

As Table 2.1 indicates, the concept of recreation and its delivery system has continually evolved over the past 100 years. With expanded notions of recreation, there is expanded need for knowledgeable recreation service providers.

Table 2.1

Major Historical Influences on Leisure and Recreation in Canada

Year	Influence
1851	YMCA offering physical activities
1854	Royal Canadian Yacht Club – commercial
1859	Recreation Grounds Act
1867	CONFEDERATION- Canada is formed from British N.A. Act
1867	Royal Mountain Parks Act
1883	Public Parks Act of Ontario
1887	Rocky Mountain Park – now Banff National Park
1893	National Council of Women
1899	National Capitol Commission
1900	Playground Movement Began across Canada
1907	Lord's Day Act
1907	Automobile – introduced pleasure travel
1910	Free time revolution
1915	First sign of professionalism within leisure/recreation field
1920	Public Parks and Recreation systems developed
1920	Golden Age of Sport – physical education accepted in schools
1928	Talking Movies
1929	Radio – hockey
1932	National Parks Act
1943	Physical Fitness Act
1944	Parks and Recreation Association of Canada
1947	First degree program offered at University of Western Ontario
1950's	Television – huge impact on leisure behavior
1960's	Professional and Academic Programs Instituted in Universities Government departments developed
1961	Fitness and Amateur Sport Act
1969	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association
1970	PARTICIPACTION
1970	Increased Education/Research: demand recreation as a human right, value of leisure appreciated; academic journals designed
1973	Sports and Recreation Bureau
1974	Ministry of Culture and Recreation developed Provincial government minister's defined Recreation identified as a social service Role of federal government established Elora prescription published
1973	First Minister of State- responsible for Sport
1978	Report – a new perspective on the health of Canadians
1980	Cutbacks in public recreation services; downsizing recreation
1982	Renewed interest in community school programs
1982	Canadian Constitution Act
1982	Inter-Provincial Recreation Statement
1987	National Recreation Statement
1990	Fitness Canada- Active Living Alliance
1990	The Benefits of Parks and Recreation: A Catalogue
1998	Parks Canada Agency Act
2000	Increased partnerships in the delivery system

Source: McFarland (1978), Searle and Brayley (2004)

Academic Programs in Recreation/Leisure

The professional development of leisure services in Canada evolved through efforts of volunteers and individuals employed by leisure services agencies (Searle & Brayley, 2000). Other than short courses and conferences, there was little opportunity for persons accepting employment in public recreation to obtain training specifically related to their field until after World War II. Many of the first paid employees of leisure services agencies were professionals from other fields or organizations such as education and engineering (McFarland, 1978). With the growth of the public recreation delivery system in the 1940's and 1950's there were more positions available than professionals trained to fill them. As the field grew so did the need to develop skilled professionals to provide quality programs and services.

The study of leisure and recreation in Canadian society is relatively young (Karlis, 2004). Universities and colleges across Canada began to develop and implement recreation/leisure degree and diploma programs (see Table 2.2) at their institutions as early as 1936, with the Niagara Parks Commission's School of Horticulture offering courses for those interested in working within Canada's park system (McFarland, 1978). In 1946, the province of Nova Scotia developed an eight- month course to prepare service men for community recreation. The following year (1947-1948) the University of Western Ontario was the first university in Canada to develop an honours Bachelor of Arts in Physical Education with a recreation option in the third and fourth year. In 1951, the University of Toronto, School of Social Work developed a community recreation stream but the program was cancelled due to zero registrations. In that same year, Municipal Recreation Directors of Ontario were offered a three-year in-service course provided by

the extension branch of the University of Western Ontario. This program was discontinued in 1963 but not before certifying 218 interim and 92 permanent practitioners (McFarland, 1978). In 1952, University of British Columbia designed a diploma course in recreation that was discontinued in 1953. The Alberta Cultural Activities Branch developed a one-year in-service program that was extended to three years by request of the students. The first class graduated from this program in 1960. Academic programs grew in the 1970's and 1980's increasing opportunities to choose recreation as an academic major and future career.

Universities today offer a wide array of degree programs specializing in sport management, tourism, outdoor recreation and therapeutic recreation. A number of Canadian universities offering recreation and leisure degree programs are experiencing a decline in enrollment (CCUPEKA, 2003).

Table 2.2

Chronology of Formal Recreation Education and Training in Canada (1936-present)

Year	University/Organization	Dept/School	Degree/Diploma	Status
1936	Niagara Park Commission	School of Horticulture	Courses in park courses	no longer exists
1946	Province of Nova Scotia	N/A	8 month course	no longer exists
1947	University of Western Ontario	Faculty of Arts	Honor's BA	1955 dropped
1951	University of Toronto	School of Social Work	Social Work–recreation	cancelled – no reg.
1951	Municipal Recreation Directors	U of Western Ontario extension branch	3 year in-service program	
1952	University of British Columbia	N/A	Diploma in recreation	discontinued in 1953
1957	Alberta Cultural Activities Branch	N/A	1 year in-service program	extended 3 years
1960	University of B.C.	School of Physical Education	4 year recreation program	discontinued in 1985
1962	University of Alberta	School of Physical Education	BA in Recreation Leadership	
1963	Federated Colleges	N/A	2 year course for rec. technicians	
1964	Mount Royal College	N/A	2 year diploma in recreation	
1967	Lethbridge Jr. College	N/A	2 year diploma program in recreation	
1968	University of Waterloo	Faculty of Physical Education	Co-op in recreation	
1969	University of Ottawa	School of Physical Education	Degree course in Recreology	
1981	University of Manitoba	Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies	Recreation Studies degree	

Source: McFarland (1978) Note: See Table 2.3 for current university programs

Table 2.3

Current recreation degree programs offered at Canadian Universities

University	Faculty/School	Degree
Acadia University	School of Recreation Management	Bachelor of Recreation Mgmt.
University of Alberta	Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation	Bachelor of Arts – Rec and Leisure
University of B.C.	Faculty of Human Kinetics	Leisure/Sport Mgmt or Recreation
U of Northern B.C.	School of Resource Recreation/Tourism	BA in Resource Rec/Tourism
Brock University	Faculty of Applied Health Sciences	Bachelor of Sport Mgmt.
University of Calgary	Faculty of Communication and Culture	Bachelor of Arts – Leisure/Tourism
Concordia University	Faculty of Arts & Science	Bachelor of Arts – T.R./leisure
	Department of Applied Heath Services	
Dalhousie University	School of Health & Human Performance	Bachelor of Science – T.R./Mgmt.
Lakehead University	Faculty of Professional Schools	Bachelor of Arts or Science
	School of Outdoor Recreation	
Laurentian University	School of Sports Administration	Bachelor of Commerce
Memorial University	School of Human Kinetics & Recreation	Bachelor of Arts in Recreation
Trinity Western U.	School of Sport and Leisure Mgmt.	Bachelor of Arts – sport/leisure
Universite de Moncton	Faculty of Kinesiology	Bachelor of Recreation
University of Manitoba	Faculty of Physical Education & Rec.	Bachelor of Recreation Mgmt. & Community Development
U of New Brunswick	Faculty of Kinesiology	Bachelor of Recreation/Sport
University of Ottawa	Faculty of Health Sciences	Bachelor of Social Sciences
University of Victoria	School of Physical Education	Bachelor of Arts in Recreation
University of Waterloo	Faculty of Applied Health Sciences	Bachelor of Recreation
	Dept. of Recreation & Leisure Studies	Bachelor of Arts – Honors
University of Windsor	Faculty of Human Kinetics Dept. of Kinesiology	Bachelor of Sport Mgmt.

Source: CCUPEKA membership list, meeting minutes (2004) and university websites.

Choosing an Academic Major - A major life decision

Career decision-making has received a great deal of attention in the literature over the years (Hackett, 1991). Ginzberg (1956, p.21) states that one of the "outstanding characteristics of our culture, since the beginning of modern capitalism, is the right of the individual to choose their work." It is important to note here that researchers do realize that not all populations have the same level of freedom to choose, however, Osipow (1973) believes western society possesses an element of choice regarding careers. Within the university system this choice involves selecting an academic major. The process of choosing an academic major is one of the initial indications of a future career or profession. "Choosing an occupation involves not one decision, but a large number of decisions over a considerable period of time" (Ginzberg, 1956, p.22). Ginzberg (1984) revised his initial thought that career choice is irreversible to include a statement that implied that career choices are often defined by compromise. The idea that career choice is a developmental process was a landmark contribution to the existing literature (Brown, 2000).

Definitions of Career Development

The definition of career development has changed over the past 50 years to include one's whole life rather than seeing career as a separate entity from other key components in life (Brown, 1990, 2000; Ginzberg et al., 1951; Hall, 1976; Holland, 1990; Roe 1956; Super 1976). Career development is a complex, ongoing process that begins in childhood. Career development theories explain why people choose a specific career path.

In 1976 Super defined career as:

> The sequence of major positions occupied by a person throughout their pre-occupational, occupational and post-occupational life; includes work-related roles such as those of student, employee, and pensioner, together with complementary vocational, familial, and civic roles. Careers exist only as people pursue them: they are person-centered. (Super, 1976, p.20)

Wolf and Kolb (1980) added to Super's definition by including a statement on the importance of the totality of a person's life:

> Career development involves one's whole life, not just occupation. As such, it concerns the whole person, needs and wants, capacities and potentials, excitements and anxieties, insights and blind spots, wants and all. More than that, it concerns them in the ever-changing contexts of their life. The environmental pressures and constraints, the bonds that tie them to significant others, responsibilities to children and aging parents, the total structure of one's circumstances are also factors that must be understood and reckoned with. In these terms, career development and personal development converge. Self and circumstances evolving, changing and unfolding in mutual interaction-constitute the focus and the drama of career development (pp. 1-2).

Sears (1982) goes on to define career development as a lifelong process involving psychological, sociological, educational, economic, physical factors, as well as chance factors that interact to influence the career of an individual. Brown (2000) adds culture to Sear's list of factors that influence an individual's career development.

There appears to be a high level of freedom of choice given to students to make the selection of an academic major (Ginzberg, 1972; Hackett, 1995; Galotti, 2002). This freedom to choose often comes with high levels of anxiety and confusion. Galotti (1999) surveyed first year college students choosing a college major. The students listed a variety of criteria that impacted their decision making such as, enjoyment, career opportunities, academic requirements, and faculty who teach the subject. She found that students had difficulty in choosing among alternatives and did not know how to go through the phases

of decision making in a productive way. These results showed that students limited the number of alternatives available to them and narrowed their options just to "get it over with" (Galotti, 2002).

Career Decision Making Process

The phases of the career decision-making process have been well established by researchers. Crites (1981) includes the phases of goal selection, career exploration, problem solving capabilities, planning skills, and realistic self-appraisal skills in his discussions. Galotti (2002) describes a similar process using setting goals, gathering information, decision structuring, making a final choice, and evaluation as the key steps in the decision making process. This self-assessment and evaluation process is illustrated by the fact that college students often change academic majors before making a final choice. This is evident among recreation majors who have been found to enter the discipline through the change of major rather than by initial declaration of major (Cunningham, Frauman, Ivy, & Perry, 2004).

According to Holland (1977, 1995) attempts to teach students the decision making process are critical to successful career choice. He states:

> The good vocational decision maker appears to have well-defined vocational interests and talents, is aware of their values and personal traits, is self-confident and interpersonally competent, has a useful fund of information about occupations and the resources where better information can be had, and is involved with their college, peers and family. Poor decision makers appear to lack one or more of these characteristics (p. 24).

In a study of undecided and decided high school and college students Holland (1977) found that decided students were more apt to have a sense of identity, maturity and positive outlook about their future career. In this same study, they asked undecided and

decided male and female college students to agree or disagree with these statements: I am not sure that my present occupational choice is right for me; I am uncertain about the occupations I would enjoy; I don't have to make a decision right now, and I don't know enough about employment opportunities. The results showed that overall, 86% of the male students and 76% of the female students stated that they were unsure of their current occupational choice and between 75% and 78% of the subjects stated that they were uncertain about the occupations that they would enjoy. These studies showed students expressing doubts about their decision-making capacities, as well as, academic ability and self-knowledge.

Research done by Taylor and Betz (1983) posits that effective decision-making depends not only on the development of skills but also in the confidence of making those decisions. In a study of college students, Galotti and Kozberg (1994) found that students experience stress in the decision making process along with the sense that it is a difficult decision with many ramifications. Over time, the researchers found that the students felt more certain, comfortable and confident with their decisions even though the students' perceptions of the decision making process remained stressful and difficult. All students expressed a need to manage the amount of career information that was available to them.

Individual differences (such as skills) have been described in the career decision making literature in two main categories: personality (traits and characteristics), and developmental (environment and life experiences). These two main categories coincide with the career development literature, which outlines traditional approaches such as, trait and factor, developmental, and social learning theories. Career choice theories have focused on the psychological dynamics behind the choice of occupation, the development

of decision making skills, impact of life stages on the choice of occupations and the emphasis of personality and work environment on choice (Osipow, 1990).

Traditional Career Development Theories

Career development theories include a variety of approaches to career choice and decision-making. According to Super (1990) the pioneers of career development are individuals representing four disciplines: differential psychologists (work and occupations); developmental psychologists (stages of career); sociologists (occupational mobility and social class) and personality theorists (individuals viewed as organizers of experience). These professionals' positive impacts on career development have influenced the traditional approaches to understanding career choice.

> In the wise choice of a vocation there are three broad factors: 1) a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations and their causes; 2) a knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensations, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; 3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts.
>
> Parsons, 1909, p.5

The traditional approaches to career development theories deal with the career decision making process (Hackett & Betz, 1981; Holland, 1966; Osipow, 1973; Parsons, 1909; Super 1980; Williamson, 1930). The roots of career development are found in the initial work of Frank Parsons. Parsons approach to career development outlined the first conceptual framework for career decision-making. Parsons believed that if the individual chose a "vocation" rather than aimlessly searching for a job their level of satisfaction

within their chosen job would increase. Emphasis on career satisfaction and success in the workplace remain a central theme in career development theories today. Parsons led the way by describing people as decided and undecided in relation to career choice. Williamson (1939) continued this area of research by asking students about their certainty of their choices. The initial work of Parsons (1909) gave way to the trait and factor theories developed in the mid 1950s. Early career development theories, including those of Parsons served as the foundation for the trait and factor theories.

Trait and Factor Theory

Trait and factors theories (also referred to as person-environment fit theories) are based on the assumption that "individuals need to develop their traits, interests, values, personality and aptitudes, as well as select environments that are congruent with them" (Brown, 2000, p.21). One of the most prominent theories in this area is Holland's Theory of Vocational Choice (1959, 1985, 1996). Holland posits that personality is the key factor in vocational (career) choice. He suggests that people can be categorized into six personality and environment types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. Holland acknowledges that individuals are usually a combination of these types and not one "pure" form of his described type. His premise of using personality as a primary factor in career decision-making is based on his assumption of "stereotypes" within occupations. Holland believes that "type begets type", hence individuals choose a working environment that is compatible with their personality. For example, individuals who see themselves as a "social" type would seek an environment that is social in nature.

Holland describes the social type as:

> "The special heredity and experiences of the social person lead to a preference for activities that entail the manipulation of others to inform, train, develop, cure, or enlighten; and an aversion to explicit, ordered, systematic activities involving materials, tools or machines. These behavioral tendencies lead in turn to an acquisition of human relation competencies such as interpersonal and educational competencies and to a deficit in manual and technical competencies. .... because of the preferences, competencies, self-perceptions and values possessed the social person is: ascendant, cooperative, feminine, friendly, generous, helpful, idealistic, insightful, kind, persuasive, responsible, sociable, tactful and understanding."
>
> (1973, p.16)

The factors influencing career choice according to Holland include specific personality traits, which are "self-concepts, perception of environment, values, achievement and performance, differential reaction to environmental rewards and stress, preference for occupation and occupational role, coping style and personal traits" (Holland, 1973, p.12). Holland's theory has been the most widely used and researched over the past 40 years.

Developmental Theory

The developmental theories, unlike the trait and factor theories focus on the stages of career development rather than the person-environment fit. Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrod, and Herma established the first developmental theory in 1951. Their theory was the first to introduce a conceptual framework that was developmental in nature by describing the career choice process as a life long process. This initial theory has been overshadowed by Super's (1976) life span, life-approach to career development. Super's writings on the topic are extensive. He outlines a number of key components to his theory including the first two discussed by (Brown, 2000); "people differ in their abilities and personalities, needs, values, interests, traits and self-concepts; people are qualified, by

virtue of these characteristics, each for a number of occupations." Super saw self-concept and vocational maturity as important factors influencing career choice. Gottfredson's (1996) theory of circumscription and compromise looks at how career aspirations develop. She bases her theory on four basic assumptions: 1) career decision making begins in childhood; 2) individuals utilize their self-concept when deciding on careers; 3) people develop occupational stereotypes that influence their decision making process; and 4) career satisfaction is dependent upon the perceptions of the career. Her work closely relates to Super's regarding self-concept, and Holland's personality stereotype.

Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory of career decision-making outlines the question of why people choose a particular educational program or occupation (Krumboltz, 1990). The theory examines many factors that impact the career decision-making process. These factors include genetic, environmental, learning experiences, and task approach skills. The genetic factors consider sex and ethnic background, as well as, the person's physique in career decision making (Brown, 2000). Environmental influences known to impact the career decision making process include an individuals' aptitude, interests, personality, family, education and lifestyle. For example, Lent, Brown and Hackett (2000) state that career development is influenced by both objective and perceived environmental factors. Examples of these factors are the quality of the educational experiences one is exposed to and the financial support available to us to pursue that experience. How one reacts to these factors can greatly influence the career decision-making process. This theory identifies the interaction between personal attributes, external environmental factors and behavior in career decision making (Kerka, 1998). It is related to "trait and factor theory in that it

attempts to explain the process by which people find congruent occupations" (Krumboltz, 1995, p. 17). Krumboltz believes that people acquire their preferences for careers through a variety of learning experiences. Table 2.4 is a summary of traditional career development theories.

Table 2.4

Key characteristics of traditional career development theories

Year	Theory	Theorist(s)	Factors
1909	Conceptual Framework	Frank Parson	resources abilities interests
1914	Origin of Interests	Ann Roe	heredity environment
1930	Trait and Factor	Williamson	
1951	Developmental	Eli Ginzberg	self; reality key persons
1953	Developmental	Donald Super	experience
1959	Trait and Factor	John Holland	personality
1976	Social Learning	John Krumboltz	ethnicity, interests, experience, SES

Purpose of Study

The primary purpose of this study is to explore career choice factors and how they may relate to selecting recreation as an academic major, and specifically, to understand what leads to the decision to pursue or not pursue recreation as an undergraduate degree. The career development theories discussed in the previous section outline prevailing factors in the career choice process, namely, personal, environmental, and socio-demographic characteristics. While personality has been a major focus of the career choice literature, the measurement of personality is a highly specialized and intensive process that is beyond the scope of this study. It is also problematic, given Holland's use of highly-biased sterotypes. The review of the career choice literature resulted in the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 2.1, which focused on individual factors; namely, socio-demographic characteristics and university experience as decision influences. Environmental factors, included information gathering and sources, influence of people or groups, importance of specific items and image of a recreation degree.

Research Questions

The framework in Figure 2.1 will guide the study by focusing the research questions, specifically:

1. What is the relationship between selected socio-demographic factors and choosing recreation as an academic major?
2. What is the relationship between selected personal (individual) factors and choosing recreation as an academic major?
3. What is the relationship between selected environmental factors and choosing recreation as an academic major?

As part of the attempt to understand what leads to the decision to pursue or not pursue recreation as an undergraduate degree, a number of objectives evolved from the research questions.

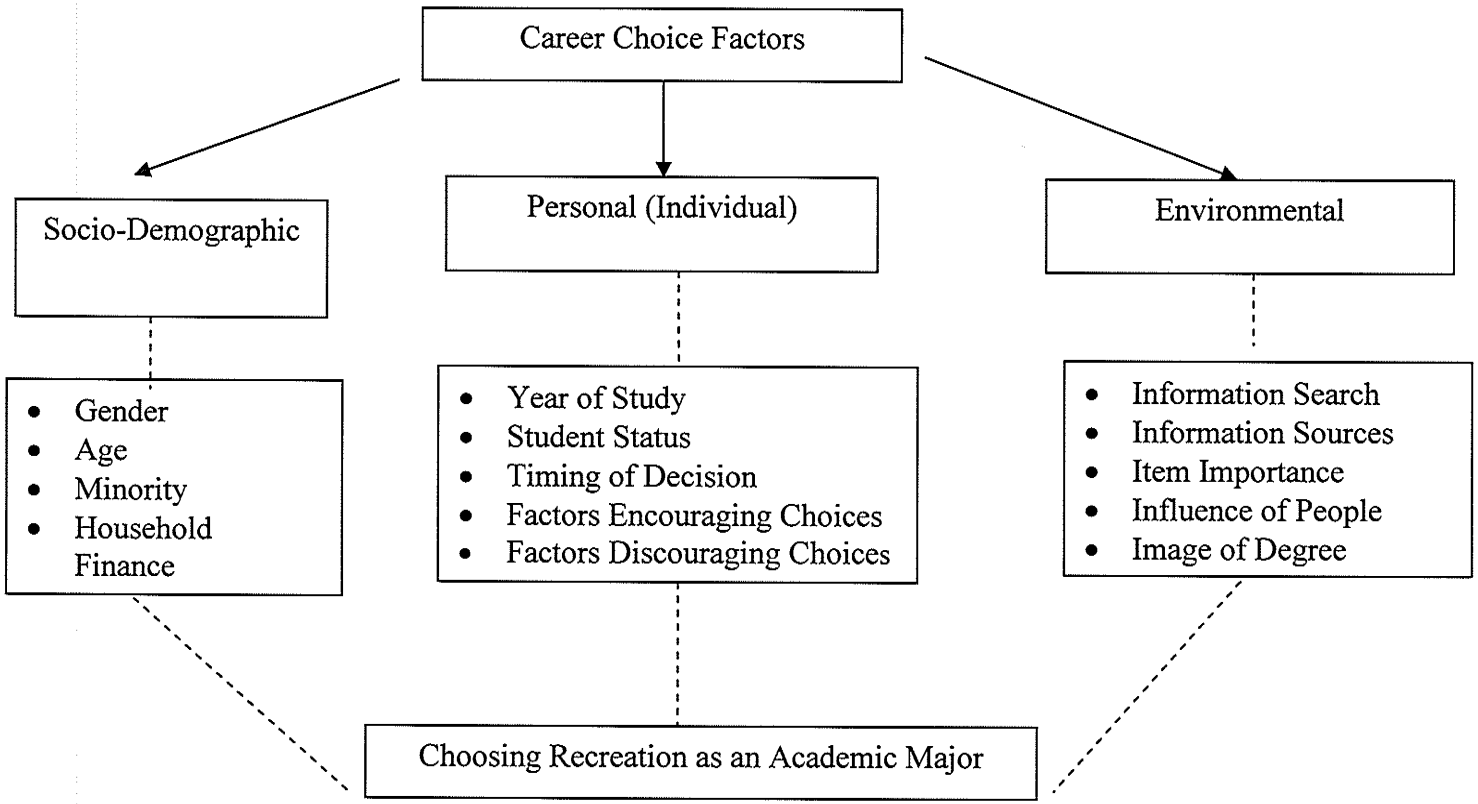
Study Objectives

1. To identify factors contributing to students choosing a university major in recreation.
2. To identify factors detracting students from choosing a university major in recreation.
3. To assess the image of an undergraduate degree in recreation among majors and non-majors.
4. To contribute to an understanding of the factors leading to recreation as a university major and career choice.
5. To provide recommendations for student recruitment in the undergraduate recreation degree program at the University of Manitoba.

The next chapter will outline the method designed to address the research questions and achieve the study objectives.

Figure 2.1

Factors Involved in Choosing Recreation as an Academic Major
Conceptual Framework



Chapter 3

Method

This exploratory study was designed to investigate the factors contributing to or detracting university students from choosing recreation as an academic major. Gaps in career development literature are evident in the area of recreation. A survey research design was implemented to gather a breadth of information from a sample of university students as an initial step toward addressing this gap and adding to the career development literature. The method chapter includes sections that outline the setting, sampling, data collection and data analysis employed to meet the study purpose and objectives.

Setting

The University of Manitoba, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies is located in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The University is the largest and only institution offering a degree in Recreation Management and Community Development in Manitoba. The undergraduate degree was implemented in 1981 as the Recreation Studies Degree Program. The program changed its name to Recreation Management and Community Development (RMCD) in 2004 to reflect current course content. The RMCD program is a general degree with specialty areas in sport management, tourism and therapeutic recreation. The program has a limited enrollment of 40 students per year. The lack of enrollment (see Table 1.1) in the recreation degree program is an issue for recruitment. Understanding the factors that encourage or discourage students from enrolling in the RMCD degree program can impact the future recruitment and marketing strategies of the program and Faculty.

Sample

Students attending the University of Manitoba provided the sample population. Following Parsons (1909) samples were required for two types of students - major decided and major undecided. These two groups were subdivided to provide the four main categories of students for this study: 1) academic major decided (recreation) 2) academic major decided (other) 3) undecided (no declared academic major) and 4) undecided (but would consider recreation as an academic major).

The non-probability sample for decided and undecided groups was drawn from students enrolled in the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program courses during second term (January – April, 2005) in the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies (see Table 3.1). This sample comprised 515 students. The majority of these students are enrolled in introductory recreation courses open to all students at the University of Manitoba. One of the disadvantages of a non-probability sample is that there are no estimates of accuracy generalized to the larger student population at the University due to the convenience of the sample (Dillman, 2000). This was not a concern in this study due to the nature of the research question. Generalizing the results to the larger student population was not required. An advantage of a non-probability sample is that it is inexpensive and allows for limited human resources to implement the survey (Weisberg & Bowen, 1977). An exploratory study is not as concerned with the generalization of results to the larger population as it is with exploring the topic area.

Table 3.1

Recreation Management and Community Development Degree: 2nd Term Courses

Course #	Name of Course	# of Registered Students
123.120	Introduction to Leisure Travel	91
123.120	Introduction to Leisure Travel	85
123.140	Concepts of Recreation & Leisure	181
123.201	Measurement & Evaluation	82
123.254	Major Recreation Program Areas	20
123.265	The Social Aspects of Aging	31
123.330	Nature Based Outdoor Recreation	16
123.387	Human Resource Development	14
123.412	Recreational Travel and Tourism	14
123.415	Clinical Aspects of Therapeutic Recreation	9
Total	10	543

Data Collection

The study used a self-administered questionnaire (see Appendix A for survey instrument) to gather data from decided and undecided student groups. The questionnaire was distributed in person by the researcher and collected on-site in sealed envelopes for respondent confidentiality. The one exception to this procedure was for 123.140 Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course, for which the researcher was the instructor. In this case to avoid conflict of interest, an independent instructor distributed questionnaires. Students had the option to take 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire or not participate in the research by handing the questionnaire back to the researcher, without penalty or repercussions (see Appendix B for consent script and instructions to students).

The questionnaire was designed using the funnel approach which concentrates on the primary questions first and then narrows down to background questions. Informed

consent was obtained by outlining the nature of the research when distributing surveys to students and requesting their participation in filling out the questionnaire. The instrument was pre-tested with a small group of university students prior to implementation. The pre-testing allowed for assessment of timing of the questionnaire as well as question clarification. The 10-minute time frame was expanded to 10 – 15 minutes based on the pre-test. No modifications were made to the instrument based on the pre-testing.

The questionnaire included closed and open-ended questions related to the overall research questions on individual factors and environmental factors that dominate the career development literature. Questions were designed to gather data on students' academic interests, as well as, how information on academic majors is gathered for the decision making process of choosing a university major. To measure career decision making and need for career information portions of the Career Factors Inventory (Chartrand, 1990) were used. The questionnaire focused on information gathering techniques, usefulness of key information sources, the importance of items such as interest in choosing an academic major, the influence of friends, parents, and others in the decision to choose an academic major, and the timing of their decision to choose an academic major were included. The students were asked two open-ended questions about what would/did encourage or discourage them to choose an academic major.

Questions were included to gain knowledge on the image of a recreation degree program among majors and non-majors. Based on Reilly (1990), students were asked to identify three key words to describe the image of an academic major in recreation. Socio-demographic information was gathered to design a profile of students taking recreation

courses as well as a specific profile of students who have declared recreation as their academic major.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from close-ended questions were analyzed using SPSS 12 (Statistical Package of Social Sciences). Frequency analysis was used to show the distribution of these responses and provide a profile of respondents. Means and standard deviations were used to describe results of scale data. Content analysis was employed to generate key themes from open-ended responses to the questions regarding image and factors that encourage or discourage students from choosing an academic major. Thematic representations and students' comments were included in the analysis of results.

To address the research question and study objectives, relationships of key factors (socio-demographic, personal (individual) and environmental) to choice of recreation as an academic major, chi-square, analysis of variance (ANOVA), Spearman Correlation and Content Analysis were conducted (see Table 3.2).

To begin, students were categorized into four groups by choice of academic major: 1) decided on recreation as an academic major, 2) decided, other academic major, 3) undecided or 4) undecided but would consider recreation as a degree. These four groups represent nominal level data. Cross tabulations allowed for comparison of selected variables across decided and undecided groups. Chi-square analysis tested if there was a relationship between academic choice, the main concept under investigation and various socio-demographic factors measured at the nominal level. Chi-square was used to examine gender, minority groups, and full student status as well as whether students used

various information sources (yes/no responses) in their decision to choose an academic major.

ANOVA was used to test for differences in mean scores across decided and undecided groups for variables that were measured at the interval and ratio level. These included age, agreement and importance of scales on information gathering, information sources, importance of item and, influence of people in choice of academic major. Spearman was used to describe the degree of agreement between paired data that are ordinal such as financial status of students, year of study and the timing of their decision to choose an academic major.

Table 3.2

Choosing Recreation as an Academic Major – Analysis Chart

O = Ordinal
N = Nominal
I = Interval
R = Ratio
SC = Spearman Correlation

Interval – Ordinal/Nominal = ANOVA
Nominal – Nominal = Chi-square
Ordinal – Nominal = Spearman Correlation

Dependent variable – academic major choice
Independent variables – socio-demographic, individual and environmental factors

Socio – Demographic Factors (R1)		
Gender F/M	Q 10 (N)	**Chi- Square**
Age	Q11 (R)	**ANOVA**
Minority	Q 12 (N)	**Chi- Square**
Financial	Q 13 (O)	**SC**
Personal (Individual) Factors (R2)		
Timing Decision	Q 6 (O)	**SC**
Encourage/Discourage	Q 7 and Q 8	**Content Analysis – Key Themes**
Image of Rec Degree	Q9	**Content Analysis – Key Themes**
Student status	Q 14 (N)	**Chi – Square**
Year of Study	Q 15 (O)	**SC**
Environmental Factors (R3)		
Information Search	Q 2 (I)	**ANOVA**
Information Sources	Q 3 (N) Q 3 (I)	**Chi – Square** **ANOVA**
Item Importance	Q 4 (I)	**ANOVA**
Referent Groups	Q 5 (I)	**ANOVA**

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter is comprised of three sections. The first section provides results of the survey distribution. The second section describes a profile of respondents. The respondents' profile includes all participants, as well as a separate profile of the students enrolled in the Recreation Management and Community Development Degree program at the University of Manitoba. The third section is a descriptive analysis of responses to the survey and an analysis of results to address the research questions.

Distribution Results

The self-administered questionnaire was distributed in the 10 Recreation Management and Community Development courses offered in second term (January – April, 2005) at the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies, Recreation Management and Community Development Degree program. Two sections of one course (123.120), and one other course (123.140) were open to all University of Manitoba students. The total number of students enrolled in the courses was n=543 with 28 duplicate registrants for a total of n=515. Students were approached at the end of class and requested to take 10-15 minutes to fill out the survey. Table 4.1 displays the 10 recreation courses offered during second term (January – April 2005) through the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program with the enrollment and survey distribution numbers by class.

Table 4.1

Summary of Distribution Results

Course	Registered	Duplicate	Present	Refused	NR	R
123. 140	181	0	97	10	12	**75**
123. 120	91	1	49	0	6	**43**
123. 120	85	0	50	6	1	**43**
123. 201	82	6	44	18	5	**15**
123. 254	20	8	14	0	0	**6**
123. 265	31	0	13	0	0	**13**
123. 330	16	6	12	1	0	**5**
123. 387	14	0	10	0	0	**10**
123. 412	14	2	12	0	0	**10**
123. 415	9	5	9	0	0	**4**
Total	543	28	310	35	24	224

Note: NR = not returned and R = returned

Table 4.2 is a summary of the overall distribution and response rates. Of the 543 students enrolled, 28 were duplicate students (i.e., the same student enrolled in multiple course), thereby reducing the actual total of individual students to 515 possible respondents. On the data collection days, 233 of the 515 students were absent, for a total number of students in class and available to participate of 282. These numbers represent an attendance rate of 60.1%. With a refusal rate of 14.9%, a total of 247 surveys were distributed, with 224 returned. Although this produces an effective response rate of 90.6% in reality the questionnaire was completed by 79.4% of those present during the study time frame, and 43.5% of students enrolled in those classes.

Table 4.2

Summary of Rate of Response

543 - 28 = 515	students registered in recreation courses		
515 – 233 = 282	students in class during distribution of surveys		
282 – 35 = 247	surveys distributed to students		
247 – 23 = 224	surveys returned by students		
N=224	224/515 = 43.5%	224/282 = 79.4%	224/247 = 90.6%

Participant Profile

Socio-demographic questions were designed to create a profile of students currently enrolled in the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program courses including those students who have chosen recreation as their academic major. Firstly, students were categorized by choice of academic major: 1) decided on recreation as an academic major, 2) decided, other academic major, 3) undecided or 4) undecided but would consider recreation as a degree (see Table 4.3). The decided (recreation major) category (n=54) included respondents currently enrolled in the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program at the University of Manitoba, who represented almost one quarter of all respondents. The majority of respondents (55.9%) were in the decided (other major) category (see Appendix C) and enrolled in one of 13 faculties at the U of M (see Table 4.4). Of the almost 20 percent of students responding that they were undecided about their major, 5.9 percent of them would consider majoring in recreation. The majority of respondents (n=168, 75.5%) registered in the introductory recreation courses (123.120; 123:140) have not chosen recreation as their academic major.

Table 4.3

Student Distribution by Academic Major Choice

Academic Major	Frequency	Valid Percent
Recreation Major	54	24.3
Other Major	124	55.8
Undecided	31	14.0
Undecided Consider Rec	13	5.9
Total	222	100.0

Table 4.4 provides a list of faculties in which student respondents were enrolled. In summary, one-third of respondents were in the Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation Studies, almost 20 percent were undecided, and the remaining 45 percent were committed to another university faculty.

Table 4.4

Representation of Students by Faculty

Faculty	Students	Valid Percent
Physical Education and Recreation Studies	75	33.5
Undecided or Consider Recreation	44	19.6
Management (Business)	34	15.2
Arts	24	10.7
Architecture, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Science, Law and Agriculture	24	10.7
Social Work, Nursing, Dental Hygiene and Human Ecology	23	10.3
Total	224	100.0

Socio-Demographic Factors: Individual Characteristics & University Experience

Research Question #1 – What is the relationship between selected socio-demographic factors and choosing recreation as an academic major?

Students were asked their gender, age, whether they felt they were of a visible minority group, household financial situation, if they were full or part-time students and their year of study. Table 4.5 provides a summary of individual characteristics of respondents by decision groups. Test results using Chi-square, ANOVA and Spearman correlation were used to address research questions one and two. These results are described below and displayed in Tables 4.6 to 4.10.

Table 4.5

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Decided and Undecided Students

Student Profile	Academic Choice N=224		Recreation N=54		Other Major N=124		Undecided N=31		Undecided/Rec N=13	
Gender	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Female	127	58.8%	33	61.1%	69	58.5%	15	51.7%	8	61.5%
Male	89	41.2%	21	38.9%	49	41.5%	14	48.3%	5	38.5%
Age										
18 – 23	174	78.5%	40	74.0%	94	75.8%	28	40.3%	12	9.7%
24 – 29	32	16.1%	10	18.6%	18	14.5%	3	9.6%	1	1.3%
30 – 39	6	2.9%	2	3.7%	3	2.4%	0	0%	0	0%
40 – 51	5	2.5%	2	3.7%	3	2.4%	0	0%	0	0%
Full Study										
Full – time	190	88.0%	50	92.6%	109	91.6%	22	75.9%	8	61.5%
Part – time	26	12.0%	4	7.4%	10	8.4%	6	20.7%	5	38.5%
Year of Study										
U1	42	19.4%	6	11.1%	15	12.6%	14	50.0%	7	53.8%
2nd year	69	31.9%	18	33.3%	33	27.7%	12	42.9%	4	30.8%
3rd year	42	19.4%	8	14.8%	33	27.7%	0	.0%	1	7.7%
4th year	38	17.6%	11	20.4%	27	22.7%	0	.0%	1	3.6%
5th year	14	6.3%	6	11.1%	7	5.9%	1	3.6%	0	.0%
Other	11	4.9%	5	9.3%	4	3.4%	1	3.6%	1	7.7%
Minority										
Yes	52	23.7%	13	24.5%	31	26.3%	6	20.7%	2	16.7%
No	160	76.3%	40	75.5%	87	73.7%	23	79.3%	10	83.3%
Financial										
Below	27	12.6%	6	11.1%	15	12.7%	4	14.8%	2	15.4%
Comfortable	96	45.1%	31	57.4%	50	42.4%	9	33.3%	6	46.2%
Above	90	42.3%	17	31.5%	53	44.9%	14	51.8%	5	38.5%

Academic Major Choice & Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Gender

The majority of survey respondents were female (58.8%); male students represented (41.2 %). The four groups each reported higher female frequency to males. Of the n=54 students enrolled in the recreation degree program (61.1%) are female. Students enrolled in other faculties reported (75.8%) female. The majority of students in the undecided (51.7%) and undecided would consider recreation categories (61.5%) were also female. Both the decided recreation major and undecided consider recreation groups reported similar proportions of females when academic choice and gender were examined, χ^2 (N = 214) = .748, therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. No significant relationship was found between deciding on an academic major and gender.

Table 4.6

Chi-Square Results: Academic Major Choice and Gender

	N	%	Test Analysis	Value	*df*	*p*
Female	127	58.8				
Male	89	41.2	Chi-square	.748	3	.862

Note: not significant at $p \leq .05$

Age

Respondents ranged in age from 18 – 51 years (see Table 4.5). The majority of students (78.5%) were 18 – 23 years of age. The average age of students at the time of the survey was 22 years. Of the 54 students in the decided recreation major group, (74.0%) are between 18-23 years of age, with an average age of 23 years (see Table 4.7). Similarly, other declared majors reported 75.8% of students between 18-23 years of age. The least represented group was between 30-51 years of age (5.4%) (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.7

Academic Major Choice and Age of Respondents

Category	**N**	**M**	**SD**
Recreation Major	54	23.1	5.55
Other Major	118	22.3	5.01
Undecided	30	20.1	2.27
Undecided Consider Rec	13	22.1	2.57
Total	215	22.1	4.85

Results of the ANOVA reported in Table 4.8 show that there was a significant difference in age of respondents across academic major choice categories.

Table 4.8

ANOVA Results: Academic Major Choice & Age of Students

	SS	*df*	MS	F-ratio	Sig.
Between Groups	232.2	3	77.4	3.39	.019
Within Groups	4813.0	211	22.8		
Total	5045.3	214			

Note: results were significant at $p \leq .05$

Scheffe

Academic Major	N	subset for alpha = .05
Undecided	30	20.1
Undecided Consider Rec	13	20.1
Other major	118	22.3
Recreation major	54	23.1
Sig		.125

An independent post hoc test (Scheffe) was conducted to see which age means were significantly different (Table 4.8). Decided recreation students were found to be significantly older than undecided students but not significantly older than the decided "other" group.

Minority

Of the N=224 students responding to the survey (23.7%) consider themselves to be of a minority group (see Table 4.9). Blacks represented the largest group with (3.6%). Interestingly, the second highest response rate was (2.7%) representing white students. Minority students represented 13 different ethnic groups (see Appendix D for complete list of minority groups). Student respondents' self-described minority groups included Filipino, East and West Indians and Asians each representing (2.2%) of the respondents with Chinese and Aboriginals each representing (1.8%) of the respondents.

Table 4.9

Academic Major Choice & Minority Groups (self – declared responses)

Minority	N	Percent of total respondents
Black	8	3.6%
White	6	2.7%
Filipino	5	2.2%
Asian	5	2.2%
East/West Indian	5	2.2%
Chinese	4	1.8%
Aboriginal/Metis	4	1.8%
South American	3	1.3%
Mature Student	2	.8%
Female	2	.8%
Bi-racial	1	.4%
Korean	1	.4%
Did not declare	7	3.1%
Total	53	23.7%

Chi-square analysis was conducted to see if there was a relationship between academic major choice and whether the respondent self-declared as belonging to a minority group (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10

Chi-Square Results: Academic Major Choice and Minority Group

Academic Major	N	Minority Group Yes	No	Test Statistic	*df*	*p*
Recreation Major	53	24.5%	75.5%	$\chi^2 = .825$	3	.843
Other Major	118	26.3%	73.7%			
Undecided	29	20.7%	79.3%			
Undecided Consider Rec	12	16.7%	83.3%			
Total	**212**	**24.5%**	**75.5%**			

Note: results not significant at $p \leq .05$

There was no significant relationship between academic major choice and minority declaration by students. Minority groups are proportionate between decided and undecided categories.

Financial Situation of Household

The largest percentage of respondents (45.1%) stated that their household financial situation was "comfortable", followed by being "comfortable and well off" or "very well off" (42.3%); with (12.6%) of respondents reporting "not having basic needs met" or "basic needs were met but not much more" (see Table 4.5). Students who have decided on recreation as an academic major predominately describe their household situation as comfortable financially (57.4%).

Table 4.11

Academic Major Choice and Financial Situation of Household

Category	N	M	SD
Recreation Major	54	3.24	.698
Other Major	124	3.36	.854
Undecided	31	3.37	.883
Undecided Consider Rec	13	3.23	1.01
Total	222	3.33	.833

Spearman correlation was used to analyze the relationship between academic major choice and the financial situation of the household. No significant relationship was found (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12

Spearman Correlation Results: Academic Major Choice and Financial Situation

N	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2- tailed)
212	.071	.301

Note: correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Full/Part-Time Student Status

An overwhelming number of student respondents (n=190) are studying full-time at the University of Manitoba (88.0%) (see Table 4.5). The percentage of students in the decided recreation major group studying full-time at the university is slightly higher (92.6%). Other decided major (91.6%) study full-time. A lower percentage of the two undecided groups were studying full-time, undecided (75.9%): undecided/consider recreation (61.5%).

A Chi-square analysis examined the relationship between academic major choice and student status (see Table 4.13).

Table 4.13

Chi-Square Results: Academic Major Choice and Full or Part-Time Study

Student Status	**Full-time**	**Part-time**	**Test Statistic**	***df***	**p**
			$\chi^2 = 20.229$	6	.003
Recreation Major	92.6%	7.4%			
Other Major	91.6%	8.4%			
Undecided	75.9%	20.7%			
Undecided Consider Rec	61.5%	38.5%			
Total	88.0%	12.0%			

Note: results were significant at $p \leq .05$

Results displayed in Table 4.13 show a significant relationship between academic major choice and students' full-time status at the university. Students who are "undecided but would consider recreation" tend to study part-time (38.5%) compared to "recreation major" students who study full-time (92.6%). Those who studied part-time were more likely to be undecided in their academic major than those who were decided and studying full-time at the university.

Year of Study

Approximately one-third of respondents (31.9%) were in their second year of studies, followed by University 1 and 3rd year students, both (19.4 %). Of the n=216 students reporting year of study, (70.7%) are in U1, 2nd year or 3rd year. Similar to the overall pattern, one-third of students who were decided recreation majors (33.3%) were in their second year of studies. The majority of respondents from the undecided (50.0%) and undecided would consider recreation (53.8%) groups were in University 1 (Table 4.13).

Table 4.14

Academic Major Choice and Average Year of Study

Academic Choice	N	M	SD
Recreation Major	54	3.14	1.50
Other Major	124	2.91	1.24
Undecided	31	1.75	1.17
Undecided Consider Rec	13	1.84	1.40
Total	222	2.75	1.39

Results of the Spearman correlation reported in Table 4.15 show that there is a significant relationship between academic major choice and student's year of study. Results

confirmed that students who are undecided in their academic major choice have fewer years of university than the decided group (i.e., tend to be in U1 or 2nd year of studies). Recreation students had more years of university (M 3.14) than undecided (M 1.75) and undecided consider recreation (M 1.84) but not decided "other" (M 2.91).

Table 4.15

Spearman Correlation Results: Academic Major Choice and Year of Study

N	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
214	-.323**	.000

Note: correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Descriptive Results: Personal (Individual) and Environmental Factors

In order to gather data on the personal and environmental factors that influenced students choosing an academic major, survey questions were designed that asked students about information gathering techniques used; information sources used and how useful they were; the importance of specific items and how influential people were in the students decision to choose an academic major. Students were also asked when they decided on an academic major. Personal (individual) factors included two qualitative questions on things that would encourage or discourage students from selecting an academic major. In addition, students were asked to write three words to describe their image of an academic major in recreation.

Personal (Individual) Factors

Research Question #2 – What is the relationship between selected personal (individual) factors and choosing recreation as an academic major?

Academic Major Choice and Factors that Encourage or Discourage Choice

Respondents answered two qualitative questions on factors that would encourage or discourage them from choosing an academic major. The responses that encourage choice of academic major ranged from student's interests to type of working environment; lack of interest and limited job opportunities were listed as discouraging choice. Interest in the academic major was the most frequently cited encouraging factor in the choice of major while lack of interest was the most often used discouraging factor (see Appendix E for list of student comments) Table 4.16 and 4.17 display the factors that encourage and discourage choice. Table 4.18 displays factors that encouraged or discouraged recreation students from choosing their academic major.

Six main themes were derived from the responses about factors that encourage choice of an academic major. The thematic representations (see table 4.16) were derived from the words of respondents and are: interest in the major; job opportunities; enjoyment; faculty (professors, course content, difficult/easy); salary and personality. Interest in the major was the most frequent factor cited made by students.

Three themes represented factors that discourage choice of major. These were faculty (course difficulty, GPA requirements, work load, professors/teachers), salary and lack of interest. Interest, salary and faculty appear to be key influencers since they appear in both spheres of influence, i.e. encourage and discourage choice.

Other responses to things that encourage or discourage choice of academic major varied and included idiosyncratic comments (see Appendix E for list of student comments). Encouraging factors were past experiences, passions, family, prior information, helping others, fun, fulfillment, lifestyle, and usefulness. Discouraging factors were stress, not being able to understand anything and lots of math.

Table 4.16

Academic Major Choice and Factors Encouraging Selection of Major Thematic Representations and Student Comments

Themes	Examples of Student Comments
Interest in the major	My interest in the subject/ My interest in the career and my excitement for working in the field/ Interest in the area of aging because of the increases in our aging population/ Personal interest, a career I won't get bored in/My interest in the subject, and how good I'd feel about myself doing this as a career/ My interest and enthusiasm about the major/ something I think there is a lot of opportunity in.
Job Opportunities	Job opportunities and helping others/potential job opportunities/ it is also a respected profession with ample job opportunities/job opportunities (both in Canada and overseas)/learning about potential job opportunities/ demand for jobs in this area/career opportunities/employment potential
Enjoyment	It is what I enjoy and what I want to do in the future for a long time/ I would enjoy the course/faculty looks fun (people and classes)/ask people in the faculty already how they like it/I enjoy the type of thinking that's involved in this field (computer science)/ I really enjoy helping people with personal problems/I looked for something that I would enjoy/What I would enjoy doing/What jobs best suit my personality/one I can enjoy, and find meaning in life/Are there jobs in that field that I would enjoy
Faculty (characteristics)	Faculty looks fun (people and classes)/ Faculty size/ courses available in that faculty/ friendly approachable faculty members/ the amount of time and money required to complete the degree/ how difficult the university courses would be/ workload/ how well I did in courses/ level of involvement with professors/ classes were interesting
Salary	High salaried jobs at the time/ Potential money/ Expected salaries/ How much money I would make/ I did not want to be a factory worker making $15.00/hr when I will be 50/ Salary (potential for high salary)/ Would I make money
Personality	Personal suitability for the profession/ personal suitability/ If it suited me/ I was good at it/ What comes easy to me and I do well in it/ I enjoy sports, arts and writing so those factors helped me decide/ My abilities, values and beliefs/ I pulled my strengths in skills and what I love to do and came up with this major/ My personality and my strong points/ I just picked it based on my personality
Other Misc. Comments	Past experiences/ passion/ family/ prior information/ helping others/ fun/ respected profession/ fulfillment/ lifestyle/ promotion/ usefulness/ social value/ security/ travel/ working environment

Most students were discouraged by how difficult an academic major was perceived to be, the competition to get into the Faculty, the availability of jobs and whether they would enjoy the courses. The quality of teaching staff was another factor that would discourage students from choosing an academic major.

Table 4.17

Academic Major Choice and Factors Discouraging Selection of Major Thematic Representations and Student Comments

Themes	Example of Student Comments
Faculty (Characteristics)	How difficult it would be/the level of difficulty of the courses, time commitment, and GPA needed to be admitted/ too much competition to get into the faculty/hard/long education/ If I had a lot of trouble in the courses related to the major/word of mouth about how hard the program is/complicated application process/a lot of fluff courses with no practical value/ high tuition/poor reputation of staff/poor professors/boring classes reputation of academic major
Salary	money issues/if money is not great it kind of makes you turned off from choosing that academic major/ potential income low paying jobs
Lack of Interest	My interest doesn't fit my major/no interest in the field/dislike for subject/something that seems boring and uninteresting/not interesting subject/ if I found the major to be very boring/not fun or interesting
Lack of Job Opportunities	Lack of career opportunities/not a lot of jobs available/ poor job opportunities
Other Factors	Nothing discouraged me/other people/math

Table 4.18

Recreation Major Choice and Factors Encouraging/Discouraging Selection of Major Thematic Representations and Student Comments

Themes	Examples of Recreation Student Comments
Interest (+)	My interest and knowledge about it/ my own interests/part of my interests/ interest in the subject matter (high interest/ I pulled my strengths in skills and what I love to do and came up with this major/ My interest, values, beliefs, potential (abilities)/ Parents were encouraging, they see what my interests are and guided me to this direction. An opportunity in sports and recreation/I just picked it based on my interest in the subject and my personality/ My interests are specifically related to my chosen major, and I have friends enjoying a similar major – my initial choice of major was dissatisfying/I didn't want to spend my life at school and this major seemed easier I guess, plus it helps that it's the only thing that I'm very interested in/my personal interest and my strong points/my interest in sports and sports management and recreational activities/classes were interesting – I was excited about the objectives of Rec/The fact that I am able to go to classes that can hold my interest, and I am not continually asking myself why I joined this faculty/I can use my talents/
Interest (-)	no interest in the field
Job (+) Opportunities	variety of jobs available with this degree/job mobility/involvement in the community/can make a difference in society working in this field
Lack of job (-) Opportunities	lack of jobs in the field/low paying jobs/work not valued by society
Enjoy Work (+)	something I would enjoy doing/jobs I would enjoy/I would enjoy the course/ Faculty looks fun (people and classes)/ ask people in the faculty already how they like it/I love sports and I've always wanted to be in business also, so I figured what if I put the two together and see if it works/
Fun (+)	an academic major in recreation is fun/having fun during classes and learning/Fun degree
Faculty (+)	the professors are good/the helpful and friendly professors/counselors/staff (coming from Science I found a HUGE difference in the amount of help and respect given! Found that in Science, the teachers were the most discouraging part/Real world practical application as opposed to management theories that don't really work/Classes were interesting/ I was excited about the objectives of Recreation/Involvement in the community/ fun and small classes/My instructor in 140 was very helpful with providing information about recreation studies. She helped the class learn/understand what it was. I also did well in that class so I knew this was the way to go/Faculty size/ it was what I wanted to do so I guess there really was no question why I chose this major

Respondents were given the opportunity to add additional thoughts in the comments section of the questionnaire. The majority of the comments came from recreation students and included suggestions to improve the recreation degree, specifically, in the areas of fieldwork, courses and promotion of the degree.

Students commented that the fieldwork placement should be paid work experience. Other students commented on the course content: a lot of courses repeat themselves, have more classes focused on business management skills, more community development courses, and no back-to-back teachings. They would like to see more emphasis on the commercial sector, tourism and marketing.

Promotion of the recreation degree program was a key area that students felt needed attention. Some stated that the program is poorly marketed and needs to be promoted, "just let people know about the program." One student stated, "if only I found this program earlier." These comments should be considered when designing the recruitment plan for the degree program.

Environmental Factors

Research Question #3 – What is the relationship between selected environmental factors and choosing recreation as an academic major?

Academic Major Choice and Information Search

Gathering information in order to decide on an academic major is an important step in the decision making process. In this section, results are reported about the nature of the information search, information sources used and their usefulness, the importance of specific items such as interest in the decision to choose an academic major and people that influenced the decision.

Firstly, students were asked to what extent they needed to engage in each of the information seeking techniques noted in Table 4.19 by answering a scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. Results of mean scores reported in Table 4.19 show that for students "finding out about present and predicted job opportunities" had the highest mean score (M 4.20, SD .825) with the exception of "other". These students agreed that they were likely to use this information strategy before choosing a major. Respondents were least likely to agree that they had to have prior volunteer or work experience in the academic major to choose it. The "other" category, while noted by few people (n=16), received the highest mean rating (M 4.75, SD .447). For those students, "other" information included interests and hobbies, talking to others in same major at a different University, and learning about specific courses in the degree.

Decided recreation students agreed (M 4.75, SD .462) that interests and hobbies as well as talking to others in the same major assisted them in the decision to choose recreation as an academic major. Finding out about job opportunities (M 4.25, SD .649) and seeking advice from others (M 3.94, SD .810) were information seeking techniques used by recreation students prior to choosing an academic major. Recreation students agreed that they needed to look into the information seeking techniques prior to choosing an academic major.

Table 4.19

Academic Major Choice and Information Search

Information Search	N	M	SD
Other	16	4.75	.447
Talk to people in various occupations	221	3.87	.880
Find out about job opportunities	221	4.20	.825
Use my free time to see what I enjoy	221	3.76	.888
Use school courses	220	3.96	.950
Familiar with 1 major	221	3.77	.955
Familiar with many majors	220	3.61	.983
Seek advice from others	221	3.85	.934
Prior vol. or work exp.	219	3.44	1.12

Note: 1 = "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree"

The results of the ANOVA's examined academic major choice and information seeking techniques in order to compare the means of the four groups. Comparisons across groups showed minimal differences between decided and undecided academic major groups with one exception. Results displayed in Table 4.20 show a significant relationship between academic major choice and "talking to people in one or more various occupations" and "use my free time to help determine what major I might do well in" when choosing an academic major. Students who are "undecided consider recreation" (M 4.58) tend to talk to people in

one or more occupations prior to choosing an academic major more than "decided recreation" (M 3.72) and "decided other" (M 3.80). Students who are "undecided consider recreation" (M 4.33) tend to use their free time to assist them in choosing an academic major more than the "decided" recreation respondents (M 3.68) or "decided" other respondents (M 3.67).

Table 4.20

ANOVA Results: Academic Major Choice and Information Search

	Rec. Major	Other Major	Und	Und Rec	*df*	F-ratio		p-level
Talk to people in one or more occupations	3.72^{A}	3.80^{A}	4.12^{AB}	4.58^{B}		3, 217	4.44	.005
Use my free time to determine what major I might enjoy	3.68^{A}	3.67^{A}	4.03^{AB}	4.33^{B}		3, 217	3.21	.024

a. Scheffe tests – means that do not share a superscript are significantly different at .05.
b. 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Academic Major Choice and Information Sources Used

As reported in Table 4.21 the most frequently used information sources (N=224) were work experiences (62.1%) and websites (58.9%). Brochures/flyers had a 50/50 response rate with half of the respondents saying they did not use them and half saying they did use them. The most infrequently used information sources were promotional CD's (93.8%), newspapers (75.4%), television (71.4%), Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course (69.6%), and Introduction to Leisure Travel course (66.5%), career fairs (55.8%), high school information (46.9%) and volunteer experiences (44.2%).

The most frequently used information sources by recreation students were work experiences (75.9%), Introduction to Leisure Travel course (75.9%), Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course (68.5%), brochures/flyers (66.7%), volunteer experiences (64.8%), websites (57.4%) and other (24%). The most infrequently used information sources were promotional CD's (92.6%), newspapers (77.8%), television (72.2%), career fairs (64.8%), and high school information (68.5%).

Table 4.21

Academic Major Choice and Information Sources Used

Used/are using in decision making	**Yes**		**No**	
N=224	**N**	*%*	**N**	*%*
Work Experiences	139	62.1%	84	37.7%
Websites	132	58.9%	91	40.6%
Brochure/Flyers	111	49.6%	112	50.0%
High School Information	105	46.9%	118	52.7%
Volunteer Experiences	99	44.2%	124	55.4%
Career Fairs	98	43.8%	125	55.8%
Introduction to Leisure Travel	73	32.6%	149	66.5%
Concepts of Recreation and Leisure	67	29.9%	156	69.6%
Television	63	28.1%	160	71.4%
Newspaper	54	24.1%	169	75.4%
Other	32	14.3%	12	5.4%
Promotional CD	13	5.8%	210	93.8%

Chi-square test found a significant relationship between category of academic major choice and high school information sources used χ^2 (n=221) = 8.00, $p<0.05$ so the null hypothesis was rejected. Recreation majors were less likely to use high school information than the others. Likewise, Chi-Square test found significant relationships between category of academic major choice and Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course χ^2 (n=221) = 79.43, $p \leq 0.05$ and Introduction to Leisure Travel course χ^2 (n=220) = 85.11 $p< 0.05$ so the null hypothesis was rejected. Students who are "undecided consider recreation" and "decided recreation" group were more likely to use the information from the Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course and Introduction to Leisure Travel course to consider recreation as an academic major than the "other major" and "undecided" groups.

Academic major choice and volunteer experience, χ^2 (n = 221) = 13.54, $p \leq 0.05$, found a significant relationship. Recreation majors use volunteer experience to decide on academic major more than the other groups. Chi-square test χ^2 (n = 221) = 10.02, $p \leq 0.05$ found a significant relationship between academic choice and use of brochures and flyers. Recreation majors used brochures/flyers more often than the other groups to decide on an academic major. The use (non-use) of high school information, volunteer experience, brochures/flyers, the introductory courses in recreation (concepts and leisure travel) and the "other" category (included hobbies, interests, talking to someone else in a recreation degree in the country) had a significant relationship to academic major choice for the decided recreation group.

Table 4.22

Chi-Square Results: Academic Major Choice & Information Sources Used

Percentage of Respondents by Academic Major Category

Category	Recreation n = 54	Decided/other n = 127	Undecided n= 30	Undecided/Rec n =13	χ^2
High School Info.	31.5%	52.8%	48.4%	61.5%	8.00*
Career Fairs	35.2%	46.3%	48.4%	46.2%	2.24
Volunteer Experience	64.8%	39.0%	29.0%	46.2%	13.54*
Work Experience	75.9%	56.9%	58.1%	69.2%	6.30
Brochures/flyers	66.7%	44.7%	35.5%	53.8%	10.02*
Websites	57.4%	59.3%	58.1%	61.5%	.106
Newspaper	22.2%	23.6%	29.0%	15.4%	1.05
Television	27.8%	29.3%	25.8%	23.1%	.329
Promotional CD	7.4%	3.3%	12.9%	7.7%	4.60
Concepts of Rec.	68.5%	8.9%	22.6%	76.9%	79.43*
Intro. Leisure Travel	75.9%	8.2%	38.7%	61.5%	85.11*
Other	100.0%	68.0%	14.3%	100.0%	19.86*

Note: * significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Academic Major Choice and Usefulness of Information Sources

Respondents were asked to indicate how useful each of the above information sources were/are in deciding on an academic major with 1 = "not at all useful" and 5 = "extremely" useful. Respondents (N=224) stated that most of the information sources had an average level of usefulness in the decision to choose an academic major (see Table 4.23).

The most useful information source was "other" (M=4.44, SD .785). Responses written in by respondents in the other category included talking to people in the field, advice from professors in the field and career resources. Information sources found to be useful in the decision-making process included volunteer experiences, work experiences, Introduction to Leisure Travel course, websites, Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course. The least useful information source was promotional CD's produced by Faculties. Information sources found to be of less than average usefulness in the decision to choose an academic major included career fairs, brochures/flyers, high school information, newspapers and television.

Recreation students found the "other" category (talking to people in the field, advice from professors and career resources) extremely useful (M 4.66, SD.651) in deciding on an academic major. Volunteer experiences (M 3.97, SD .923) were very useful in deciding on recreation as an academic major. The introductory courses in the recreation degree program, Concepts of Recreation and Leisure (M 3.92, SD 1.02) and Introduction to Leisure Travel (M 4.02, SD .999) were also very useful in the decision to choose an academic major in recreation. The remaining information sources were of average usefulness to recreation students in their decision making process.

Table 4.23

Academic Major Choice and Usefulness of Information Sources

Information Source	M	SD
Other	4.44	.785
Volunteer Experiences	3.83	.995
Work Experiences	3.80	.988
Introduction to Leisure Travel	3.60	1.17
Websites	3.53	1.03
Concepts of Recreation	3.42	1.23
Career Fairs	3.23	1.09
Brochures/Flyers	3.22	1.07
High School Information	3.12	.972
Newspaper	3.07	1.10
Television	3.06	1.14

Note: 1 = "not at all useful" and 5 = "extremely useful"

To explore the relationship between academic major choice and the usefulness ratings of information sources, ANOVAs were conducted (see Table 4.24). Four sources were significant in their usefulness to students in the academic major decision groups: brochures/flyers, Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course, Introduction to Leisure Travel course and the "other" category. The post hoc testing (Scheffe) revealed that students' in the "decided recreation major" (M = 3.92) and "undecided but would consider recreation" (M = 3.50) found Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course more useful in their decision to choose an academic major than "decided other major" (M = 2.15) students. Likewise, "decided recreation major" (M = 4.02) students and "undecided but would consider recreation" (M = 3.75) students found Introduction to Leisure Travel course more useful in their decision to choose an academic major than "other major" (M = 2.53) students.

Table 4.24

ANOVA Results: Academic Major Choice & Usefulness of Information Sources

	Rec. Major	Other Major	Und.	Und. Rec.	*df*	F-ratio	p-level
Concepts	3.92^{A}	2.15^{B}	3.16^{AB}	3.50^{A}	3, 67	9.15	.000
Leisure Travel	4.02^{A}	2.53^{B}	3.23^{AB}	3.75^{A}	3, 72	7.24	.000
Brochures	3.62^{A}	3.08^{AB}	3.06^{AB}	2.75^{B}	3, 114	2.71	.048

a. Scheffe tests – means that do not share a superscript are significantly different at .05.
b. 5-point scale ranging from 1 = (not at all useful) to 5 = (extremely useful).

Academic Major Choice and Item Importance

Respondents (N=224) were asked to state how important specific items were/are in their decision to choose an academic major. Items that were listed included; my interest in the major; reputation of university staff; prior information about the major; potential job opportunities; potential to earn a high salary and society's value of the major. "Other" category was included to allow students to express importance of items not on the list. The response was based on a rating scale where 1 = "not at all important" and 5= "very important".

Respondents (N=224) ranked interest in the academic major to be "very important" to "extremely important" (M = 4.59, SD = .685) in choosing an academic major followed by "other" (M = 4.44, SD = .933) and potential job opportunities (M = 4.32, SD = .847). Potential to earn a high salary (M 3.85, SD 1.07) and prior information about the major (M 3.81, SD .826) were above average importance while society's value of the major (M 3.23, SD

1.32) and the reputation of the university staff (M 3.14, SD 1.15) rated average importance (see Table 4.25).

Items rated as "important" or "very important" to decided (recreation) respondents were "other" (enjoyment) (M 4.60, SD .699), interest in the academic major (M 4.57, SD .742), potential job opportunities (M 4.33, SD .868), prior information about the major (M 3.77, SD .743) and potential to earn a high salary (M 3.44, SD 1.02). Items that held less importance included society's value of the major (M 3.09, SD 1.36) and reputation of university staff (M 3.18, SD .991). Of the decided (recreation) respondents, 22 percent stated that society's value of the major was not at all important in their decision to choose an academic major. Interest and potential job opportunities were extremely important to all respondents.

Table 4.25

Academic Major Choice and Item Importance

Item	N	M	SD
Interest in the major	222	4.59	.685
Other	27	4.44	.933
Potential job opportunities	222	4.32	.847
Potential to earn high salary	222	3.85	1.070
Prior info about major	222	3.81	.826
Society's value of major	222	3.23	1.320
Reputation of university Staff	222	3.14	1.150

Note: 1 = "not at all important" and 5 = "very important"

Differences across academic major groups were tested using ANOVA. Results in Table 4.26 show that potential to earn a high salary differed significantly across the four groups. The post hoc test (Scheffe) indicates that recreation majors rated the potential to earn a high salary significantly less important (M = 3.44) than those in the undecided group (M = 4.26).

Table 4.26

ANOVA Results: Academic Major Choice and Item Importance

Potential to earn high salary	SS	*df*	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	14.925	3	4.97	4.47	.005
Within Groups	242.462	218	1.112		
Total	257.387	221			

Scheffe

		Subset for alpha = .05	
Academic Major	N	1	2
Recreation Major	54	3.44	
Other Major	124	3.91	3.91
Undecided Consider Rec	13	4.00	4.00
Undecided	31		4.25
Sig.		.255	.678

Academic Major Choice and Influence of Referent Groups

Respondents in the "decided" groups were asked to indicate how influential friends', family, parents, teachers, guidance counselors, university staff, student advisors and role models were/are in assisting them with their decision to choose an academic major. The "other" category was included to give students the option to specify a person or group of people who influenced or are influencing their academic major decision. Respondents indicated whether the people were 1= "not at all influential" or 5 = "very influential" (see Table 4.24). The highest mean rating was for other (n=27), (M=4.47, SD = .510) and parents (M=3.38, SD =1.39). The other category included "me" as the person who influenced the decision to choose an academic major the most.

People who influence the respondents (N=224) decision to choose an academic major the most are family (M = 3.29, SD = 1.31), friends (M = 2.93, SD = 1.22) and teachers (M = 2.81, SD = 1.30). Role models (M = 2.65, SD = 1.44) influenced 25 percent of the students and were not influential at all for 36 percent of the students. University staff (M = 2.37, SD = 1.32), student advisors (M = 2.23, SD = 1.32) and guidance counselors (M = 2.18, SD = 1.24) had minimal influence on academic major choice.

Decided (recreation) respondents found the "other" referent group (M 4.50, SD .534) influential in assisting them in deciding on an academic major. Decided (recreation) respondents found that they were the most influential person in deciding on an academic major. Parents (M 3.33, SD 1.41), family (M 3.31, SD 1.17), friends (M 3.05, SD 1.23) and teachers (M 3.03, SD 1.46) were of average influence in the decision to choose an academic major. University staff (M 2.72, SD 1.57), role models (M 2.72, SD 1.37), student advisors (M 2.24, SD 1.46) and guidance counselors (M 2.05, SD 1.29) were somewhat influential in assisting the student with the decision to choose an academic major.

Table 4.27

Academic Major Choice and Influence of Referent Groups

People	**N**	**M**	**SD**
Other	23	4.47	.510
Parents	218	3.38	1.39
Family	218	3.29	1.31
Friends	220	2.93	1.22
Teachers	215	2.81	1.30
Role Models	213	2.65	1.44
University Staff	213	2.37	1.32
Student Advisors	213	2.23	1.32
Guidance Counselors	214	2.18	1.24

Note: 1 = "not at all influential" and 5 = "very influential"

ANOVA were conducted to see if there were any differences in academic major choice and the influence of people in the decision to choose an academic major. No differences were found so the null hypothesis was not rejected. Students choosing an academic major are influenced by the same people (including themselves and parents) in their decision to choose an academic major.

Academic Major Choice and Timing of Decision

Respondents who had chosen a major were asked to indicate when they decided on their academic major. Respondents (n = 178) were given the options of elementary school, middle school, high school, after high school, during University 1 (U1) or other. The most frequently stated response was during U1 (35.5%) and "other" (29.5%) which students noted as second year of university. "Other" responses included middle school (1.5%), high school (15.6%) and after high school (10.7%). The lowest response rate came from students who decided in elementary school (4.0%) (see Table 4.28).

Table 4.28

Academic Major Choice and Timing of Decision

Time	Rec	Other Major	Frequency	Percent
Elementary School	0	7	7	4.0%
Middle School	0	3	3	1.5%
High School	3	29	32	17.5%
After High School	5	17	22	12.0%
During U1	28	38	66	35.5%
Other	18	30	48	29.5%
Total	54	124	178	100.0%

Note: correlation not significant at the 0.01 level

Recreation majors (85%) decided in either U1 or second year. Decided other major decided during U1 (31%), other (24%) and high school (23%). Spearman correlation test did not show a significant correlation between academic major choice and timing of the decision to choose a major. Most students chose an academic major in U1 or second year. Very few recreation students decided on recreation prior to U1 (14.8%).

Image of an Undergraduate Degree in Recreation

Students registered in recreation courses in the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program had more positive words than negative words to describe a degree in recreation. Table 4.29 displays the words describing the recreation degree summarizing positive, negative and frequency of words (see Appendix F for complete list of descriptors).

It is interesting to note that the only consistent answers across the four groups were fun, interesting and exciting in the positive imaging and easy in the neutral imaging. Fun represented the most frequent responses from decided and undecided students registered in recreation courses.

Table 4.29

Image of an Undergraduate Degree in Recreation – N=224				
Word used to describe degree	# of responses	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Fun	75	yes		
Interesting	29	yes		
Health and Fitness	29	yes		
Easy	22			yes
Travel and Tourism	18	yes		
Sports	16	yes		
Exciting	14	yes		
Enjoyable	13	yes		
Outdoors	13	yes		
Low Pay	10		yes	
Boring	9		yes	
Useless	7		yes	
Community	6	yes		
Image of an Undergraduate Degree in Recreation – N=54 Recreation Students				
Fun	20	yes		
Exciting	7	yes		
Interesting	5	yes		
Enjoyable	5	yes		
Positive learning experience	4	yes		
Easy	4			yes
Travel	2	yes		
Sport	2	yes		
Change	2	yes		
Poor Jobs	1		yes	
Poor Salaries	1		yes	
Undervalued	1		yes	
Useless	1		yes	
Frustrating	1		yes	

In summary, results showed that decided and undecided students are similar in many aspects when choosing an academic major. Demographic composition of the respondents in the selected courses was mostly female between the ages of 18 – 23, have not declared themselves a visible minority, are financially comfortable and attend U1 or 2nd year university. The majority of decided students made the decision to choose an academic major in U1 or 2nd year of university. The four groups of students agree that they need to gather information prior to choosing an academic major. A variety of information sources were used and found to be useful in choosing an academic major. Interest in the academic major was very important to the four groups of students. People (parents and family) influencing choice of an academic major was the same for decided and undecided groups. Factors encouraging and discouraging students from choosing an academic major varied greatly among students. Categorization of themes encouraging choice included interests, job opportunities, enjoyment, faculty characteristics, salary and personality. Categorization of themes discouraging choice included faculty characteristics, salary and lack of interest. Faculties, salary and interest are key themes that encourage and discourage students to choose an academic major. Students' images of a degree in recreation are generally positive. The word that was used most often by students to describe a degree in recreation was "fun". Most words provided a positive image of a degree in recreation. A few students used negative or neutral imaging to describe a degree in recreation: easy, useless, low salary, poor jobs.

Socio-demographic factors that differed for recreation students were age and student status. Recreation students were older than "undecided" students but not decided "other' students. Recreation major students were studying full-time more than undecided consider recreation" students and had more years of university than undecided groups. Significant factors that influenced recreation students choosing an academic major included: the use and usefulness of introductory recreation courses, volunteer experiences, brochures/flyers and limited use of high school information; as well as the importance of the potential to earn a high salary, which was not as important to recreation students. Interests, job opportunities, faculty and salary were factors that encouraged students to enroll in the recreation degree program.

Understanding the factors leading to recreation as a university major and career choice will build on the current literature which is very sparse and provide useful information for student recruitment in the recreation program at the University of Manitoba. The findings are discussed in light of the study objectives in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Discussion

As stated at the start, the decision to choose an academic major can be a defining moment in life. For the purpose of this study students registered in courses offered through the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program were divided into four decision categories (decided recreation major; decided other major; undecided; undecided would consider recreation major) to explore the factors that influenced their decision status. Respondents with declared majors (not recreation) registered in courses in the recreation program are mainly from the Faculty of Management, the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies (BESS and Physical Education). Other majors included those who are in the "helping" professions of social work and nursing. Representation from professional academic majors such as law and dentistry was minimal.

The survey respondents had more similarities than differences across decision groups when choosing an academic major at the University of Manitoba. Factors influencing students to choose recreation varied slightly between decided (other) and undecided groups. Survey results showed significant differences in academic choice based on decided and undecided groups. Overall, the results provided insights on relevant personal (individual), socio-demographic, and environmental factors involved in the choice of an academic major. In this chapter, findings are discussed in relation to the research questions and study objectives, as well as, the existing literature on career choice.

Recreation Student Profile (socio-demographic factors)

Students choosing recreation as their academic major were similar in socio-demographic characteristics to "decided other" and "undecided" students. No significant relationships between the selected socio-demographic and personal (individual) factors of gender, visible minority groups, or financial situation were found. The level of university experiences of respondents did differ in terms of student status and year of study (full or part-time). Recreation major students study full- time more than the "undecided consider recreation" students. Recreations students had more years of university than "undecided" students. Like other respondents, registered in the selected courses, recreation students were individuals who were predominantly women, who did not identify as a visible minority and considered their household financial situation to be comfortable. The majority of recreation students (88%) studied full-time at the university and were in their 2nd year (33.3%) of the program. The one characteristic that differentiated recreation major respondents was age. Decided recreation students were found to be significantly older (average age = 23) than undecided students but not significantly older than the other two groups. According to the Institutitonal Analysis, the average ages of students attending the University of Manitoba in 2003 to 2004 were females' 18- 21 years of age. On average recreation students were older than the general student population attending the university. As well, recreation majors have been found to enter the academic major through the change of major rather than by initial declaration of major indicating they would be on campus for a year or two prior to deciding on recreation (Cunningham, Frauman, Ivy & Perry, 2004).

Personal (Individual) Factors

Potential to earn a high salary was significantly less important to recreation major's than to "undecided" students. Salary was also not as important as interests, enjoyment of the work and job opportunities in encouraging students to choose recreation as an academic major.

Factors Encouraging Choice of Academic Major

Findings from this research suggest that interest in the academic major is the key personal (individual) factor that plays a role in choosing an academic major. Thirty-one percent of recreation students were encouraged to choose recreation as an academic major based on their interests. This finding is in agreement with Brown (2000, p.103) who states that "students' need to develop their traits, interests, values, personality and aptitudes, as well as select environments that are congruent with them." All students felt that their personal interests were the most important factor in deciding to enroll in an academic major. Survey results were reinforced by the questionnaire comments. Comments included: "interest in the career and excitement for working in the field, my interest in it, my skills and abilities and my interests are specifically related to chosen major." Availability of job opportunities, enjoyment of the work, and a fun degree were also reasons that students chose recreation as an academic major. Galotti (1999) similarly found that students listed a variety of criteria that impacted their decision to choose an academic major such as, enjoyment, career opportunities, academic requirements and faculty that teach the subjects. These factors create opportunities for recruitment of students to the recreation degree program.

Factors Discouraging Choice of Academic Major

Findings from this research suggest that lack of job opportunities is the key individual factor that plays a role in not choosing an academic major. Nineteen percent of recreation students were discouraged to choose recreation as an academic major based on perceived lack of job opportunities. According to a report on undergraduate experience at Canadian universities (First- Year University Students), 75% of U of M, U1 students identified getting a good job or preparing for a specific career as the reason they chose to attend university. Other individual factors that discouraged recreation students from choosing an academic major were poor professors and entrance requirements. Recreation students commented that students may not choose recreation as an academic major because "people see it as the "easy" degree and dismiss it", "not a real job as viewed by society," "little importance of the degree," "no prestige," and the "Mickey Mouse reputation of recreation."

Timing of Decision of Academic Major

Recreation students decided to apply to the recreation degree program during U1 or 2nd year at university. Recruitment strategies can be designed based on this information. It is interesting that students decided on recreation in U1 and 2nd year but were not influenced in their decision to choose an academic major by professors or student advisors. Their parents had the most influence on their decision to choose an academic major.

Environmental Factors

Information Search

Results examining academic major choice and information seeking techniques showed that students who are undecided but considering recreation as an academic major tend to talk to people in one or more occupations and use their free time to determine what they would like, prior to choosing an academic major more than recreation majors and other decided majors. The recreation degree program is an academic major option for these students. The majority of respondents considering recreation as an academic major use the introductory course, Concepts of Recreation and Leisure as an information source in their decision to potentially choose recreation as an academic major. Having students declare an interest early on in the course would allow for tracking of these students by introducing them to a contact person within the faculty. Bringing professionals into class as panelists and presenters allows for both information sources (talking to people in occupations and Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course) to be brought together to assist in promoting recreation as an academic major among "undecided but would consider recreation" respondents.

Information Sources Used

Recreation students used more information sources than the other groups. These sources included: work experiences, Introduction to Leisure Travel course, Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course, brochures/flyers, volunteer experiences and other. According to the U of M research report (2005) on housing and student life, "about 8 students in 10 or more (nationally and at the U of M) read brochures, attended a campus

visit, or had a university representative visit their high school. Two important media sources considered by students were the university web site (94%) and MacLean's magazine (74%)." Galotti (2002) found students limited the number of information sources available to them and narrowed their options just to "get it over with". This is not true for recreation students in the Recreation Management and Community Development Program at the university. Students choosing recreation as an academic major were significantly less likely to use high school information than the other groups. In light of this information, some of the traditional recruitment strategies that have been used by the Faculty would not be effective in recruiting recreation students (e.g. promotional CD, information distributed to guidance counselors).

Usefulness of Information Sources

Four sources were significantly different in their usefulness to students across the academic major decision groups: Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course, and Introduction to Leisure Travel course, brochures/flyers and other (talking to people in the field, advice from professors). As discussed above, recreation students did not often use high school information in choosing an academic major, likely because they found it less useful than other sources. Recreation major students and students considering recreation as an academic major found Concepts of Recreation and Leisure course and Introduction to Leisure Travel course significantly more useful in their decision to choose an academic major than those from other majors or undecided groups. Many undergraduate recreation programs begin active recruitment of their majors in "Introduction to Recreation" course offerings (Becker et al, 1995).

Referent Groups

People who have the most influence on students choosing recreation as an academic major are parents, teachers, friends and family. Guidance counselors, university staff, student advisors and role models have less influence on recreation students. Although students do not find high school information useful in the decision to chose an academic major they are influenced by teachers during their education. According to Ginzberg (1984) "key persons" influencing the choice of academic major are "parents, relatives, teachers and friends." This information coincides with the results of this research.

Image of an Undergraduate Degree in Recreation

Words used by all respondents to describe the image of a degree in recreation were predominantly positive. Recreation students' image of a degree in recreation included an overwhelming number of responses saying "fun". Students enrolled in the recreation courses agreed with recreation students that the image of the degree is "fun". Students used the word fun as the first positive response to the image of a degree in recreation most often. Fun was also cited as a factor that encouraged students to choose recreation as an academic major. Other words used by recreation students to describe the image of the degree were exciting, interesting, enjoyable, hands on learning experiences, sport and travel. Recreation students and students taking courses in the program relate the degree to the specialty areas of sport, travel, outdoors, special events and planning. The words used to describe the image of a recreation degree by recreation students varied greatly. There was little consistency other than in using the word fun. Using the word fun in describing the recreation degree would be useful in the recruitment of students.

Negative words were noted much less frequently to describe the image of a degree in recreation; however, descriptions by a few recreation students included "poor jobs", "poor salary", "undervalued", "useless" and "frustrating". These words were shared by some non-recreation major students registered in the selected courses to describe a degree in recreation. In terms of neutral imagery, the student respondents who were not in recreation were more likely to describe the image of the degree as "easy".

In summary, findings from this research suggest that personal (individual) factors and environmental factors influenced choosing a university major in recreation more than the socio-demographic factors. While there are similar patterns of student composition and decision-making surrounding their choice of majors, some unique aspects were noted for recreation majors. Age is the socio-demographic factor that was found to have a significant difference across the groups. Recreation students tend to be older than undecided students. This may or may not influence their choice of academic major. Specifically, recreation students' image of a fun and exciting degree, the need to talk to people in one or more occupations, their work and volunteer experiences, information from websites, brochures/flyers and introductory courses in Concepts of Recreation and Leisure and Introduction to Leisure Travel and influences of parents,family, teachers, friends and themselves. Factors that detract students from choosing a university major in recreation include: "boring classes, lack of job opportunities, not seen as a profession, lack of profile".

The contribution of this research both practically and theoretically is summarized in Chapter 6. Also included are recommendations for future research.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Choosing an academic major in recreation involves several key factors. There is not one factor that influences the decision to choose recreation as an academic major but many factors. When re-examining the conceptual framework in figure 2.1 it becomes evident that all three factors, socio-demographic, environmental and personal (individual) played a role in choosing recreation as an academic major. Conclusions can be made based on significant differences between recreation majors and the other groups on various factors influencing choosing recreation as an academic major.

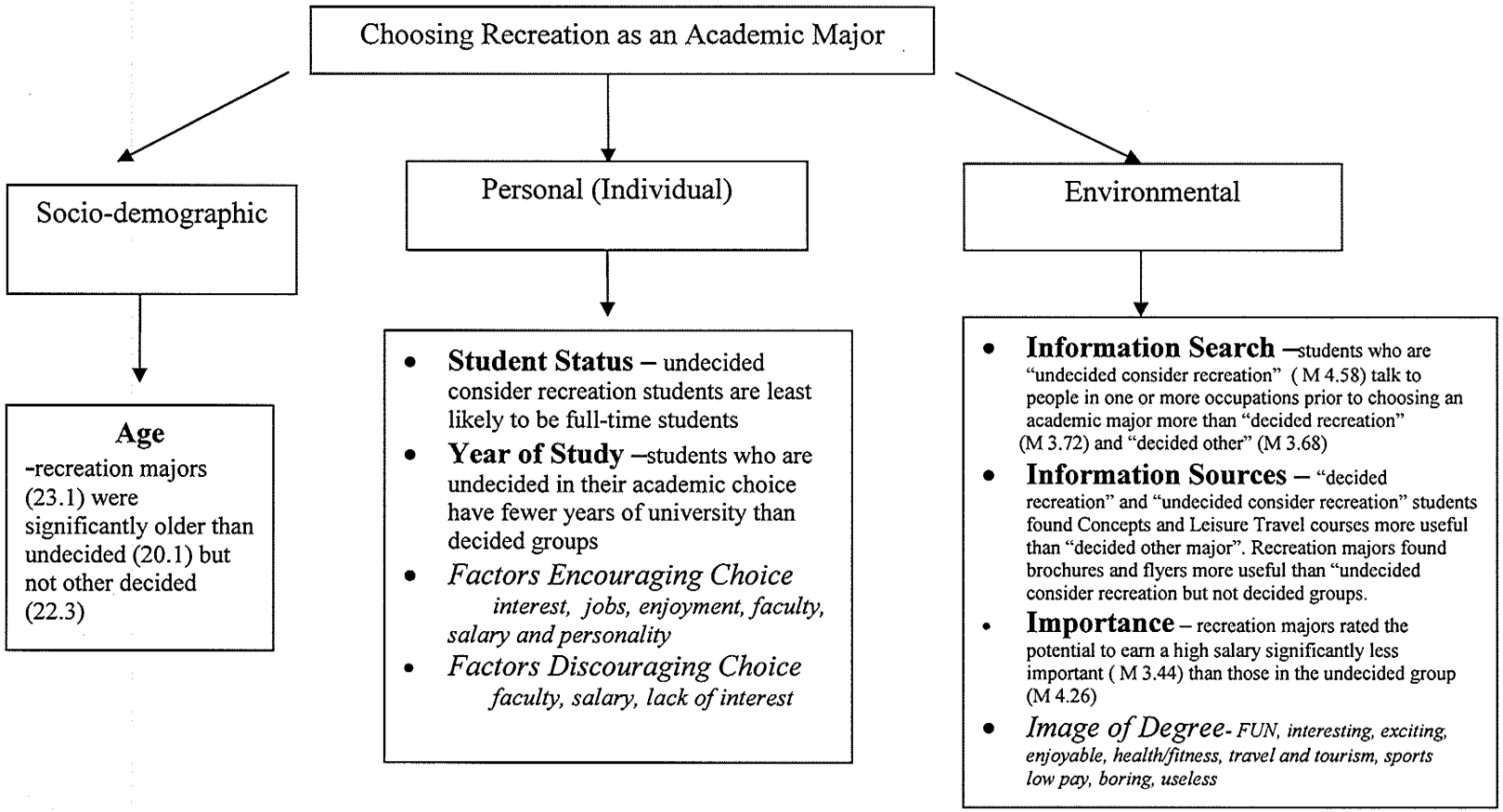
Factors Influencing Choosing Recreation as an Academic Major

Contribution of Research

The study addressed five objectives: 1) to identify factors contributing to students choosing a university major in recreation; 2) to identify factors detracting students from choosing a university major in recreation; 3) to assess the image of an undergraduate degree program in recreation among majors and non-majors; 4) to contribute to an understanding of the factors leading to recreation as a university major and career choice; and 5) to provide recommendations for student recruitment in the recreation degree program at the University of Manitoba.

Firstly, the research contributed to the understanding of socio-demographic factors involved in choosing a university major in recreation by providing a profile of current recreation students, as well as, students considering recreation as an academic major.

Figure 6.1
Factors Involved in Choosing Recreation as an Academic Major



Of the three types of factors considered in this study, socio-demographic characteristics were the least different across all decision groups. Only age was significantly different. Students who had decided on recreation as an academic major were older than undecided students but not older than students choosing another major or students considering recreation.

Recommendation 1: Design recruitment strategies to expand diversity of student population.

Recreation students decided to choose recreation when they were in either U1 or 2nd year university. This was true for all groups.

Recommendation 2: Target students in U1 and second year for recruitment into the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program at the University of Manitoba. Promote the diverse recreation job market through posters in U1 offices and on campus. Communicate with staff in U1 office about regular planned activities to promote the recreation degree to U1 students.

The recreation majors did exhibit some differences in their information seeking process, such as finding information, use/usefulness of information sources and importance of items. Recreation students tended to not use high school information when choosing recreation as an academic major. They were less likely to find it useful than other groups. This is important information in light of the fact that the current emphasis on "recruitment" of students by the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies frequently involves high schools. Recruitment strategies designed with this new information in mind will assist with targeting students who are more inclined to choose a degree in recreation.

Other information seeking strategies that were highly used by all students including recreation majors in their decision making were: finding out what present and predicted job opportunities were available, talking to people in other occupations, becoming familiar with one academic major and work experiences.

Students who are considering recreation need to talk to people in one or more various occupations before deciding on an academic major.

Websites and brochures are extremely useful to recreation students in their decision to choose an academic major. This was true for all groups.

Recommendation 3: Website design must be a priority of the Faculty. A fun and dynamic interactive website would assist in the recruitment of recreation students. The website developer can use the information found in this survey to highlight factors that influence students to choose recreation as an academic major.

Recommendation 4: Design promotional materials (brochures and flyers) for use in schools that focuses on students in leadership programs and interest based recreation activities within the schools. Invite schools to bring students to the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies for a joint "future leaders" forum promoting the degree in recreation. Make it a FUN event. Content of recruitment materials should focus on job opportunities and the ability to talk to people in the field.

Recreation students found 123.140 Concepts of Recreation and Leisure and 123.120 Introduction to Leisure Travel very useful in their decision to choose recreation as an academic major. Likewise, students who are considering recreation as an academic major are using 123.140 Concepts of Recreation and Leisure to assist in the decision

making process. Make it a good course. It is recommended that experienced instructors teach this course.

This information can be used to design recruitment strategies and communication with U1 students as well as the general public.

Recommendation 5: Organize an integrated meeting process with faculty, students and professionals to review the content of 123.140 Concepts of Recreation and Leisure to ensure the quality of the course. Survey students taking 123.140 the first day of class to ask them why they have chosen the course, what are their expectations and what they believe would be relevant course content. Invite a panel of professionals to speak to students enrolled in 123.120 and 123.140. Treat 123.120 and 123.140 courses as important recruitment tools. Create opportunities to talk to people in the field.

Factors that encouraged recreation students to choose the degree were interests, enjoyment and job opportunities. Interests, potential jobs and enjoyment were very important to recreation students' choice of major. Parents, teachers and the students' themselves were the major influencers in the decision to choose recreation as an academic major. These factors were similar across the groups.

Discouraging factors were lack of job opportunities, poor professors, entrance requirements, value of the major within society and salary. Recreation students did not feel the potential to earn a high salary was as important a factor in the decision to choose recreation as a major. This information is important to consider when discussing salaries with students choosing recreation as an academic major. Promoting student's interests, enjoyment of the degree and job opportunities are more important to recreation students.

Recommendation 6: Communicate with sport organizations, travel and tourism agencies, as well as, public, not for profit and commercial organizations to identify student volunteers and staff for recruitment to the recreation degree program based on interests in the field. Involve parents and family in the recruitment process.

Recommendation 7: Do not focus on salary when promoting recreation as an academic choice. Promote interest, enjoyment and job opportunities.

The image of the University of Manitoba's recreation degree program between major and non-majors is illustrated by mostly positive responses. The majority of respondents described the degree as fun, enjoyable, exciting and interesting. To them, a recreation degree included health and fitness, travel and tourism, sports, outdoors and community. Using positive image words to develop strategies to attract students to the recreation degree program may assist with a successful recruitment plan.

Recommendation 8: Utilize the word fun in all communications and promotional materials (e.g. website, brochures, flyers, posters). Design tag lines to promote the degree using the word fun.

Scope and Limitations

The generalizability of this study beyond the sample is limited due to the non-probability of the selection of students. As this was an exploratory study, the intent was to explore the topic and was less concerned with generalizing the results. The scope of the study was limited to the University of Manitoba and the use of recreation courses to study non-majors. These students had some interest in recreation and may be different from non-majors who would not take a recreation course.

Future Research

Research focused specifically on the recruitment of recreation students is limited. The knowledge from this study should precipitate further research in a variety of areas.

Interesting results were gathered from the survey that would be worthwhile pursuing in further research studies. In-depth interviews with recreation students to collect data on their specific interests, career expectations, and value of a recreation degree and a personality profile of students would allow for a richness of information that is not available through a self-administered questionnaire.

From a professional perspective, if enrollment in recreation undergraduate degree programs is declining there may be a need to conduct research on the need for recreation service providers. Lastly, ongoing research in the area of student recruitment and enrollment is critical to the future success of the recreation degree program at the University of Manitoba.

Conclusion

This study provided insight into the decision making process of students who choose recreation as an academic major and those who are considering it, thereby adding to the breadth of career choice knowledge. This study also expanded the demographic and decision making information available on recreation students in the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program at the University of Manitoba. Perceptions about the image of a degree in recreation were also assessed.

By gaining insight into the factors that influence students choosing recreation as an academic major, it may be possible to increase student enrollment through the development of a research-based recruitment plan for the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies. Understanding those factors will allow for the recreation degree program to move forward with passion and energy to re-create and ensure full capacity.

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APPENDIX A
Survey Design

Questionnaire ID #:_____

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
FACULTY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECREATION STUDIES

Thank you for your participation in this research on factors that influence or detract students from choosing recreation as an academic major. The survey is being conducted as part of the requirements for the Master's thesis at the University of Manitoba and has been reviewed and approved by the Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board, which can be reached by calling the Human Ethics Secretariat at for any concerns or complaints about this project. The objectives of this study are 1) to identify factors that contribute to choosing a university degree in recreation; 2) to identify factors that detract students from choosing a university major in recreation; 3) to assess the image of recreation as an academic major among majors and non-majors; 4) to contribute to the understanding of the factors leading to recreation as a university major; 5) to provide recommendations for student recruitment in the recreation degree program at the University of Manitoba.

The research involves a self-administered questionnaire that will last between 10-15 minutes. Responses to the survey should come from individuals who are currently enrolled in one of the recreation degree courses. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and not linked to you as only group results will be reported. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Thank you again for your time and input.

START HERE:

1. The decision to choose an academic major is a major life decision. Have you made a decision on an academic major? (Please check the one that best suits your situation).

_____ Yes, decided on recreation as my academic major
_____ Yes, decided: What is your major? _____
_____ No, undecided on an academic major
_____ No, undecided, but would consider a degree in recreation

2. When deciding on an academic major we need to gather information to make our decision. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with all of the following statements:

Before I chose or would choose entering a particular academic major I need(ed) to:

	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree
talk to people in one or more various occupations	1	2	3	4	5
find out what present and predicted job opportunities are available	1	2	3	4	5
use my free time to help determine what major I might enjoy	1	2	3	4	5
use school courses to help determine what major I might do well in	1	2	3	4	5
familiarize myself with one academic major and its requirements	1	2	3	4	5
familiarize myself with many academic majors and their requirements	1	2	3	4	5
seek advice from others regarding my choice	1	2	3	4	5
have prior volunteer or work experience in the academic major	1	2	3	4	5
other_____	1	2	3	4	5

3. When deciding on an academic major, did you use or are you using the following information sources? Please indicate (A) whether you **used or are using** each of the following information sources, and (B) if YES, indicate **how useful** they were/are to you in deciding on an academic major.

	(A) Used/are using in decision making		(B) If yes, how useful?				
			Not at all	somewhat	average	very useful	extremely
High School information	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Career Fairs	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Volunteer Experiences	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Work experiences	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Brochures/Flyers	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Websites	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Newspaper	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Television	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Promotional CD's	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Concepts of Recreation/Leisure	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Introduction to Leisure Travel	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5
Other_____	____yes	_____no	1	2	3	4	5

4. Please circle the number for each statement listed below that states how important each item was/is in your decision to choose an academic major.

	Not at all	somewhat	average	important	very important
My interest in the major	1	2	3	4	5
Reputation of university faculty	1	2	3	4	5
Prior information about the major	1	2	3	4	5
Potential job opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Potential to earn a high salary	1	2	3	4	5
Society's value of the major	1	2	3	4	5
Other_____	1	2	3	4	5

5. Please indicate how influential each of the following people were/are in assisting you in deciding on your academic major:

	Not at all Influential	somewhat influential	average	influential	very influential
_____Friends	1	2	3	4	5
_____Family	1	2	3	4	5
_____Parents	1	2	3	4	5
_____Teachers	1	2	3	4	5
_____Guidance Counselors	1	2	3	4	5
_____University Faculty	1	2	3	4	5
_____Student Advisors	1	2	3	4	5
_____Role model	1	2	3	4	5
_____ Other_____	1	2	3	4	5

6. If decided, when did you decide on your academic major? (Please check one only)

_____ Elementary school

_____ Middle school

_____ High school

_____ After high school

_____ During University 1

_____ other (specify) _____

7. When thinking about choosing an academic major, what things would/did encourage you to select it? (Please print clearly)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

8. When thinking about choosing an academic major, what things would/did discourage you to select it? (Please print clearly)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. What three words best describe your image of an academic major in recreation?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

The following information is being gathered to understand the profile of students currently enrolled in the recreation degree courses at the University of Manitoba.

10. I am: _____ Female _____ Male

11. I am _____ years old.

12. Do you consider yourself a visible minority?

_____ no
_____ yes
If yes, which visible minority group? _____

13. When thinking about your household (family) of origin, choose the item that best describes your financial situation. (Please check one only)

_____ did not meet our basic needs
_____ met our basic needs but not much more
_____ comfortable
_____ comfortable and well off
_____ very well off

14. Currently I am a: _____ full-time student_____ part-time student

15. Please indicate your current status as a student at the University of Manitoba.
(Please check one only)

____ University 1
____ 2nd year of University
____ 3rd year of University
____ 4th year of University
____ 5th year of University
____ other_____

COMMENTS

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your input is greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX B
Consent Forms

INFORMED CONSENT
(Detachable from questionnaire for students to keep)

EXPLORING FACTORS INVOLVED IN CHOOSING RECREATION AS AN ACADEMIC MAJOR

A study being conducted as part of a Master's degree at the University of Manitoba

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. You will be providing valuable information on how students choose academic majors and provide valuable guidance for student recruitment to the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program at the University of Manitoba. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and your decision to participate in (or not) this study will not affect your role as a student at the University of Manitoba. Participation is entirely voluntary and there will be no consequences in not participating in this study.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the sealed envelope provided to the instructor or individual distributing the questionnaire in your class. Individual responses will be kept strictly confidential. You may keep this paper for your records.

The Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba has approved this research. If you have any concerns about this project you may contact the Human Ethics Secretariat at or Colleen Plumton, Principal Investigator at . or the thesis advisor, Dr. Kelly MacKay

A summary of the results of this research may be viewed on Dr. MacKay's website after August 30th, 2005. Please go to:

March 2005

Dear Dean Hrycaiko;

I am in the process of receiving approval from ethics to pursue my research on "an exploration of factors involved in choosing recreation as an academic major". In order to proceed I would like to request the use of 10 minutes in each of the Recreation Management and Community Development degree classes during the week of March 14th – 24th, 2005.

The students will be asked to volunteer to answer a self-administered questionnaire about choosing an academic major. Instructors will be informed about the study electronically and asked for approval to enter their classes to administer the questionnaire.

I look forward to your positive response to this request.

Sincerely,

Colleen Plumton

SCRIPT

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The questionnaire you are about to fill out asks you questions about choosing an academic major. I am interested in how you decided on your academic major (recreation, other major or undecided).

The information you provide will be used to develop recruitment and marketing strategies for the Recreation Management and Community Development degree program at the University of Manitoba.

The questionnaire takes approximately 10 minutes to fill out. Please read each question carefully and answer the questions to the best of your ability. All individual responses will be kept in strict confidence and names will not be attached to the questionnaires. Once you have completed the questionnaire seal it in the envelope provided. The questionnaire can then be handed in to the instructor of the class.

The data will be collected and analyzed for the purpose of completing a Master of Arts degree at the University of Manitoba. All questionnaires will be secured in 103 Frank Kennedy and shredded within a year of completion of the study.

Any questions about the study can be directed to Colleen Plumton, Principal Investigator, 474-8994

March 2005

An exploration of factors involved in choosing recreation as an academic major
Master of Arts
Colleen Plumton, Principal Investigator

Dear Instructor and Colleague:

Thank you for your ongoing support with my pursuit of my Master of Arts degree in the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies at the University of Manitoba. I successfully proposed my thesis and am now ready to commence my study.

In order to distribute my questionnaire to the students enrolled in the Recreation Management and Community Development classes this term, I require approval to enter your class to survey your students for my research project. I would like to schedule the research using class time during the weeks of March 14th – 24th, 2005. The questionnaire will take 10 minutes to fill out. I am requesting use of these 10 minutes at the end of each class.

A script will be provided to you outlining the format for the distribution of the questionnaire. I will bring the questionnaires to the class prior to distribution to students. I will introduce myself and then leave the class in order that students can feel free to fill (or not fill) out the questionnaire. The questionnaires will then need to be collected by you (in the envelopes provided) at the end of the class. I will then come to your class and pick up the questionnaires.

Your positive reply to this request would be greatly appreciated. Please email me by March 11, 2005 to confirm your involvement with my research project.

Sincerely,

Colleen Plumton
Email:

APPENDIX C
Declared Majors

Other declared majors

Valid	Frequency	Percent
accounting	46	20.5
agriculture	12	5.4
architecture	2	.9
art history	1	.4
BESS	11	4.9
biochem	1	.4
biology	1	.4
business	6	2.7
commerce	4	1.8
commerce/marketing	1	.4
commerce/rec	1	.4
computer science	3	1.3
criminology	3	1.3
dental hygiene	1	.4
dentistry	3	1.3
economics	2	.9
english	1	.4
entrepreneurship	1	.4
environmental design	2	.9
family social sciences	5	2.2
finance	2	.9
food sciences	1	.4
geography	3	1.3
history	6	2.7
human ecology	1	.4
law	1	.4
management	1	.4
marketing	4	1.8
microbiology	1	.4
nursing	7	3.1
pathology	1	.4
pharmacy	4	1.8
phys ed	6	2.7
recreation	54	24.1
science	3	1.3
social work	4	1.8
textile sciences	1	.4
women studies	1	.4
Total	224	100.0

APPENDIX D
Minority Groups

Frequencies

Statistics

listing of minority groups

N	Valid	224
	Missing	0

listing of minority groups

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		175	78.1	78.1	78.1
	aboriginal	1	.4	.4	78.6
	african-canadian	1	.4	.4	79.0
	african	1	.4	.4	79.5
	afro-canadian	1	.4	.4	79.9
	asian	4	1.8	1.8	81.7
	asian (vietnamese)	1	.4	.4	82.1
	bi-racial	1	.4	.4	82.6
	black	3	1.3	1.3	83.9
	black/asian/white	1	.4	.4	84.4
	brown	1	.4	.4	84.8
	chinese	3	1.3	1.3	86.2
	did not declare	2	.9	.9	87.1
	east indian	4	1.8	1.8	88.8
	female	1	.4	.4	89.3
	filipino	2	.9	.9	90.2
	filipino (asian)	1	.4	.4	90.6
	filipino/asian	1	.4	.4	91.1
	filipino/chinese/spanish	1	.4	.4	91.5
	international student	1	.4	.4	92.0
	korean	1	.4	.4	92.4
	latin american	1	.4	.4	92.9
	metis	3	1.3	1.3	94.2
	old students	1	.4	.4	94.6
	older adult female	1	.4	.4	95.1
	south american	1	.4	.4	95.5
	trinidadian	1	.4	.4	96.0
	visiting student	1	.4	.4	96.4
	west indian/caucasian	1	.4	.4	96.9
	white	3	1.3	1.3	98.2
	white male	2	.9	.9	99.1
	white male (we are the minority now)	1	.4	.4	99.6
	women	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	224	100.0	100.0	

APPENDIX E
Students Comments
Factors encouraging/discouraging choice

FACTORS ENCOURAGING OR DISCOURAGING ACADEMIC CHOICE

Questionnaire format: questions 7 and 8 script, comments section
All Respondents – N=224

Question 7: When thinking about choosing an academic major, what things would/did encourage you to select it?

- Having work experience really helps me to determine that I enjoy drafting
- Known information about the field
- Personal interest, a career I won't get bored with
- My interests, the faculty environment, the parties
- Job opportunities
- I enjoy psychology
- Event in the past (i.e. murder victim in the family)
- Level of interest, job opportunities, past influence
- I looked for something I would enjoy and had interest in and that would allow me to carry on with a post graduate degree in education
- My interest in the subject, and how good I'd feel about myself doing this as
- a career
- If I am interested in it and if I can see myself going further in that field.
- My interest in the field, how it will help in my next degree
- Interest
- I enjoy learning about the earth and how the weather, natural disasters, etc.
- happen.
- If it suited me, and if I could find a job that I enjoyed through this major.
- What my interests are, what job I could get with my particular major.
- Diploma
- After taking courses in that area, I linked it so I decided to continue.
- Workload, further education possibilities, and job opportunities.
- My interest in the subject and if it was something I could do well in.
- The fact that when I am finished I will be able to provide service to others
- skills learned are helpful for entire life)
- Interest, and if I can see myself working in this career in 10 years from now
- Career field
- I decided to get an arts degree as a springboard into law/MBA program. I chose a psychology major because I was interested in the intro. (1st year) course.
- What potential careers were available, did I enjoy the field of study
- I selected it based on style of evaluation, good professors, style of note taking and predominately, whether I believed I could get good marks.
- My interest in the area, I wasn't about to waste 4 years on a honours degree if I wasn't going to continue on in the area.
- What encouraged me in choosing my major, was the career path I wanted

- From others about the major and the demand for jobs in this area
- My personality. What jobs best suits my personality, one I can enjoy, and find meaning in life
- I love working with people and helping other people so I thought that nursing would be the right career path for me
- People will always be dying, there will be a need for employees in this field
- Salary, job demands, benefits, choice of full or part time
- Having a very good understanding of what my job would be
- Job availability, money, demand
- My mother
- Job opportunity, the kind of services I would be providing, length of training, school close to home
- Job requirement is BA in nursing. I got the job because of past nursing.
- My interest in math, I enjoyed intro courses, I was good at it
- That I was good in math and enjoyed it
- Type of job I will get when finished
- What I thought I would be good at
- Potential job opportunities, money
- I like business, videogames
- Potential earning, job opportunities, status
- How well I did in courses and potential salary
- I enjoy the topic, therefore they come easy to me and I do well in it
- The nature of the work, potential for growth, salary, and job security
- Vocational
- Potential careers that would come from it, and the expected salaries
- How much I enjoy that area of study, and how much money I would make
- I was interested in it, I used it at work, I was good at it
- My parent's job that made me interested in studying this
- Personal interest, demand for jobs
- My interest and enthusiasm about the major
- Money, job opportunity, networking opportunities, potential to move up
- Interest in major
- I did not want to be a factory worker making $15.00/hr when I will be 50
- Freedom- both time and financial
- Personal interest and suitability. Job opportunities
- Whatever you do, make sure your are passionate about it
- I love organizing, love accounting and dealing with numbers
- My interest in the business side of it as well as the number side of it
- What kind of job I wanted and what kind of course I like taking
- Job opportunities
- Potential job opportunities, potential salaries, opportunities for advancement

- Job opportunities (both in Canada and overseas), salary
- My interest
- The U1 courses I am in help me to determine what I like and what course I will do well in. Also, what I want in the future, such as opportunities in life
- My interest in it, my skills and abilities, salary and job opportunities
- Something of interest to me, something that would hold my attention
- Learning about potential job opportunities and insight to what goes on
- What interests me the most. What I would enjoy doing
- If it is my interest and I am confident that it will help me in the career
- Salary, job security
- My interest in the major and the salary
- Job opportunities, salary, interest in the field, years to complete
- Money, chance to travel
- The love of the job
- Natural ability, interest, social interactions
- Career opportunities
- My interest and career importance
- If I like that subject and do well in it.
- Enjoyment, job opportunities and salary
- Valuable information
- If I like or not or enjoy. If I don't understand, I don't want to study but if I like the topic I'll make so much effort to reach the goal
- Something I had interest in, family
- Whether I liked it or not
- Money, enjoyment
- How well I enjoyed it, salary
- Interest in subject, opportunities, reputation
- Pure interest in the employment and whether I would enjoy doing it
- Looks like a good time
- Salary, something I want to do
- Salary
- Practical application of what I'm learning
- Whether it is something that I could do for the rest of my life
- High school teachers
- I've always wanted to teach. I enjoy sports, arts and writing
- It is important to me to have a career where I can interact with others,
- Personnel satisfaction and interest
- Wage, how happy I would be doing the future job
- Salary, work environment, employment potential and experience
- Exciting area's of research, good materials available for study, level of excitement of professors
- Interest, something I do well in
- Future career opportunities
- Have not chose one yet
- Salary and interest

- Are there jobs in that field that I would enjoy
- My interest, values, beliefs, what my choices and my potential

Question #7 – Recreation Majors – n=54

- I pulled my strengths in skills and what I love to do and came up with this
- Faculty and job opportunities
- My interests
- How the degree can branch out into other areas (diversity), small classes
- My own interest
- My interest in knowledge about it
- Type of programs
- To have in an area that I'll enjoy working in
- My own personal interests and hobbies
- "FUN" job
- My personal interest and my strong points
- Job mobility and training that would prepare me for various type of jobs
- Lots of job opportunity (I dislike repetition)
- My life style – I love travel
- Academic counselor/good professor
- I looked at what I enjoy doing, where I work, where I volunteer, and at the things that I would like to do
- I didn't want to spend my life at school and this major seemed easier
- I am currently working in the field of recreation and enjoy my job. I was fairly sure that this was the major that I wanted, my experience in classes and with staff in rec. studies have reaffirmed this
- My interest in the topic, my ability to sustain or enhance my interest/motivation, the helpful and friendly teachers/counselors/staff (coming from Science I found a HUGE difference in the amount of help and respect given!! Found that in Science, the teachers were the most discouraging part)
- In fact, when I was in the middle school, I decided to study or choose travel and tourism is my major, but in my country, didn't have recreation faculty I just interested in recreation.
- Classes were interesting, I was excited about the objectives of Recreation, diversity
- Within my volunteer experiences, what made me happy and what was I good at
- Enjoy the work, have fun, make a (+) difference in society
- I thought about the benefits. Would it be fun, would I make money, what are some possible job opportunities
- My interests are specifically related to my chosen major, and I have friends enjoying a similar major, my initial choice of major was dissatisfying/wrong

- Recreation major: my interest was #1. Then seeking information and talking to staff at the university and reading brochures and comparing classes to other universities
- Comments from individuals already in the workforce with the "major"
- My parents let me know about recreation, and then I decided to take it
- Fun, learning experience-variety of the employment- part of my interests
- Interest, job availability, salary, something that I would enjoy doing
- Meets my interests, I can use my talents
- Volunteer experience
- Interest in subject matter and job opportunities, high interest and lots jobs
- The fact that I am able to go to classes that can hold my interest and I'm not continually asking myself why I joined this faculty
- Parents were encouraging, they see what my interests are and guided me to this direction. An opportunity to work in sport and recreation
- Involvement in the community, fun and small classes
- Real world practical application as opposed to management theories that don't really work
- My interest in sports and sports management and recreational activities
- My instructor for 140 and 120 was very helpful with providing information about recreation studies. She helped the class to learn/understand what it was. I also did well in those classes so I knew this was the way to go
- Job opportunities in China
  I chose this particular program because it was the easiest to transfer into and allowed the most transferable credits to me. Not because of job/salary opportunities
- Something I would enjoy and meet lots of people
  Prospect of job enjoyment, fulfillment, opportunity for success, classes involving rec.
- My interest in the field, my talent, and if I am good at it – if there is career opportunities available
- Knowledge of subject
- My interest in the course and my marks
  Availability of jobs, experience in recreation programming (visual artist)
- I just picked it based on my interest in the subject and my personality
- Something that I enjoy doing on a regular basis. Something I would want to get out of be for everyday
- My passion to travel

Question #8: When thinking about choosing an academic major, what things would/did discourage you to select it? N=224

- A lot of fluff courses with no practical value
- If I don't enjoy or have a passion for it
- Course requirements and grade requirements
- Once I got to the U of M, I hear a lot of people were taking it, mainly because it's faster to finish than other degrees and you get summers off (not a good reason to teach!)

- I wouldn't want a desk job or something that is repeated over and over Nothing with math. Can't be boring
- Money and work load
- Entrance requirements
- Waiting lists (to enter faculty, etc.)
- Length of programs, negative learning environments, unpassionate professors
- How difficult it would be, where it would take me (careers, salaries)
- My interest doesn't fit my major
- Whether I would be able to do a good job
- No jobs, low paying
- Money, less recognize as a profession, less jobs when done school- hope it all changes
- Money. But I would rather have fun and enjoy work then hate it and make $
- Job opportunities – lack of
- Lack of information
- Teachers
- Teachers
- The course content and program requirements
- Not a "real" job (as viewed by society)
- Lower job opportunities, lower development chances
- Poor reputation of staff and lack of job opportunities
- Money issues
- That you don't really need a major to work in the recreation field (yet it helps). People don't view rec.seriously. It has a "micky mouse" reputation
- The level of difficulty of the courses, time commitment, GPA needed to be admitted, and my general interest in the area
- Only knowing some of the career possibilities, not knowing how vast an area re studies includes
- Demands as in how much work will be required and is it hard (content) also, if money is not great it kind of makes you turned off from choosing that academic major
- Nothing really – it was the obvious choice (although, the prospect of switching majors seemed like it would be a hassle)
- The ability to get a job, not sure if I could into law school with a rec. degree
- Having to apply to get in (what if I don't), is this really what I want? Will I change my mind later?
- No interest in field, pressure from others
- Low interest, little importance of degree (not really useful)
- I was planning on going into business, but I took a few courses and found that the majority of the classes were extremely boring and tended to not allow people to use any imagination, it was all sort of directly from the text
- The number of years/credit hours needed to complete it
- People see it as an "easy" degree and dismiss its importance (recreation)
- A lot of people don't understand what Rec Studies is so they'd always look at me and say you want to be a gym teacher. That was the most annoying thing and almost made me change my mind

- No jobs
- Income, stress, disinterest
- Not being able to understand anything
- Public stigma, salary, family approval
- Workload
- The amount of people interested in it
- Current employment opportunities, potential income
- Amount/cost of schooling, competition to get into the faculty
- Whether it was not interesting or not
- Negative feedback from people in the field, length of degree program, low wage
- Difficulty, job opportunities
- Difficulty
- Inconsistent information, unattainable
- Dislike for subject, no job opportunities, minimal money
- My dislike of it
- Not interesting subject
- Lack of career opportunities
- Availability, competition
- Nothing
- Too much school/work, not interesting/fun opportunities
- Low salary, not a lot of jobs available, unstable job, high tuition
- If I found the major to be very boring and hard to learn i.e. would discourage me to select it
- Acceptance rate i.e. law, course load
- Time constraints and other hindrances such as job opportunities in the future, the society demand and competition with other people
- The amount of years of school, some types of courses: pre-requisites
- Low pay, no social value, not a career that won't be around in 10 years
- Entrance – how many spots, chance of getting in
- Something that seems boring or uninteresting, low wages in the particular field, low/no job availability
- Salary , dislike of the subject
- Low salary, same job experiences day after day
- Cost, time consumption
- Low job opportunities, bad work experiences
- Length to complete
- Amount of work required, difficulty
- Nothing
- Cost, validity
- Lack of jobs
- The level of disinterest in a subject
- The work involved to eventually get my CA, the competitive nature
- $, opportunity, help others
- not respected by society, low quality job opportunities or saturated jobs
- hard/long education, low salary, boring, same people everyday
- not interesting, don't see value in it, poor job opportunities, poor growth
- none!
- Conflict of personal interest, not a prosperous industry – w/o any potential

- Cost to attain major at University
- Don't do it if you are only doing it for other people
- Monotonous tasks, and low level of life importance
- Condition or current demand i.e. labour market
- Parents tell you what THEY want YOU to do. It's your life you choose
- Numbers of years of schooling
- Courses I don't like or the among of years in school it would take
- If it to content was boring, unchallenging
- Job opportunities
- Quality of teaching staff and lack of a co-op/internship program (which is critical to get a job in this field)
- Commitment required in terms of time, money, expensive
- Time for example, engineering has to study at least 5 years
- If I had a lot of trouble in the courses related to the major even after I had studied hard, also if their were no job opportunities in Canada available or if I had to move away specifically to get a job
- How hard the courses would be, will I still enjoy it in the long run, writing a thesis paper, will I succeed in that field
- Prior high school requirements, length (# of years), the program was
- No longer train on the job, medical school is a requirement, this is about another 10 years of University in addition to the 8 I have (costly, long term commitment)
- Hard courses, amount of years to complete, slot availability, only on GPA no interview
- Very little information on it and also classes have to be taken but don't relate to the course
- It would discourage me if there were an abundance of people applying in the same field. The competition of university can be frustrating
- The intense schooling
- Salary, funding to program, accessibility to jobs
- The fact that there would be lots of papers to write but I have to do it and get what I want so I might as well make the best of it
- Requirements needed that I don't have, limited job opportunities
- Grades, interest
- Salary potential
- The math involved for the field of climatology
- Chance at succeeding
- Job opportunities, course offered
- Not getting a diploma
- Not really anything, except that it is very difficult
- Difficulty, low/no further education possibilities, high workload, higher then average costs
- Lack of interest, lack of job/career opportunities
- Not beneficial for society
- Low pay, boring, competitive

- Jobs available
- Lack of job opportunities, low earning potential
- Other people
- Unrealistic expectations of professors
- The fact that with my major I wouldn't be able to get a job related to my area of interest, rather I would have to continue on with a Masters Degree or Ph D.
- Nothing really discouraged me, except for how many years of school needed
- If there wasn't any demand for the occupation
- Some of the required courses
- Nothing – I know what I wanted and nothing could discourage me
  People's perception and knowledge
- What discourage me was having to take Biology B. I love everything about physical education but I'm not very good with biology
- People telling me I shouldn't go in it
- Classes look boring, jobs in the future
- Getting bored, not caring about my work – for majors I didn't' choose i.e. business, STRESS
- A lot of fieldwork, which wasn't clinical work. I want to open my own clinic when certified.
  Ability to be admitted into the faculty
- Jobs are hard to get, salary low at first until you advance yourself in the workplace
  Lots of math
- Whether I would get into the program (i.e. athletic therapy only taking 20 students)
- The possibility that I may not be good at doing it and if there are any job opportunities not available
- Salary once graduated
- The level of commitment (time and money)
- Nothing
- The fact that you must take same courses as you would as a doctor
- 3 of years, difficulty of courses
- bad income, no jobs available, not fun or interesting
- course schedules b/c not many offerings – many only had one choice
- I was discouraged from taking my education degree from the large amounts of people taking education right now and how hard it is to get into the program
- Hard
- Some stresses and unsure future
- Unpredictable job opportunities, disinterest in the work
- No job opportunities in the field of interest
- Whether job market would be good when I graduate
- To difficult to do well
- Word of mouth about how hard the program is

- Amount of time required, I might not be able to keep up
- Low paying jobs
  Nothing discouraged me, I was very focused on what I wanted to major in
- I was discouraged in the Nursing faculty because the instructors were not high quality
  Competitiveness within the faculty – or post graduation for jobs
- Complicated application process (eg. Masters in clinical psychology very hard to even apply for); expectation that specific high school credits needed – if you don't have then they should be offered through the university and send you back to high school!
- Nothing has discouraged me
- Subject areas I am academically weak in – stayed away from
- No chance for advancement in the field
- University resources , bad professors
- None/nothing
- Time in school, money
- Years in school, wanting a family, money
- People who doubt you can do it. Chances are they are uneducated making nasty comments
- The type of job available for major, the interest level
- Nothing
- Bad teachers (any faculty)
- Boring classes
- Not seen as a profession
- Overshadowed by physical education degree
- Lack of jobs
- Some of the course content
- Number of years to complete a degree
- Money
- Lack of information
- Poor reputation of program
- Pressure from others
- Degree not really useful
- Lack of profile of degree
- Salary – low paying jobs

Recreation Students - 54
Factors that discourage them from choosing an academic major

- Boring classes
- Not seen as a profession
- Overshadowed by physical education
- Lack of jobs
- Teachers
- Course content
- Program requirements
- Nothing really
- Income
- Stress
- Number of years to complete the degree
- Money
- Lack of information
- Poor reputation of program
- Pressure from others
- Degree not really useful
- Lack of profile or prestige of the degree
- Salary – low paying jobs
- Lack of value by society
- Disinterest

COMMENTS – Recreation Majors – n=54

- Paid work experience, in my opinion, would provide the student and the company with better value. Paid employees are given more time, training and possible future opportunity. As a "volunteer' placemen the student is often overlooked and sometimes not taken as seriously, which is unfortunate for everyone involved. Asking students to work full-time, without pay, is extremely stressful especially when students have to work another job to pay bills, rent, mortgage, etc. this is also a disadvantage for the placement agency because students aren't able to focus solely on their tasks with the agency.
- I am doing my schooling in recreation and can't wait to be done, so that I can go and work!
- Just let people know about the program, promote the tourism and marketing aspects more.
- Have more classes focused on small business management skills, hold spots for recreation students in some business faculty classes.
- I am a graduate of RRC older adults program. The U of M rec program is poorly marketed and many people I speak to do not know what it entails – I have chosen it as a career path and encourage my co-workers to also do the same – colleen, this is well needed to promote the program – Recreation enrollment numbers are too low.
- I'm probably not in the best frame of mind to objectively fill out a survey of this type right now.
- I think that when promoting the rec degree, there are some misleading images of the program. It's very much focused on the not for profit and public sector, and I felt going into it there was going to be more emphasis on commercial I think the placement should be emphasized as a great networking for jobs after graduating.
- More courses on community development since it is part of our title – switch no back to back teachings – have course in proper order (i.e. outdoor 1 – outdoor 2) they were not in order during my 4th year. Have a major in Recreation – more specific i.e. outdoor major – volunteer placement within community during first year (maybe 2 weeks) – more info. On career trekking – employment opportunities.
- I am graduating this year, and looking back on the class that we have to take I was dissatisfied. A lot of the class repeated themselves. Also, there is a limit to the course that you can take. If you want to specialize in a certain area there is only 1 or 2 classes and limits the knowledge that you can learn. I if would have know before hand I would have gone to a different University for my education. The work experience was disappointing and other faculties at U of M get paid for their placement. Other universities (in the rec field) get paid or at least don't have to pay to work.
- To encourage more students in the rec degree program we should; have past students come in to talk about their career path, have the work placement program PAID.
- Please help and understand international students more – thanks.

- I am an exchange student and some things are very different to my university. And my choice making – thanks.
- Being in faculty of science, I found it discouraging when my work wasn't paying off. By switching because of personal interest and not influence from my parents, I finally have found something that I thoroughly enjoy. If only I had found out about this faculty earlier it would have save me a lot of time. There should be more awareness/promoting of recreation management faculty instead of just the focus on physical education faculty.
- Stereotype of rec students is that of a gym teacher – I chose this faculty because I needed a degree in two years so student loans wouldn't cut me off Add marketing and business courses to the required courses and drop some of the electives.
- The class is interesting, but there needs to be more to marks because multiple choice does not indicate anything it discourages my interest in this subject. Selecting a major is an important decision and mustn't be taken lightly
- I am taking 18 credit hours of rec courses. I want a minor in recreation studies.
- Hope this helps, this major is important to quality of life! I don't feel my strengths lie in the physical sphere more in the intellectual.
- Hope this is useful.
- Very interesting survey, interesting and useful topic, took me 3 years to figure out what I wanted to do with myself.
- There are a lot of useless info in a lot of phys ed courses i.e. physical activity health and wellness, dance, come on!

APPENDIX F
Image of a Recreation Degree

Frequencies

Statistics

		academic major	words describe your image of rec
N	Valid	222	224
	Missing	2	0

Frequency Table

academic major

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	recreation major	54	24.1	24.3	24.3
	other major	124	55.4	55.9	80.2
	undecided	31	13.8	14.0	94.1
	undecided consider rec	13	5.8	5.9	100.0
	Total	222	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.9		
Total		224	100.0		

words describe your image of rec

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		20	8.9	8.9	8.9
	active, fun	1	.4	.4	9.4
	active, healthy, knowledge	1	.4	.4	9.8
	active, sport, leisure centre	1	.4	.4	10.3
	adventures, travel, fun	1	.4	.4	10.7
	always changing, satisfying, fun	1	.4	.4	11.2
	athletes, fitness/health, management	1	.4	.4	11.6
	athletic, outdoorsy	1	.4	.4	12.1
	athletic, outside, healthy	1	.4	.4	12.5
	athletic, physical, intelligent	1	.4	.4	12.9
	athletic, relaxed, under paid	1	.4	.4	13.4
	athletic, sports, gym teacher/coach	1	.4	.4	13.8
	b.s, no money, easy to get in	1	.4	.4	14.3
	best, wonder, nice	1	.4	.4	14.7
	boring	1	.4	.4	15.2
	boring, useless, no such thing	1	.4	.4	15.6
	bullshit, poor salary, easy to get	1	.4	.4	16.1
	challenge, fun, active	1	.4	.4	16.5
	challenging, enjoyable, interesting	1	.4	.4	17.0

words describe your image of rec

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	changing, fun, challenging	1	.4	.4	17.4
	changing, fun, unique	1	.4	.4	17.9
	class involvement, easy going, practical experience	1	.4	.4	18.3
	community involvement, outdoor activities, leisure education	1	.4	.4	18.8
	community, leisure, research	1	.4	.4	19.2
	community, people,programs	1	.4	.4	19.6
	complicated, uninteresting, leisure time	1	.4	.4	20.1
	discovery, research, knowledge	1	.4	.4	20.5
	diverse, innovative, evolving	1	.4	.4	21.0
	diversity, opportunity, time well chosen	1	.4	.4	21.4
	don't understand question	1	.4	.4	21.9
	dynamic, therapeutic, beneficial	1	.4	.4	22.3
	easy, fun, enjoyable	1	.4	.4	22.8
	easy, fun, exciting	1	.4	.4	23.2
	easy, fun, interesting	1	.4	.4	23.7
	easy, fun, laid back	1	.4	.4	24.1
	easy, gym teacher, jocks/athletes	1	.4	.4	24.6
	easy, impractical, not reputable	1	.4	.4	25.0
	easy, interesting, laid back	1	.4	.4	25.4
	easy, lack of prestige, fun	1	.4	.4	25.9
	easy, low pay, fun jobs	1	.4	.4	26.3
	easy, low paying, fun	1	.4	.4	26.8
	education	1	.4	.4	27.2
	employment opportunities, lack of training, lack of recognition	1	.4	.4	27.7
	enjoyable	1	.4	.4	28.1
	enjoyable to learn about, fun, interesting	1	.4	.4	28.6
	enjoyable, average stress, adventure	1	.4	.4	29.0
	enjoyable, effective, fun	1	.4	.4	29.5
	enjoyable, interesting, informative	1	.4	.4	29.9
	enjoyable, useful, modern	1	.4	.4	30.4
	enthusiastic, new, fun	1	.4	.4	30.8
	environment, planning, research	1	.4	.4	31.3
	exciting, enjoyable, learning experiences	1	.4	.4	31.7
	exciting, future, fun	1	.4	.4	32.1
	exciting, interesting, fun	1	.4	.4	32.6
	fitness,active,extrovert	1	.4	.4	33.0

words describe your image of rec

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	free-time, long weekend, 20 hour work week	1	.4	.4	33.5
	fulfilling, rewarding, fun	1	.4	.4	33.9
	fun	1	.4	.4	34.4
	fun, acive, healthy	1	.4	.4	34.8
	fun, adventure, outdoor rec	1	.4	.4	35.3
	fun, adventure, travel	1	.4	.4	35.7
	fun, challenge, satisfaction	1	.4	.4	36.2
	fun, challenging, wellness	1	.4	.4	36.6
	fun, changing, unique	1	.4	.4	37.1
	fun, easy, active	1	.4	.4	37.5
	fun, easy, games	1	.4	.4	37.9
	fun, educating, communication	1	.4	.4	38.4
	fun, emerging, relaxing	1	.4	.4	38.8
	fun, engaging, hands-son learning	1	.4	.4	39.3
	fun, enjoyable, interesting	1	.4	.4	39.7
	fun, essential, interest	1	.4	.4	40.2
	fun, eventful, travel	2	.9	.9	41.1
	fun, exciting, always learning new things	1	.4	.4	41.5
	fun, exciting, interesting	1	.4	.4	42.0
	fun, exciting, not boring	1	.4	.4	42.4
	fun, exciting, travel	1	.4	.4	42.9
	fun, exciting, unpredictable (salary)	1	.4	.4	43.3
	fun, freetime, myself	1	.4	.4	43.8
	fun, friends, exercise	1	.4	.4	44.2
	fun, growing, helpful	1	.4	.4	44.6
	fun, hands-on, new	1	.4	.4	45.1
	fun, health orientated, improving of your mind	1	.4	.4	45.5
	fun, healthy, eductional	1	.4	.4	46.0
	fun, healthy, exciting	1	.4	.4	46.4
	fun, help others, for myself	1	.4	.4	46.9
	fun, interesting, easier	1	.4	.4	47.3
	fun, interesting, enjoyment	1	.4	.4	47.8
	fun, interesting, joy	1	.4	.4	48.2
	fun, interesting, travelling	1	.4	.4	48.7
	fun, interesting, usefull	1	.4	.4	49.1
	fun, limited, undervalued	1	.4	.4	49.6
	fun, no money	1	.4	.4	50.0
	fun, perks, exciting	1	.4	.4	50.4
	fun, positive, educational	1	.4	.4	50.9
	fun, relaxing, easy	1	.4	.4	51.3
	fun, relaxing,money	1	.4	.4	51.8
	fun, working outdoors, low wage	1	.4	.4	52.2
	fun,easy,relax	1	.4	.4	52.7
	fun/exciting, diverse opportunities, active	1	.4	.4	53.1
	good, alright, okay	1	.4	.4	53.6
	good,bad, ugly	1	.4	.4	54.0

words describe your image of rec

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	gym, coach, teacher	1	.4	.4	54.5
	gym, sports, relaxing	1	.4	.4	54.9
	hands-on, fun, health	1	.4	.4	55.4
	hands-on, practical, general public	1	.4	.4	55.8
	health, activity, discretionary time	1	.4	.4	56.3
	healthy, active, knowledge	1	.4	.4	56.7
	help, community, building	1	.4	.4	57.1
	highly commercial, aging population increase changes trends, cost prohibitive	1	.4	.4	57.6
	hotel, activity, travel	1	.4	.4	58.0
	I have no idea - sports, fitness, programming	1	.4	.4	58.5
	interactive, life skills, fairly easy	1	.4	.4	58.9
	interesting	2	.9	.9	59.8
	interesting, boring, eventful	1	.4	.4	60.3
	interesting, career, major life decision	1	.4	.4	60.7
	interesting, fun	2	.9	.9	61.6
	interesting, fun challenging	1	.4	.4	62.1
	interesting, fun, active	1	.4	.4	62.5
	interesting, fun, easy	1	.4	.4	62.9
	interesting, fun, enjoyable	1	.4	.4	63.4
	interesting, lifestyle, variety	1	.4	.4	63.8
	interesting, purposeful, rewarding	1	.4	.4	64.3
	interesting, satisfaction, outdoors	1	.4	.4	64.7
	interesting, ueful, exciting	1	.4	.4	65.2
	interesting, vague,opportunities	1	.4	.4	65.6
	intereting, dynamic	1	.4	.4	66.1
	interpersonal, outgoing, fun	1	.4	.4	66.5
	leadership, community, management	1	.4	.4	67.0
	leisure, recreation, choice	1	.4	.4	67.4
	leisure, recreation, fun	1	.4	.4	67.9
	leisure,information,community	1	.4	.4	68.3
	leisurely, research, activation	1	.4	.4	68.8
	limited, boring	1	.4	.4	69.2
	limiting, confining (ususally deal with old people), poor respect in community	1	.4	.4	69.6
	low pay, easy, active	1	.4	.4	70.1
	low pay, low opportunities, small job market	1	.4	.4	70.5

words describe your image of rec

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	low pay, unsure of job opportunities	1	.4	.4	71.0
	nature, bugs, exercise	1	.4	.4	71.4
	new, interesting, unfamiliar	1	.4	.4	71.9
	no answer	3	1.3	1.3	73.2
	no comment	11	4.9	4.9	78.1
	non-restrictive, rewarding, interesting	1	.4	.4	78.6
	not useful, innovative	1	.4	.4	79.0
	organized, fun, exciting	1	.4	.4	79.5
	outdoor type, environmental, helpful	1	.4	.4	79.9
	outdoor, informal. people	1	.4	.4	80.4
	personality dependent, limited jobs in MB., growing market	1	.4	.4	80.8
	physed, education	1	.4	.4	81.3
	physical fitness, physical health, lifestyle	1	.4	.4	81.7
	physically fit, smart, outgoing	1	.4	.4	82.1
	planning, facilitating, encouraging	1	.4	.4	82.6
	poor job prospects, poor salary prospects	1	.4	.4	83.0
	professional, useful, fun/relax	1	.4	.4	83.5
	R.O.M., excitement, interesting	1	.4	.4	83.9
	rec, leisure, concepts	1	.4	.4	84.4
	recreation, leisure,tourism	1	.4	.4	84.8
	recreation, therapeutic, fun	1	.4	.4	85.3
	relax, commitment, involvement	1	.4	.4	85.7
	relaxed, healthy beneficial	1	.4	.4	86.2
	slow paced, not challenging, multiple areas	1	.4	.4	86.6
	small, ok, neutral	1	.4	.4	87.1
	social, helpful, sport	1	.4	.4	87.5
	special event planning, tourism, gym teacher	1	.4	.4	87.9
	specialty, leadership, facilitator	1	.4	.4	88.4
	sport, travle, tourism	1	.4	.4	88.8
	sports, ahletes, the gym	1	.4	.4	89.3
	sports, fitness, camping	1	.4	.4	89.7
	sports, organizing or reserach, communications	1	.4	.4	90.2
	sports, travel, fun	1	.4	.4	90.6
	sporty, recreational, healthy	1	.4	.4	91.1
	student, smart	1	.4	.4	91.5
	sweat pants, laziness, easy money	1	.4	.4	92.0
	teacher, school	1	.4	.4	92.4

words describe your image of rec

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	tourism, play, enjoy life	1	.4	.4	92.9
	tourism,outdoors,fun	1	.4	.4	93.3
	travel, sports, community	1	.4	.4	93.8
	travel, tourism, activities	1	.4	.4	94.2
	travelling, meet new people, learn about different	1	.4	.4	94.6
	undervalued, useless, frustrating	1	.4	.4	95.1
	useful, important, valuable to society	1	.4	.4	95.5
	useless, boring, easy	1	.4	.4	96.0
	useless, fun, enjoyable	1	.4	.4	96.4
	useless, unimportant, easy	1	.4	.4	96.9
	valuable, intersting, knowledgable	1	.4	.4	97.3
	very,very,boring	1	.4	.4	97.8
	vitality, statistics, boring	1	.4	.4	98.2
	wellness, exercise, fitness	1	.4	.4	98.7
	wellness, sport, travel	1	.4	.4	99.1
	work experience, small classes, making new friends	1	.4	.4	99.6
	worthwhile, exciting, organized	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	224	100.0	100.0	