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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

THE WELL-BEING OF BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS  
THROUGH THE PARTICIPATION OF GOLF  
WITH COWORKERS AND CLIENTS

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Science

Marisa Hisaki

College of Natural and Health Sciences  
School of Sport and Exercise Science  
Sport Administration

August 2021

This Thesis by: Marisa Hisaki

Entitled: *The Well-Being of Business Professionals Through the Participation of Golf with Coworkers and Clients*

has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Master of Science in College of Natural and Health Sciences in School of Sport and Exercise Science, Program of Sport Administration.

Accepted by the Thesis Committee:

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Accepted by the Graduate School

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## ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to explore and understand how participation of golf influences the well-being of business professionals and how organizations could incorporate activities such as golf to their management practices. Open-ended, semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1996) were utilized in this study to explore and understand how golf influences the well-being by expressing their experience of the phenomenon of the effects of golf. Seven participants were interviewed, where three were insiders and four were outsiders. The age of the participants ranged from 23-68 years, with the average being 49.7 years. Of the seven participants, six were male and only one was female, showing the deficiency of females in casual golf participation. The findings of this study indicated that playing golf improved relationships through trust and community, decompression from the stressors of their workplace or personal lives and allowed for self-efficacy. Therefore, the three themes that emerged are improved relationships, stress reliever, and success through self-efficacy. Individuals can experience personal well-being (Kim et al., 2019) by improving the work-life environment and this study explored the intersection of sport/leisure and well-being. As stress increases the level of depression and anxiety (Moracco & McFadden, 1982), playing golf is a way to reconstruct current lifestyles to cope with stress in a healthy manner.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Introduction to Well-Being**

Heavy workloads and low salaries result in 80% of individuals experiencing stress in the workplace due to frustration, poor work-life balance, or the lack of opportunity for promotions (Stephens, 2014). The current work force management practices contribute to more than 120,000 deaths and 8% of health care costs are accounted for each year due to workplace stressors (Goh et al., 2016). Among different generations, Gen Xers (ages 39-52) reported the highest level of stress, with Millennials (ages 18-32) coming in second (American Psychological Association, 2017). Consequently, it is imperative for businesses to counteract the emotional demands on their workforce. One such avenue is through the participation in sport. Sport and leisure have impacted society in many ways: stress, burnout, overall mood and well-being, and relationships. Stress negatively impacts an individual's physical health, performance, and well-being (e.g., Childs & Stoeber, 2012; Griffin & Clarke, 2011). As stress levels rise, being aware of this issue is critical to create ideas to reconstruct current lifestyles such as playing golf. Individuals experiencing stress may realize an increase in depression and anxiety, being emotionally or physically distant to others (Moracco & McFadden, 1982), fatigue, and sicknesses (Ray & Miller, 1991; Weiskopf, 1980). Yet, sports and other physical activities allow for the reduction of psychological pressures that lead to an improvement in well-being as it provides a way for individuals to cope with stress (e.g., Soltaniyan & Aminbeidokhti, 2009). Stress impairs the central nervous system as it releases hormones that disturb the stability of the immune system that can be detrimental to an individual's health (Glaser & Kiecolt-Glaser, 2009). By finding

outlets to cope with stress, individuals can begin to witness well-being. Wellness can be defined as aspects of functioning from relationships, having proper cognitive functions, interpersonal and coping skills, and empowerment (e.g., Cowen, 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2001). By recognizing the negative side effects of stress and burnout, this study will explore if playing golf remedies or mitigates work stress. While physical activity plays a role in well-being, what is lacking is an understanding of how organizations can alter their management frameworks to incorporate sports, such as golf, into their practices and the resulting impact on the well-being and socialization of their employees.

### **Stress and Burnout**

There are several factors that influence the role of stress for individuals: poor working conditions, difficult working hours, workload, confusion of role or responsibility, and difficulty in maintaining relationships with the boss, coworkers, or clients (Cooper, 1995). Occupational stress is defined as the negative physical and emotional responses caused by workplace stressors and are associated with “recurrent coronary heart disease events, blood pressure, musculoskeletal, lifestyle cancer risk factors, and poor mental health” (Tsai et al., 2009, p. 443). This type of stress is related to the work environment that the individual considers as emotionally or physically threatening (Jamal, 1990). The productivity of an individual may also decline from continuous stress, which can hinder with company’s goals of their needed output or efficiency (Williams, 2003). Kim et al. (2013) found that administering leagues that promote physical activity allowed some employees to develop positive attachments to their organizations. It is important for managers to discover and implement ways to keep employees healthy as it also benefits the company. As the most common workplace stressors were experiencing too many demands or hours (Williams, 2003), this type of physical activity is a demand that can be

reconstructed to focus less on their current workload. Additionally, the added stress the individual feels from workplace stress can affect their family life by negatively impacting their child's mental health as proper parenting becomes disrupted (Bhui et al., 2016.). Stress may also lead to restless or the lack of sleep, where sleep deprivation increases the chance of impaired judgment or delayed reaction time (Williams, 2003). Depending on the role of a job, these impairments may greatly affect job performance that leads to even more detrimental stressors such as the loss of a job or the fear of creating an accident.

Burnout for employees occurs from being overworked and exhausted due to stressors caused by the pressures of the workplace (e.g., Golembiewski et al., 1986; Miller et al., 1990). The definition of burnout is expressed through three different characteristics: mental or emotional exhaustion, cynicism and depersonalization, and inefficacy through negative self-evaluation (e.g., Gorter et al., 1998; Rožman et al., 2019). There is an extensive list of negative consequences to burnout: lower patient or client satisfaction, lower care quality, higher rates of error, higher rates of turnover, alcohol or drug addiction or abuse, and suicide (e.g., Gardiner et al., 2005; Kouvonen et al., 2005; Shanafelt et al., 2002). With multiple employees suffering burnout, organizations are less like to succeed due to unmotivated or unhealthy workers (Goswami, 2015; Palmer et al., 2004). Women compared to men, experiences greater stress and job strain which leads to higher odds of depression and anxiety (Shields, 2006). By understanding the effects of causal golf play on business professionals, it can lead to better golf playing initiatives by the company to promote well-being through physical activity and relationship building. To prevent harmful effects of burnout, physical activity can be implemented to alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 1996).

Research on the effects of stress and burnout has focused on health care providers like nurses (e.g., Laschinger & Fida, 2014), teachers, lawyers (e.g., Hamilton, 2007; Tsai et al., 2009), dentists (Gorter et al., 1998), insurance companies (Coetzer & Rothmann, 2006), banking organizations (e.g., Shah, 2003), and many other professionals. However, more research can be expanded on the burnout of sport employees that encounter high stress to perfect their role. The engagement of sport employees can result in workaholism (Huml et al., 2020) which means working beyond their expected hours to fulfill their responsibilities of the job (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Other negative emotions attached to burnout include: decreases in personal satisfaction, separations and interference in relationships, sleeping disorders, and decreases in motivation (Rožman et al., 2019; Yavas et al., 2013). Over two decades ago, 60% of public sector employees revealed feelings of burnout (Golembiewski et al., 1998). With many individuals working long hours that are over forty hours a week, 47% experienced stress from excessive demands or working too many hours (Williams, 2003). More recently, 83% of a nation's population reported being stressed by the demands from their workplace (Stephens, 2014). In the twenty-first century, society has become more aware of bringing mental health into the light. Implementing physical activity programs in the workplace may protect these individuals from stress and burnout by introducing healthy behaviors.

### **Physical Activity on Well-Being**

Different types of exercise affect well-being and mood differently. Consistent physical activity can additionally prevent and improve different conditions: mental health, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, musculoskeletal health, maintaining a healthy weight, and the development of motor skills in young children (e.g., Durstine et al., 2013; Lahart et al., 2019; World Health Organization, 2010). Physical activity positively impacts mood states by

alleviating some symptoms of depression and anxiety (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 1996) due to its favorable effects that are comparable to antidepressant treatments prescribed by psychologists and psychiatrists (e.g., Babyak et al., 2000; Dinas et al., 2011). Physical activity allows for individuals to experience a sense of well-being as endorphins being produced through exercise and excitement resemble opiates in the body (e.g., Dinas et al., 2011; Fichna et al., 2007). While high-intensity exercise promotes cardiorespiratory and metabolism benefits, significant changes in well-being or mood were not seen (Berger & Motl, 2000; Bretland & Thorsteinsson, 2015). Low-to-moderate intensity, however, can affect the psychological well-being of an individual (Berger & Motl, 2000) with noticeable differences in older, healthy individuals (Arent et al., 2000; Netz et al., 2005). Moderate-intensity exercises can also contribute towards longevity in individuals (O'Donovan et al., 2010) as well as lowering the risk of cardiovascular events (Rognmo et al., 2012). In a ten-week training study of adolescents meeting twice a week for approximately 30 minutes, those who exercised at a high intensity reported less stress than the other groups (Norris et al., 1992). Therefore, there is an opportunity for another study to explore how golf influences employees. With golf being low-to-moderate levels of intensity, participation in golf individually, coworkers, or clients can provide health benefits that lead to a higher quality of psychological well-being (e.g., Bretland & Thorsteinsson, 2015; Sorbie et al., 2020). Multiple studies have an unanimity in physical activity providing mood enhancement benefits (e.g., Berger, 1996; Berger & McInman, 1993). The goal of the study is to discover how the effects of low-to-moderate levels of physical activity intensity such as golf improve the workplace setting and behavior by exploring the socialization processes outside of the standard company building.

The participation of sports and other recreation offers many benefits: healthy lifestyles, community engagement and identification, forming socially desirable attitudes, increasing sociability within different groups, and reducing tensions (Chalip et al., 1996). Positive relationships have been found between those who engage in the regular participation of leisure and moderate sports activities and life satisfaction with a small impact on general happiness (Wheatley & Bickerton, 2017). These positive experiences occur not from quantity of leisure activities, but rather the quality of leisure time an individual is able to experience as it generates more positive feelings (Wheatley & Bickerton, 2017). While the association depends on the amount of leisure time they are exposed to, the relationship is still noteworthy to creating healthier lifestyles and well-being in organizations. Others have found that employees who stayed active felt less emotional exhaustion compared to nonactive employees and noted that sport and physical activities aid in the process of coping with psychological pressures (Soltaniyan & Aminbeidokhti, 2009). Additionally, active participants feel more content, energetic, and calm after physical activity (Kanning & Schlicht, 2010). These sensations can impact workplace relationships and well-being that may influence the overall workplace (Wheatley & Bickerton, 2017).

### **Golf's Effect on Well-Being**

To underscore the importance and relevance of golf and well-being, overall personal well-being and social trust were rated substantially higher for golfers when compared to other community members (Sorbie et al., 2020). Therefore, these emotional states an individual experiences due to golf can impact organizational behaviors and effectiveness by creating positive environments through trust. It has been noted that playing golf has been positively correlated with enjoyment, a sense of belonging, and well-being after reopening the golf courses

due to COVID-19 (Sorbie et al., 2021). Additionally, life satisfaction improved as it became something everyone could do amid a pandemic. Since golf courses limit the group size to no more than four players, it allows for higher interactions and communication compared to other sports, which creates and nurtures social relations (Sorbie et al., 2020). When middle-aged men regularly walked the golf course, it positively affected body compositions like weight, waist circumference abdominal skin fold thickness, and increased high-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels (Parkkari et al., 2000). This study deemed walking during golf a healthy form of physical activity due to its high adherence levels and low risk of injury while enhancing and promoting health.

With golf being in an outdoor, natural environment, it has been found to promote well-being (Bowling et al., 2010) as an individual may feel an improvement in their sense of belonging (Sorbie et al., 2021; Stenner et al., 2016). Having a sense of belonging will improve an individual's perception of work and life satisfaction. These green exercises, which are physical activities in a natural environment, can improve the well-being of adults (e.g., Brown et al., 2013; Pretty et al., 2005; Rogerson et al., 2020). Natural environments have been seen to provoke positive psychological states through the process of increased positive emotions and a decrease in stress (e.g., Lachowycz & Jones, 2011; Lahart et al., 2019). The exposure of nature from exercising outdoors has displayed an increase in enjoyment compared to exercising indoors (Lahart et al., 2019). After the introduction to green exercise, 61% of participants who were rated with low well-being progressed to average-to-high well-being (Rogerson et al., 2020). Wheatley and Bickerton (2017) found that life satisfaction was higher in those who played golf compared to other moderate-intensity sport or leisure activities. It is valuable to understand how these natural environment sports and leisure activities can be ingrained within the management

practices of organizations and the subsequent influence on employees' workplace experiences and if there is a resulting impact on the organization.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand how participation of golf influences the well-being of business professionals and how organizations could incorporate activities such as golf to their management practices. Exploring the individual's life between golf and workplace well-being provided information on the purpose of constructing well-being within the office and their internal relationships with coworkers and clients. Therefore, this study assessed individuals who regularly played golf with coworkers or clients outside of coordinated golfing events by the company.

Past research of well-being in sports have looked at sport employees' psychological capital (Kim et al., 2017), sport participation at ski resorts (Lee et al., 2014), organized sports (e.g., Kim et al., 2013; Steenhuis et al., 2009), recreational activities (e.g., Chalip et al., 1996), leisure satisfaction (e.g., Berger, 1996; Berger & McInman, 1993; Moon & Heo, 2011; Wheatley & Bickerton, 2017), effects of physical activity and burnout (Soltaniyan & Aminbeidokhti, 2009), and the difference of music and sport students (Alessandri et al., 2020). Additionally, Crosset and Hums (2012) clarified that to be successful in the golf business, sport managers need an understanding in both sport and business. This study aims to build off past research to explore how the influences of sport, specifically golf, can be managed within organizations to improve the well-being of their employees. By understanding how other sport participation affects well-being, this study can explore if and how well-being of business professionals is created by the integration of golf.

## Research Questions

With golf providing the opportunity to step away from four walls that are the office spaces, this study explored the casual effects of playing golf with their coworkers or clients.

When examining these individuals, I proposed the following research questions:

- Q1 How has golf affected your physical and mental health?
- Q2 How have you seen golf affect you in either your office, relationships, or personal life?

## Summary

Having a sense of belonging such as what the golf community offers can potentially improve an individual's perception of work and life satisfaction. Golf allows its participants to interact on a deeper level and increase communication compared to other sports as it takes four to five hours that can create and nurture social relations (Sorbie et al., 2020) between the players. Understanding the influence of golf in the workplace is critical due to the benefits the company and individuals may experience. These benefits may include the overall happiness of an individual, stronger relationships between coworkers or clients, and seeing their business opportunities or work-life positively (Kim et al., 2013). By unraveling individual's experiences, other companies may begin to instill programs that help employees improve in the workplace and overall well-being. Obtaining well-being can increase productivity and work-life satisfaction that helps company growth. As golf becomes a more popular sport (Readman, 2012), especially among older males, it is seen as social outings for employees to take time out of their work hours and create relationships within their community. In the history of golf, it was an exclusive sport that accommodated and entertained upper-class white males (Crosset & Hums, 2012). As it becomes more common and accessible, findings of the effects of golf will be catered to all

people. This study will explore how casually playing golf with their coworkers or clients will affect an individual as they get away from the office after work or on weekends.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### **Sport Management**

Sport management scholars have researched areas sport organizations (e.g., Do Kim et al., 2019; Kellett & Warner, 2011; Kim et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2017; Oja et al., 2018; Steenhuis et al., 2009) and organizational behavior. Psychological capital (e.g., ; Kim, Do Kim et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2017; Oja et al., 2019), psychological well-being (e.g., Kim, Oja et al., 2020), sport participation (e.g., Kim et al., 2013), and job satisfaction have been examined among sport employees. To improve the perception of job satisfaction, work motivations need to increase (Latham & Pinder, 2005) like building a supportive community. The participation of watching collegiate basketball with coworkers developed a sense of community within the group that created an organizational culture (Oja et al., 2018). The regulation of company community sport effects organizational commitment and the level of intrinsic motivation or amotivation effects on job stress (Kim et al., 2013). Additionally, communities and workplace environments are impacted by major sporting events as it gives them an opportunity to bond over common factors in sport (Oja et al., 2018). Researchers have examined organizational behavior through the lens of human resource management by understanding job satisfaction, stress and burnout, motivation, commitment, group conflict, and group cohesion (Doherty, 1998). While sport management research typically explores sport organizations, it can move towards non-sport organizations as well through the use of sport in organizations (e.g., Steenhuis et al., 2009; Wheatley & Bickerton, 2017).

## Leisure Activities

Leisure activities are activities that bring pleasant experiences during their free time (Ateca-Amestoy, 2011) or are different from their daily routine (Wang et al., 2012). Recognizing how adolescents participate in leisure activity is a predictor of leisure participation in their adulthood (Scott & Willits, 1998). Adults mostly participate in three types of leisure activities: achievement activities, social activities, and time-out activities (Passmore & French, 2001). However, leisure activities consist of different categories: mass media, socializing, creative or artistic activities, outdoor activities, sports activities, cultural activities, intellectual activities, and hobbies (e.g., Lloyd & Auld, 2002; Scott & Willits, 1998). Volunteerism is also considered a leisure activity with the support of many works of literature (e.g., Laverie & McDonald, 2007; Wearing, 2004). Social activities like visiting or going out with friends have impacted well-being positively (Lloyd & Auld, 2002). Supporting this view, Hamermesh (2003) indicated that the community and being together may lead to positive leisure experiences. Leisure activities may be used in different ways; individuals who are working may participate in leisure activities as a way to cope with workplace stressors (Trenberth & Dewe, 2002), whereas the elderly may participate in leisure activities to have a chance at getting out of the house and have the opportunity for social interaction (Auld & Case, 1997; Tinsley et al., 2002). Being able to properly cope with stress and receiving social interaction are both ways to potentially improve quality of life (Kemperman & Timmermans, 2008). Person-centred and place-centred are two variables that makeup leisure activities (Lloyd & Auld, 2002). Lloyd and Auld (2002) described how person-centered variables include participation, satisfaction, and attitude, whereas place-centered variables refer to the resources and their environment. Participation in leisure activities can improve the individual's quality of life by strengthening old and creating new social

relationships, experiencing positive emotions through their activity, learning new skills, and acquiring new knowledge (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011).

With priorities being focused on work, school, and family, physical activities can be considered insignificant and a burden to their energy use (Rawal et al., 2020). Individuals are mostly influenced by their support systems like their friends, family members, and health professionals to seek out physical activities (Bragg et al., 2009). Having strong support systems becomes a powerful motivator to participate in physical activities due to encouragement and a sense of security that these social supports provide (Griffin et al., 2008). Unfortunately, when companies fund fitness and exercise programs, employees have had mixed opinions about doing physical activities with their coworkers as some employees did not find these programs enjoyable (Steenhuis et al., 2009). For example, many spend their leisure time watching television and were less likely to engage in activities like visiting friends, attending concerts, dining out at restaurants, going to church, reading a book, shopping, going to sporting events, and playing sports (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011). A significant predictor that improves the quality of life includes leisure activities through participation in community or religious activities (Leung & Lee, 2005).

### **Socioeconomic Determinants**

While the higher socioeconomic group portrayed higher true satisfaction (high satisfaction and optimism) and a higher creative dissatisfaction (low satisfaction and optimism), the middle socioeconomic group presented the least amount of leisure satisfaction (Francken & Van Raaij, 1981) Financial status only had a more significant correlation with life satisfaction for poorer nations compared to wealthier nations through the analysis of life satisfaction in college students in the domains of family, friends, and finances (Diener & Diener, 1996). Contradicting

Francken and Van Raaij's (1981) research, Leung and Lee (2005) claimed that socioeconomic status and life quality do not strongly correlate to higher satisfaction. By looking at vacationers, higher levels of vacation satisfaction were found in lower levels of income and socioeconomic status along with lower levels of education as they have lower expectations and aspirations for their vacation as it feels like a luxury (Francken & Van Raaij, 1979). Individuals who belong to a higher social class have similar leisure activities, while those in the lower social class have no similarities in their leisure activities which justifies the differences in satisfaction among socioeconomic groups (Shinew et al., 1996). The demand for low-cost sports facilities and gymnasiums rises as it is accessible to the majority of the population (e.g., Kamphuis et al., 2007; Steenhuis et al., 2009; Withall et al., 2009). Through habits and inclinations, these individuals reporting low satisfaction are victims of their behaviors as they are unable to modify their situations (Francken & Van Raaij, 1981). Many low and middle socioeconomic groups reported that the cost of leisure and physical activities has become a barrier to play and affects their inclusivity to those leisure activities (Kamphuis et al., 2007). Francken and Van Raaij (1981) also found that the middle satisfaction group, on the other hand, felt external restraints with deficiencies in time and money to experience more leisure activities. Lastly, all three socioeconomic groups spent the least amount of hours visiting art events like going to the theater, concerts, or museums (Francken & Van Raaij, 1981).

### **Gender and Age**

There are differences in how males and females experience leisure activities. As male students are more frequently involved in active leisure such as sports (Raboteg-Šarić et al., 2002; Sylvia-Bobiak & Caldwell, 2006), females are more likely to read or be involved in cultural events (Raboteg-Šarić et al., 2002). Age affects well-being in both men and women, with the

lowest level of well-being in people over 60 years old (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011) which could be explained because as they get older, they perceive to experience a lower quality of life (Lloyd & Auld, 2002). Further, women and older adults have reported lower life satisfaction and happiness compared to men and the younger population (Bejaković & Kaliterna Lipovčan, 2007).

### **Psychological Well-Being**

Psychological well-being (PWB) is also known as eudaimonic well-being, which is the actualization of human potential (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993). It is the combination of happiness and meaningfulness (McGregor & Little, 1998) or differing wellness variables like self-actualization and vitality (Ryan & Deci, 2000). However, being able to obtain feelings of happiness requires work (Ryff & Singer, 2008). Self-actualized people take responsibility of their surroundings, are honest to themselves and others, and work hard as they are focused on purposes outside of themselves (Maslow, 1965). These people are fully functioning to their peak and live greatly enriched lives compared to the average person (Maslow, 1965). When a person is self-actualized they empathize and display affection to all people, have a great capacity for love, have friendship that are deep and meaningful, and can closely identify with others (Maslow, 1965). This type of well-being is not the equivalent of subjective happiness as the desire or the outcome the individuals' value do not always lead to well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Obtaining PWB requires a sense of self-acceptance, a sense of autonomy, being able to adapt to the fluctuations of life, a sense of personal growth, having a purpose in life such as a connection to something greater than the self, and having positive relationships with their surroundings, (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Singer, 2008). In order to grow in well-being, experiencing and cultivating ways towards PWB is essential (Vainio & Daukantaitė, 2016). There are issues

that are applicable to well-being: repression, disclosure, compartmentalization, and overcontrol versus under control of emotions (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Additionally, there are six dimensions to psychological well-being and its human actualization: self-acceptance, positive and supportive social relationships with others, personal growth, meaning and purpose in life, environmental mastery, and autonomy (Diener et al., 2017; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2008).

Personal expressiveness was coined to define individuals' activities that deeply match their values to feel alive and authentic to who they are (Waterman, 1993). Producing eudaimonic well-being means the individual is rooted in human nature and encourages human growth by calling others to live in fulfillment of their true self (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Personal growth can come from an individual's openness to new experiences (Schmutte & Ryff, 1997). Aristotle declared that "striving for perfection represents the realization of one's true potential" (Ryff & Keyes, 1995, p. 100). Self-acceptance, mastery, and life purpose are some of the dimensions of PWB that are linked to conscientiousness, extraversion or agreeableness from positive relationships, and low neuroticism from autonomy (Schmutte & Ryff, 1997). When material goods like fame and societal image are prioritized, the psychological needs are not satisfied as it becomes a distraction from fulfillment (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

### **Subjective Well-Being**

Subjective well-being (SWB) refers to an individual's opinion on their life through the judgment of their life satisfaction, moods, and emotions (Diener et al., 1999) on the standards of the respondent's perspective of a good life (Diener, 2009). It focuses on a range of emotions from bodily pleasures to self-interests (Ryan & Deci, 2001) that is experienced only by the individual (Campbell, 1976). There are different components that affect SWB: life satisfaction (overall judgments and perspective of an individual's life), satisfaction with important domains

(e.g., work satisfaction), positive affect (emotions and moods that are pleasant to the individual), and low negative affect (unpleasant emotions and moods that are kept to a minimum; Diener, 2000). Individuals reporting higher SWB are those who are relaxed, strays away from problems, and encounter happiness (Ryan & Deci, 2001). It is also known as hedonism and sees well-being as pleasure and happiness (Kahneman et al., 1999) as a Greek philosopher believed life's ultimate goal is to achieve maximum pleasure (Ryan & Deci, 2001). There are three components that equate to happiness and SWB: life satisfaction, the presence of a positive mood, and the absence of a negative mood (Diener et al., 1999). The first area of life satisfaction is subjective and inherent in their experiences (Campbell, 1976). This area can potentially include the conditions of health, comfort, success, or wealth but are not a necessary component (e.g., Diener, 2009; Kammann, 1983; Tatarkiewicz, 1976). It considers the individual's perception of the good and bad elements of their life as it regards pleasures and displeasures of life (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The second area relates to how the individual perceives positive measures in their life (Diener, 2009). The third component is an assessment that includes all aspects of their life, integrated with judgment (Diener, 2009). A complication that arises is the emotions that occur during a specific moment in their life or a predisposition to particular emotions whether they are feeling that way or not (Bradburn, 1969).

Individuals score the highest in happiness when they are “young, healthy, well-educated, well-paid, extroverted, optimistic, worry-free, religious, married person with high self-esteem, high job morale, modest aspirations, of either sex and of a wide range of intelligence” (Wilson, 1967, p. 294). Wilson (1967) adds that individuals who are predominantly advantageous are also the happiest. When individuals perceive most situations positively by being less responsive to negativity and ignoring opportunities that will not be given to them, individuals had higher SWB

compared to others (Lyubomirsky & Ross, 1999). Philosophers have attempted to identify the source of happiness. Rousseau recognized happiness by obtaining a good bank account and having a good cook and digestion, whereas Thoreau believed happiness came from activities (Diener, 2009). While nations with higher wealth are on average happier and score higher on SWB, increases in income do not show benefits in SWB (Diener, 2000). Therefore, making money or find ways to make more money does not show significant advantages to SWB (Diener, 2000). SWB allows people to continuously experience affect where affect is a straightforward positive or negative; those who report higher SWB reports experiencing more positive affect (Diener & Lucas, 2000). Happy people are more active in social activities compared to those who are unhappy as they participate in activities as a function of their happiness (Robinson & Martin, 2008). When individuals understand the importance of needs being satisfied and participated in leisure activities, they reported higher SWB (Rodríguez et al., 2008); socialization and the individual's perceived happiness are related (Robinson & Martin, 2008). By looking at the pattern of television usage, individuals who were deemed as not happy engaged in more television hours per day by 30% compared to those who were deemed as very happy people (Robinson & Martin, 2008). Unfortunately, there is no clear understanding of why and how leisure affects the quality of life (Iwasaki, 2007). Examining the effects of physical and leisure activities can provide incentives for individuals to seek those activities as a way to manage their mood and well-being (Kanning & Schlicht, 2010).

Although SWB research studied happiness by a single self-report item like, "How do you feel about your life as a whole?" (Andrews & Withey, 1976), SWB research now studied happiness on a scale containing different scenarios (Diener, 2000). These questions include "In most ways my life is close to my ideal" or "So far I have gotten the important things I want in

life" (Diener, 2000; Pavot & Diener, 1993). Regardless of where they stand on the scale of happiness, researchers have discovered that most people are resilient and are able to recover from adversity (Diener & Diener, 1996). The hedonic treadmill refers to when the expectations of the individual rises due to their accomplishments and increased or valuable possessions (Brickman & Campbell, 1971). As these individuals move to different levels of expectations, they are no longer happy with their situation. Therefore, Brickman and Campbell (1971) suggested that hedonic neutrality occurs to everyone as good and bad events are only a temporarily effect on happiness. Research on an accident that caused disability found that while the individual was unhappy after the accident, they were able to adapt and create positive emotions that masked negative emotions by the eighth week (Sabini & Silver, 1982). Other studies have also confirmed and revealed that people are designed to adapt and be resilient to most conditions very quickly (Diener, 2000) even if the event is considered significantly good or bad (Brickman & Campbell, 1971). As they continue to adapt they are able to return to their original level of happiness (Brickman & Campbell, 1971) by reverting back to their baseline mood conditions (Sabini & Silver, 1982).

Improvements of SWB can occur if an individual set goals and discovered ways to progress toward that goal, engages in activities they place value on, and interact with their support system (Lent, 2004). Participating in these actions allow for personal growth, live an organized lifestyle, and have a sense of meaning in their lives (Lent, 2004). An influence of life satisfaction is the individual's sense of experience in their central domain of their lives, including the workplace (Lent & Brown, 2008). Additionally, when people feel that progress made on goals they value the highest, feel happier on those days compared to the days they successfully achieve a goal they value less (Oishi et al., 1999). However, goal flexibility can be a solution to

improve SWM because of how an individual adapts to new conditions and circumstances as goals that seek excitement will influence emotions (Diener, 2000). Between sensation seekers, those who are rated high are more satisfied and happier when they are exposed to pleasure and high arousal emotions, while those who are rated low are happy with general contentment (Oishi et al., 2001).

### **Workplace Well-Being**

Well-being pertains to the physical, psychological, and social states of an individual's health (Diener et al., 2017). Culture plays a critical role in the employees' wellbeing and the deciding factor of happiness and healthiness of a workplace (Kane-Urrabazo, 2006). As the average person spends most of their life working, it is important to recognize the state of well-being of employees since work satisfaction plays a significant role in overall life satisfaction (Campbell, 1976; Harter et al., 2003). Poor leadership results in negative health outcomes, turnover, and an increase in burnout for employees (e.g., Kane-Urrabazo, 2006; Laschinger & Fida, 2014). The workplace environment is also an important factor for retaining current employees and recruiting new employees (Kanter, 1977). Leaders of an organization can influence the employees' well-being and overall outcome (Kane-Urrabazo, 2006). The feeling of competence and confidence with the combination of valuable goals can lead to well-being (Carver & Scheier, 1999; McGregor & Little, 1998). Additionally, those who are happy tend to interpret their life events and unpredictable encounters more positively than those who are unhappy (Lyubomirsky & Tucker, 1998). However, psychological stress may occur if there was a combination of a failure to meet a specific demand and an unfavorable consequence (Bretland & Thorsteinsson, 2015; Thorsteinsson et al., 2014).

The outcomes of well-being in the workplace are seen positively as workers show efficiency, more creativity, retention in the company, and better business outcomes (Harter et al., 2003). High-performing business outcomes are related to experiencing positive emotions like joy, interest, contentment, and love (Fredrickson, 1998). When organizations offer their employees by providing basic materials, encourage contribution, offer clear outcome expectancies, a sense of belonging, and a chance to grow in their work and as an individual, positive emotions can be experienced (Harter et al., 2003). Relationships the individual has with their coworkers is significant in affecting the overall work experience by influencing functions and behavioral outcomes (Hamilton, 2007). Productivity occurs when the employee has an understanding of what is expected, receives the encouragement to develop, opinions are heard, feels they are cared about, and is committed to producing quality (Harter et al., 2003). Well-being, job satisfaction, and productivity are also seen as individuals cultivate workplace friendships as they provide companionship, assistance in their work, an understanding relationship, and emotional support (Hamilton, 2007).

### **Well-Being in Sport**

Through recreational sports, physical activity increases where individuals can see improvement in well-being (Sorbie et al., 2020). However, participation in those activities begins to decline with age (Barnes & Schoenborn, 2003; Bélanger et al., 2011). A study showed emotional well-being to improve after three months of exercise (Malcolm et al., 2013). Presenteeism is the act of going to work despite the individual's poor health and low performance in their job responsibilities (Brown et al., 2011). The practice of physical activity, however, can be implemented into a routine to reduce presenteeism and improving mental health (Brown et al., 2011). Understanding the effects of exercise can help others make lifestyle

changes through physical activity and disclosing any mental health difficulties (Callaghan, 2004; Malcolm et al., 2013)

Participation in golfing activities has shown benefits in mental health and wellness (Breitbarth & Huth, 2019; Murray et al., 2017). Those who golfed and exercised for over 150 minutes per week were considered as the active group, where participation in golf and exercise in the future was higher (Sorbie et al., 2020). Golf is a sport with different intensities; golf can provide low or moderate intensities during the course of the game, which makes it difficult to categorize its intensity (Luscombe et al., 2017; Murray et al., 2017). However, the duration of golf allows its athletes to achieve the recommended physical activity (Sorbie et al., 2020). With the demands of carrying the golf bag and walking, golf offers other health-related benefits (Zunzer et al., 2013). Participation in physical activity is beneficial as it increases self-efficacy (Kwan & Bryan, 2010). When the individual believed that they would either exercise or golf regularly self-efficacy was reported the highest in those groups and reported that they would participate in other exercises outside of golf (Sorbie et al., 2020). Golf is also known as a sport of integrity and honesty because each player calls their own rules infractions and keeps their own scores (Brunelle et al., 2007; Russell, 1994). Therefore, golfers had higher interpersonal trust with others, along with higher personal well-being compared to the general population in the United Kingdom due to the unique aspect of how golf is played (Sorbie et al., 2020).

Sport management scholars have looked at well-being in the sport workplace and found that an individual's work-life is significantly related to their personal well-being (Kim et al., 2019; Oja et al., 2019). As sport organizations are notoriously promoting stress working environments from long hours and low wages (Newman, 2014), health problems are occurring among employees through the consequences of burnout (Karabatsos et al., 2006). By creating a

supportive organizational environment, meaningful work from all employees can be fostered (Kim et al., 2019). Psychological well-being and better interpersonal relationships between coaches and their athletes can see improvement when the coaches feel a sense of job security, development in their professional work, and low work-life conflicts (Stebbing et al., 2012). When the employee's values on participation in work-organized sports matched their expectations, these employees could grow and attach with their organization (Kim et al., 2013). Understanding the influences of golf will use the concept of sport to understand how to improve well-being in non-sport employees.

### **Positive Organizational Behavior**

Positive organizational behavior (POB) is the “study and application of positive- oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace” (Luthans, 2002, p. 59). POB consists of the attitudes and behaviors of that exist in the organization by understanding how employees feel about their paygrade, commitment to the organization and their coworkers, their willingness to work overtime, and how well they execute their job responsibilities (Doherty, 1998). There is a shift in importance to the foundations of positive approaches (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). The characteristics of POB relate to the psychological state of development (Luthans et al., 2007) and human resource strengths that affect the well-being or performance of an individual (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). The influence of psychological capital (PsyCap) consists of four elements: efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience (Luthans et al., 2007). As individuals hold these characteristics, they are more likely to be resilient with challenges faced at work and produce positive work wellbeing (e.g., Joo et al., 2016; Laschinger & Fida, 2014; Luthans et al., 2007). Efficacy describes one's confidence in their ability to complete the given

task by putting in the effort to succeed (Luthans et al., 2007). Those who are hopeful are intrinsically motivated through the process of reaching their goals and look for creative strategies to reach them (Gilson & Shalley, 2004; Snyder, 2002) as hope encourages creativity (Rego et al., 2009). Optimism is having a positive attitude to succeed in the present and in the future (Luthans et al., 2007) and can strengthen self-esteem and boost morale which leads to higher levels of creativity (Lyubomirsky et al., 2006). Resilience is the ability to conquer and bounce back from adversity which is reactive recovery and proactive learning and growth (e.g., Luthans, 2002; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). People who are resilient are open to new experiences while producing positive and energetic approaches to their view of life (Tugade et al., 2004). If an individual obtains a high level of PsyCap, they are motivated more intrinsically and are proactive in their tasks (e.g., Joo et al., 2016; Luthans et al., 2007). Additionally, these employees are less likely to leave their jobs or organization (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). PsyCap is an indicator for the outcomes of an organization regarding job satisfaction (Badran & Youssef-Morgan, 2015) and work engagement (Joo et al., 2016; Leiter & Bakker, 2010).

Cultivating authenticity in leaders can influence their well-being and even their followers' well-being and self-concept (Ilies et al., 2005). According to the ancient Greeks, authenticity means to be true to oneself (Gardner et al., 2009) and implies that they act like their true self as they externally express their inner feelings (Harter, 2002). Well-being occurs because authentic leaders can impact another's self-awareness and self-regulated behaviors as they are "confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, moral/ethical, future-oriented, and gives priority to developing associates to be leaders" (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 243). Authentic leaders foster well-being in their followers by cultivating truthful relationships, providing an atmosphere of positive emotions and leading by example, being a role model for positive behavior by being

expressive and authentic, and provide opportunities that allow followers to develop skill and autonomy (Ilies et al., 2005).

### **Work Empowerment**

Empowerment contributes to an individual's sense of worth as it is the process of enabling and encouraging others to complete a certain task (Kane-Urrabazo, 2006). These employees who feel empowered have increased innovation, creativity, and success in completing the required tasks (Spreitzer, 1995). When a manager includes their employee to collaborate on problem-solving situations, the employee can feel work empowerment (Kane-Urrabazo, 2006). Feeling empowerment allows individuals to work effectively as it increases their perception of the organization's value (Liu et al., 2007). By strengthening an individual's sense of effectiveness in the company (Liu et al., 2007), motivation, productivity, and effectiveness may be affected in positive ways (Umiker, 1992). Workplace empowerment strategies have resulted in higher job satisfaction, higher work engagement, lower turnover rates (Boamah & Laschinger, 2015).

### **Work Engagement**

Work engagement can be defined as the connection of physical, cognitive, and emotional aspects with an individual and their role in their workplace (Kahn, 1990) where the focus is on the organization's goals (Macey et al., 2009). This type of work is fulfilling with feelings of high level of energy, mental resilience, high effort and time, enthusiasm throughout the pursuit, and being so engrossed in their work (Boamah & Laschinger, 2015). Work engagement is significant in understanding turnover rates, PWB, work performance, and innovative behavior (Svensson et al., 2021). Engagement is the employee's attachment and personality to their work roles (Kahn, 1990) and their psychological presence in that role (Rothbard & Patil, 2011). Individuals who are

engaged with their work show vigor, dedication, and absorption in their work position (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) and differ from job satisfaction through those elements (Bakker, 2011). Acquiring work engagement from their employees leads to positive outcomes: desirable performance, satisfaction in clients, motivation, accommodating and reactive to circumstances, and are more creative (Rothbard & Patil, 2011). There are four explanations that link work engagement and performance: positive emotions like gratitude and enthusiasm, better health that allows them to dedicate their time for better work, creating their own job and personal resources, and engaging in others (Bakker, 2011). It was additionally noted that as collaborations between coworkers are a necessary component of the workplace, team performances can be improved through engaging in one another and their environment (Bakker, 2011). Job resources have also been seen to improve performance as it pertains to social support from those in the workplace whether they are coworkers or managers, feedback for their performance, skill variety, and autonomy (Bakker, 2011). While engaged employees are dedicated to their work, employers should provide employees with plenty of breaks and resources to deviate from burnout, depletion, or distractions to keep motivations and productivity at a consistently high rate (Rothbard & Patil, 2011). Having higher rates of work engagement among employees constitutes higher occupational well-being in employees and employers (Bakker, 2011).

### **Sense of Community**

Sense of community is defined as a physical or emotional environment where an individual can experience a sense of belonging through the social aspects of the community (Sarason, 1974). It is an important concept as it relates to an individual's quality of life (Warner & Dixon, 2011; Warner et al., 2013); subjective well-being was rated higher (Davidson & Cotter, 1991), delinquency rates and drug use were lower (Battistich & Hom, 1997), participation within

the overall community increased (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990), loneliness was reported less (Pretty et al., 1994), and the resilience of an individual may be enhanced (Battistich & Hom, 1997). SOC can enhance an individual's confidence, feelings of entitlement, and in-group loyalty where the community can provide acceptance and support (McMillan, 1996; Sarason, 1974). With the process of committing to the group, group members have faith in each other to have their needs and group goals met (Chavis et al., 1986). Through commitment, satisfaction, and other outcomes, the sport experience can influence an individual's sense of community (e.g., Green & Chalip, 2004; Warner & Dixon, 2011; Warner et al., 2013). Additionally, SOC has been able to clarify sport organization's relational processes (Warner et al., 2013). Regarding gender differences, the SOC for men came from the support of their coworkers, whereas the SOC for women came from the support of upper management (Pretty & McCarthy, 1991). This supports Lambert and Hopkins' (1995) study of SOC in the workplace as informal support benefits men's SOC and formal support benefits women's SOC.

SOC consists of multilevel factors of determinants: 1) individual characteristics, 2) job characteristics, 3) leadership characteristics, 4) subgroup characteristics, 5) organizational characteristics, and 6) extra-organizational characteristics (Klein & D'Aunno, 1986). Individual characteristics explain that the more comparable the individuals of a group is, the more likely they will be perceived as a community. Characteristics include time worked at the company which shows the satisfaction the individual has for that company, having a favorable status, and holding high responsibility jobs. There are five defining characteristics in a job: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and provided feedback (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Additionally, if an employee perceives their job as enjoyable, they are more likely to identify with that company and place value on that community (Klein & D'Aunno, 1986). Leadership

characteristics are molded from managerial positions that are supportive and inclusive to encourage homogeneous environments (House, 1981). They are the opportunities, formal and informal, that guide the community (Warner & Dixon, 2011). Subgroup characteristics refer to the workgroups, task groups, or divisions that can influence an individual's involvement through feelings of appreciation (Klein & D'Aunno, 1986). The tasks that are implemented in the company can influence an individual's awareness of how they fit into their roles (e.g., Cummings, 1978; Hackman, 1983). As members of the group continue to work together over time, loyalty and understanding of each other increase and affect the sense of community positively (Klein & D'Aunno, 1986). Organizational characteristics are practices that shape individuals' sense of community such as participation programs (e.g., Klein & D'Aunno, 1986; Lawler & Mohrman, 1983). Larger companies have felt challenges to inspire employees and promote loyalty and increase commitment (Klein & D'Aunno, 1986). The extra-organizational characteristics are the company's created environment and the effects it has on their community within (Klein & D'Aunno, 1986).

### **Collegiate Sporting Activities**

More recently, research on the sense of community among athletes has increased (Warner et al., 2013). SOC can be seen in recreational and elite athletes at the collegiate level through the participation in club or varsity sports (Warner et al., 2012). Overall, the environment that sport fosters is a way for individuals to create some type of community (Schimmel, 2006). Sport represents "one of the few remaining social institutions that foster a sense of community in our society" (Warner & Dixon, 2016, p. 49). Additionally, being an athlete on a sports team builds strong community relationships in the team as there is a shared interest in sport competition (Schimmel, 2006) and influences from every player and the overall sport community (Warner et

al., 2012). Both the club and varsity teams offer leadership positions that cultivate purpose and accountability to build on the sense of community where their efforts can make a difference and promote loyalty (Warner et al., 2012). SOC has advantageously created an atmosphere that allows for retention, continued participation, increased performance outcomes, and improvements in well-being (Kellett & Warner, 2010). On the other hand, SOC has also looked through the experiences of referees by understanding the concepts in sport to create environments that increase the level of retention (e.g., Kellett & Warner, 2011). In addition, universities have used sports, especially football, as a way to elevate the SOC on campus through participation as students connect over common interests and through fans as they come together in an environment watching a game of common interest (e.g., Clopton, 2009; Warner & Dixon, 2011).

### **Sense of Community in Employees**

A sense of community has the potential to benefit both the individual and its institution (Warner et al., 2012, 2013). While coworkers spend most of their time at their workplace, they are often invited to meet outside for sporting events. Watching games with coworkers is considered a socialization process as shared interests increase the level of bonding and camaraderie (Oja et al., 2018). However, the study found that those who were not a part of the ritual had a hard time fitting in with the rest of the group. As one of the ways a sense of community is built is through shared purpose and identity; volunteers can experience a sense of community through this definition (Green & Chalip, 2004). Sport volunteers are motivated to help their sport, their community improve, or to socialize and interact with other volunteers (Coyne & Coyne, 2001). With their common interest and building friendships through volunteerism, they begin to feel a sense of belonging due to the comfortability of the group

(Kerwin et al., 2015). In a study on volunteers at professional golf events, volunteers reported multiple reasons for their enjoyment: love of golf, love of camaraderie, community spirit, meeting interesting people, love for beneficiary charity, getting to see and sometimes meet celebrities, a conversational piece to bring home, a way to relieve boredom at home, and helping a friend out (Coyne & Coyne, 2001). Bringing the positive emotions felt for the love of golf, community spirit, and a way to relieve boredom, may be essential in cultivating a healthy workplace environment for employees in a non-sport organization.

### **Social Cognitive Theory**

“Social cognitive theory (SCT) is a comprehensive theory of human behavior that has proven useful in studies of health behavior” (Petosa et al., 2003, p. 303). The two primary constructs of SCT are self-efficacy and outcome expectations (Young et al., 2014) where it involves the interaction of three influences: personal, behavioral, and social or environmental factors (Bandura, 1997). These influences affect the behaviors of self-efficacy by creating behaviors for achievement like task choice, effort, and persistence (Schunk & Pajares, 2009). SCT can play a role for the initiation and the maintenance of healthy behaviors as behavioral changes are made by the individual’s sense of control (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). Therefore, an individual’s behavior and cognitive functions can dictate future behaviors (Baranowski et al., 2002) as they learn by observation of their environment, taking advantage of self-regulation strategies, and analyzing behaviors (Bandura, 1986; Baranowski et al., 2002). Self-efficacy can be determined from four sources: mastery experiences like personal accomplishment, vicarious experiences by social comparison of a similar individual, social or verbal persuasion that can speak reassurance, and physiological indexes like emotional arousal so the individual does not perceive a situation as threatening (Bandura, 1997; Luszczynska &

Schwarzer, 2005). As self-efficacy pertains to personal goals, morals, and standards, behaviors of an individual can be monitored through their performance (Hawley et al., 2010). SCT claims that learning occurs by actively doing or vicariously through observation (Bandura, 1977) where the levels of SCT influences motivation by enhancing or impeding (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). Through self-efficacy, one can resist temptation, cope with stress, and find resources to meet set demands as it differs from unrealistic optimism through their lens of experience (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). Luszczynska and Schwarzer (2005) further explains three areas of outcome consequences in self-efficacy: physical outcome expectations, social outcome expectancies, and self-evaluative outcome expectations. Physical outcomes are the symptoms an individual can experience from the behavior change, social outcomes are the responses of society like behaviors that can be seen from friends and family, and lastly, self-evaluative outcomes are the internal feelings and standards from the initial behavior change (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). The outcome expectation that is a construct to SCT is the predictable event that the specific behavior will lead to a valuable outcome (Petosa et al., 2003).

The US Surgeon General clarified that the use of SCT can organize, understand, and promote healthy behaviors (Anderson et al., 2006). Social support, self-efficacy, and realistic outcome expectations are all essential behaviors in the SCT model to maintain an active, healthy lifestyle (Anderson et al., 2006) where self-regulation becomes the focus (Bandura, 1997). In the social cognitive model of physical activity, self-efficacy can determine if an individual acquires the recommended level of physical activity to maintain a healthy lifestyle (Anderson et al., 2006); where self-efficacy is the belief and the ability of the individual to lead that active life (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy through the lens of physical activity can be differentiated by many variables: age, gender, overall health, environmental variables, access to exercise facilities,

and social support (from family and friends, exercise partners, or physical trainers) that encourages physical activity in a positive way (Anderson et al., 2006; Bandura, 1997). Individuals who lack self-regulation skills typically view vigorous activities as a negative concept as exercise is not their personal identity and therefore, have low outcome expectancy values (Petosa et al., 2003). However, difficulties may arise in order to achieve an active lifestyle; the individual may experience the lack of opportunities to be active like being surrounded in an area where physical activity is absent within schools, families, or communities (Bandura, 2004). While those who obtain moderate physical activity possess basic motor skills that are quickly learned, those with low activity levels depend on their ability to plan and set goals through evaluation (Bandura, 1997). The key for an individual to alter their health behavior comes from a social cognitive method of regulation (Bandura, 1997) that Anderson et al. (2006) found to be the most influential variable in their study. Within SCT, identifying specific goals are encouraged to motivate those who are unmotivated (Bandura, 1997), called goal specificity (Bandura, 1986). When goals are specific or challenging, performance levels are higher as individuals can understand what constitutes effective performance through self-regulation (Latham & Locke, 1991). By using SCT, behaviors can be examined to encourage the maintenance of an active and healthy lifestyle. Providing goals to increase physical activity in the workplace can motivate those who typically do not engage in those activities through social support.

### **Well-Being Through Social Cognitive Theory**

The social cognitive view assesses core variables like self-efficacy and set goals that link to personality traits that lead to job satisfaction where individuals can experience positive emotions (Lent & Brown, 2006). This view suggests that those who experience positive

emotions are likely to be experiencing satisfaction at work. The second component to this view suggests that relevant goal setting and striving to make progress towards these goals can influence well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The third component relates to one's self-efficacy that they are able to perform and reach such goals (Duffy & Lent, 2009). The social cognitive model for work satisfaction is based on seven variables: "(a) work satisfaction, (b) overall life satisfaction, (c) personality and affective traits, (d) goal-directed activity, (e) self-efficacy, (f) work conditions and outcomes, and (g) goal and efficacy-relevant environmental supports and obstacles" (Lent & Brown, 2008, p. 11). Through outcome expectations from goal setting such as valued goals and commitment to achieve those goals support well-being (Lent & Brown, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Self-efficacy and favorable working conditions or outcomes can be the source of work satisfaction (Lent & Brown, 2008). While Lent and Brown (2008) explain the causation of work dissatisfaction, individuals can be assisted through different interventions of the social cognitive model: (a) setting attainable goals that are clear and valued, and yet challenging, (b) finding ways to move towards fulfillment through valued work outcomes or nonwork projects, (c) identifying favorable coping methods to counter unfavorable work conditions, (d) cultivating positive self-efficacy beliefs, and (e) discover resources to maximize work skills to reach goals. While SCT shows significance in self-efficacy and self-regulation, it acknowledges and makes transparent the sources that affect an individual's work satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Lent & Brown, 2008).

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) can help explain work satisfaction and general well-being through the lens of a social cognitively based approach (Lent & Brown, 2008). Within life satisfaction, job satisfaction is a component in overall SWB (Heller et al., 2004). This model indicates that the satisfaction felt in both work and life correlates and influences each

other (Lent & Brown, 2008). This correlation becomes stronger when work is a part of the individual's central life identity and domain (Lent & Brown, 2008). As individuals feel a sense of progress toward their personal goals, well-being can be established as positive emotions arise through the completion of self-efficacy and goal setting, which have been seen throughout different longitudinal studies (e.g., Brunstein, 1993; Elliott & Sheldon, 1997). Personality and affective traits are presumed to be related to job and life satisfaction through this model by cognitive, affective, behavioral, and social paths (Lent & Brown, 2008). Research has shown that job and life satisfaction are associated with positive and negative affect (e.g., Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000). Negative affect or neuroticism influences work satisfaction by affecting an individual's self-efficacy by viewing their abilities as unfavorable (Lent & Brown, 2008). Goal setting offers individuals a way to participate in activities that allow for social support, which in turn provides structure and meaning in their lives and increases life satisfaction (Lent & Brown, 2008). Additionally, goals can provide a sense of purpose and direction that ultimately leads to a more optimistic well-being (Elliott & Sheldon, 1997; Ryan & Deci, 2001). The stronger self-efficacy beliefs an individual has allows them to possess expectations that are optimistic and can determine outcome expectations (Lent & Brown, 2008).

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Overview**

The primary aim of this research was to understand people's meaning of their lived experiences of golf and how well-being is occurred by constructivism/interpretivism. The ontology of this constructivism/interpretivism paradigm was the relativist view as their view of the world was shaped differently through their personal experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The subjective/transactional epistemology was utilized in this study as the researcher and participants co-constructed meaning of their experience while entering the study with the researcher's preconceived experiences. The specific phenomenon of interest were the influences of golf on the well-being of business professionals. A phenomenological methodology was applicable to this study as it aimed to discover the meanings of the individual's lived experiences through discussions and by challenging their norms (Van Manen, 1990). As they experienced the phenomenon of well-being through playing golf, a phenomenological study explored the common characteristics of the participant's lived experiences. This study explored and discovered "commonalities across participants to see how lived experiences relate to a phenomenon of interest" (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 50) as it is almost impossible to avoid prior knowledge of a phenomenon (Laverty, 2003).

#### **Methods**

Semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1996) were utilized in this study to explore and understand how golf influences the well-being of business professionals. The interview allowed individual's to express their experience of the phenomenon of the effects of golf on their

workplace and overall well-being. The interviews consisted of seven business professionals and occurred until data saturation was met (i.e., deep understanding achieved; Creswell & Clark, 2017). Data saturation was established when the contributions of understanding the effects of golf declined, and codes could be gathered in the interviews. It is recommended to interview those who have experienced this phenomenon from 5-25 different participants (Polkinghorne, 1989).

### **Participants**

Purposeful sampling was used to understand a specific population of individuals (i.e., business professionals who engaged in golf; Jones, 2015). These participants were purposefully selected as they met two certain criteria. The first criteria is being a business professional, while the second criteria ensured they played golf with either their coworkers or clients. Additional criteria were individuals 18 years of age or older.

Seven participants were interviewed and within the seven participants, three were insiders as they were previously known to the researcher and four were outsiders as they were not known to the researcher. While interviewing outsiders reduces favoritism in the process of data collection and analyzing, interviewing insiders allows for deeper data depth and building rapport (Taylor, 2011). The age of the participants ranged from 23-68 years, with the average being 49.7 years. Of the seven participants, six were male and one was female, which shows the deficiency of females of the workplace in golf participation. Within the participants, three work in the business sector such as finance and accounting, three works in the golf business, and one works in the electronic data business. The participation of golf ranged from two to over fifty years which allows for a wider range of data through different experiences. The diversity of working

environments and sectors allow for a wide perspective of a phenomenon that is seen in different workplace settings that are used in phenomenology methodology (Creswell, 2013).

### **Procedure**

The author received Institutional Review Board approval and acquired verbal consent prior to the semi-structured interviews. Data were collected in the summer of 2021. Participants were then asked questions about their experiences playing golf and its effect on their overall and workplace well-being via Zoom video conferencing or in-person. A set of established questions were asked to initiate deeper conversations between the interviewer and the participant with other follow-up questions. Questions will be open-ended to allow the participants to expand upon their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The interview ranged from 40- 70 minutes. Audio of the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure the collection of thorough and quality data (Kvale, 1996). During the transcription, pseudonyms were assigned to each participant to ensure confidentiality as personal identifiers were removed.

### **Instrument**

The semi-structured interviews consisted of an interview guide with thematic questions that enabled discussions of their personal experience of their well-being through golf (Kvale, 1996). Each interviews consisted of demographic information questions of the participant which then lead to open-ended questions regarding their experiences of golf and their perception of their well-being. These research question guides included: (a) Why do you like playing golf?, (b) Can you talk about the emotions the game of golf brings you?, (c) How have you seen golf affect you in either your office, relationships, or personally?, (d) How has golf affected your physical and mental health?, and (e) What are your thoughts on the golf community? These questions

strived to create meaning and understanding of their experiences and maintain relevance to PWB, SWB, and SCT by enabling engagement.

### **Researcher Positionality**

Author One's previous experience in sport is a significant factor to this study (Rich & Misener, 2017). A reflexive methodological practice was utilized to consider the status of the community of Author One to gain an in-depth understanding of their identities (Rich & Misener, 2017). Author One was a former Division I golfer and a current casual golfer that have experienced the effects of golf in different ways. While competitive golf and casual golf consists of some differences, there are mainly similarities in the effects of golf and well-being. Author One is also a volunteer at a golf course who can understand how often some business professions come to play golf with their coworkers or clients. This enables the co-constructing of meanings and interpretivism as the participant's experiences are relatable. The status of being a golfer helps conversation flow, credibility, and trustworthiness as they see similarities with Author One and can influence the research by their response and results. Due to previous experience within the golf industry, interpretation of the participant's experiences can be better understood, known as hermeneutic phenomenology (Van Manen, 1990). Additionally, with Author One's understanding and experience of the game, there is good insight on how participants experience the game.

### **Data Analysis**

To analyze the findings in the data, themes and codes were established and a thematic analysis procedure was utilized (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is "a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and

interprets various aspects of the research topic” (2006, p. 79). The process of thematic analysis is not a linear progression (one step to another), but a recursive method (revisiting codes and techniques) to interpret the data with as much accuracy. The framework of thematic analysis is a recursive process: a) becoming familiar with the data, b) generating initial codes, c) searching for themes, d) reviewing themes, e) defining and naming themes, f) producing the report and the quotes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). From the audio recordings of the interviews, the researcher will review the transcriptions multiple times to become familiar with the data and transcription notes will initially be made to establish codes. Once the codes were reviewed, themes were created to reflect those codes. Theme will be created to align with the literature and research questions. The process of analyzing the data and establishing codes in these various processes were repeated multiple times to ensure the building of codes and themes. By thoroughly repeating the process, specific themes were defined to reflect the outcome of the data. Quotes were then taken from the transcripts to create better understandings the created themes.

### **Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is established through four criteria: credibility (i.e., background of Author One), transferability (i.e., while experiences are unique to individuals, the phenomenon may be utilized and compared to broader groups), dependability (i.e., a method section that allows for the study to be replicated), and confirmability (i.e., results and ideas come from the participant’s experiences; Shenton, 2014). Credibility is established as Author One has knowledge of golf and has experienced the influences of golf on well-being. While it was not the traditional workplace environment, teammates are similar to coworkers and the coach similar to a boss. Credibility also exists as it highlights the author’s experience in the golf industry between playing at the Division I level and volunteering at the golf course. Author One’s personal voice

during the interviews ‘further informs the credibility and trustworthiness of the data analysis’ (Kerwin & Hoerber, 2015, p. 500). Transferability exists in this study as it can be compared to other sport, leisure, or recreational activities that are both individual and group setting. By providing quotations in the findings that explain the created themes where they “allow readers to have a proper understanding of it [the data], thereby enabling them to compare the instances of the phenomenon described in the research report with those that they have seen emerge in their situations” (Shenton, 2004, p. 70). With the inclusion of a specific method section, dependability is formed in this study to offer other researchers the ability for this study to be replicated. Confirmability exists as the results rely on the participants experiences of golf and how well-being can occur. Additionally, the inclusion of the study’s limitations and methods section, it allows for scrutinization. Once the transcriptions were completed after each interview, the individual’s transcription and selected quotations of the interviews were sent back to them to review. The participants collectively approved of their transcriptions and quotations to build trustworthiness with the participants.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS

#### **Findings**

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand how the participation of golf influences an individual's well-being and how organizations could incorporate golf activities in their management practices to improve the workplace environment. The participants' experiences of physical, mental, and workplace well-being were similar due to the participation of golf. Playing golf improved relationships through trust and community, decompression from the stressors of their workplace or personal lives and allowed for self-efficacy. Three themes were created from the interviews: improved relationships, stress reliever, and success through self-efficacy. The theme of improved relationships allowed golfers to communicate on a personal level that allowed them to get to know each other deeper. The decompression of stressors allowed golfers to experience happiness and peace in their personal lives and in the workplace as it gave them a environment where they could be outside in nature and out of the office. The last theme of success through self-efficacy as it opened doors for new opportunities with relationships and jobs. While participants engaged in other sport, leisure, or recreational activities such as basketball, hunting, fishing, mountain biking, and kayaking, the participants relied mostly on the effects of golf to relieve stress by playing or going to the driving range. The participants collectively experienced physical and mental well-being as golf provided a way to be outside, walk, and be away from the office while cultivating relationships with their clients or coworkers by getting to know them outside of the workplace. Participants understood the importance of playing golf in their lives to improve the workplace environment and their lives.

Nine holes of golf takes on average two and a half hours to play, and 18 holes takes on average five hours to play. Although golf is considered as an expensive sport, participants collectively experienced positive effects of golf that improved all aspects of the workplace. Participant 1 broadly encapsulated their experiences by noting the “minimal expense of playing golf has more than paid for itself due to the increase in relations with clients and other businesses that I have acquired by play with people on the golf course.” Therefore, the participants made goals to include golf in their busy schedule whether it was to play alone or with a coworker or client.

### **Improved Relationships**

The participants experienced an improvement in relationships with their clients and coworkers through the participation of golf. Since playing golf takes between two to five hours, conversation could flow in a non-threatening manner with the opportunity to have fun and go wherever the conversation lead. Golf gave business professionals the opportunity to build rapport as they connected on a personal level to establish a deeper connection outside of the work environment. Rapport was built through conversations, a common ground for their passion of golf, and similar experiences they have lived through as they are usually in the same industry or company. Participant 3 experienced that golf was a way to build rapport that ultimately helped the workplace environment as they showed loyalty to the company and their coworkers. Working in managerial positions, there were two ways for managers to convince others to do a specific job: force them or you can convince them it is a good idea. With Participant 3’s unpaid volunteers having to come out during tournament days at five o'clock in the morning, a good relationship is needed for these volunteers to eagerly work at that time. Taking volunteers out to play a round of golf cultivated a friendly relationship between the boss and the employee that is also brought to the workplace and increases efficiency. Golf provided an environment that is not

in the office or the boardroom that created intimate experiences and relationships. Although some of these participants are the boss, coworkers, or clients, they consider the people they play golf with a close friend. Having friends is essential to feeling happiness through the laughter that are filled within conversations and the support of each other throughout their lives. This ultimately improves the satisfaction of the workplace.

Casual conversations were experienced in the duration of the golf round that allowed people to get to know personalities and life stories. Participant 2 described their experience as: “golf as a pathway to allow these unknown clients to become friends.” Participants experienced improved working relationships with coworkers as the golf course allows conversations about workplace issues and gives them an opportunity to vent about occurring issues on the company’s day-to-day operations that increases bonding and relationships. Being able to bring work-related issues on the course gives the workers an opportunity to talk and find ways to fix a problem in a relaxing environment. There were no feelings of pressure from upper-management or the stressful work environment. This allowed individuals and their coworkers to properly clear their mind and improve workplace issues without cloudy judgements or in anger. On top of building current relationships, participants experienced the expansion of their relationships through meeting new people in the golf community as golf can be played in a group of four. Through the participation of leagues, these participants have met people from the company who they normally do not work with or have increased their client-base from these interactions.

There is a personal aspect to playing golf with clients and coworkers as they get the chance to tell stories on a more intimate, social level of a relationship that the normal business environment does not allow for. These participants in managerial positions reported being able to assess their workers and put them in the right positions and understand how people conduct

themselves outside the office, while participants who play with their clients are able to assess personalities to see if they are compatible to do business with as it increases a sense of what somebody is really like outside of work. By playing golf, Participant 4 has “the opportunity to spend more time with another person and understand what makes them tick, understand their likes and dislikes, how they react and find ways you can work better together. Especially in business, there is more success if you're able to build good bonds with people.” By building relationships and earning support from coworkers and bosses, it creates a workplace environment that works together as a unit that makes them stronger and more efficient.

Meaningful relationships can be built whether it is a work relationship, client, customer, coworker, or friend as they get to know people on a personal level while being outdoors and having fun. There is an opportunity for participants to experience how someone reacts to distress and enjoyment that is not covered by a false personality created for the workplace. The participants collectively experienced meeting new people through golf that have benefitted their personal lives or the workplace. Participants in managerial positions have recognized the importance of developing relationships as it increases support where they can rely on their workers. On days the manager needs their volunteers for extra help, they gladly lent a hand and are happy to help even if it is an early wake-up call because they have a enjoyable time due to the bond of friendship that was cultivated during golf rounds. As these volunteers are friends with one another due to the relationships that were built from playing the golf course, they are able to have fun at work as it becomes a more social compared to the superficial relationships seen in a typical workplace. The close bond that was improved through golf not only improves well-being in workplace setting, but also personally. These relationships affect individuals personally as they diverge from loneliness and enter a community. Ultimately, these created

relationships were a benefit that everyone could enjoy as it affects the individual's perception of their workplace satisfaction. Having employees satisfied with their workplace can improve efficiency and loyalty as they desire to see positive outcomes from the company and strive toward that goal. Participant 3 utilizes golf as a way to connect with their workers in a way that builds friendship and explained that "people who do not golf are missing out and they do not realize what they are missing out on." Golf is a unique sport that allows people of all ages to be involved, while being able to deepen current relationships and establish new relationships that can potentially contribute to the individual's well-being. Being able to consistently see someone on the golf course gives more opportunities to engage in each other's lives by spending time to create those bonds.

### ***Trust Building***

Golf was experienced as a game of honor that comes with trust and integrity. Through this game, participants experienced being able to understand an individual's personality by the way they play golf. It builds a relationship by being able to understand who people are, if they play by the rules or not. Participant 5 experienced "Golf itself as a very trusting, honor-based system of sport that builds trust. It's not a poker game where you're trying to bluff someone." Building trust from a sport that inherently offers that opportunity can quickly uncover an individual's personality to pursue business and improve relationships. Participant 6 understood the importance of golf in a similar way as "people know when they click and they want to do business with somebody. It is an opportunity to play golf with another person. I have played with people that I realized after playing that I would never wanted to do business with them. There are things that you watch about somebody that makes you think, "if they're doing that here, then where else are they doing it?" Catching a player announce the wrong score repetitively is an indicator of a cheater. This

makes it hard to do business with someone who is willing to cheat when there is nothing on the line. Being able to recognize another person's personality before being in business with them is an essential advantage. Participant 6 explained that "with investing as an example, it is a business of integrity. You cannot have people running investment products that have no integrity. You want to know that you are doing business with somebody that you can trust and that the people behind them are trustworthy as well. It is a great petri dish for understanding who people are and find what is important to them." Therefore, figuring out the integrity of a client or coworker is critical in the business environment for creating better well-being. Through the hours that are spent playing golf, individuals can experience another's true self as it brings out the personalities of people. On the other hand, understanding personalities outside the workplace gives people a chance to connect on a deeper level that goes beyond knowing their job title and their marital status.

Participant 5 plays golf with their coworkers and clients to have conversations similar to being in a car. It is a similar environment as being in a car since eye contact is not always necessary; it is not a serious situation because of the environment of golf. The environment of golf enables taking business or other work outside to create a more relaxed feeling. Therefore, building that trust can ultimately bring in more money as they are more inclined to do business and build a relationship with someone they can trust. Participant 5 explained that in the golf industry, "when you're talking about a golf account, you are able to prove yourself, and these clients can trust you a little bit more." Being able to prove who you are can be essentially to business as a way to build trust. Having trust was the baseline of building relationships where coworkers and clients can feel support and can create well-being within the workplace and well-being in personal lives. Similarly, Participant 6 sees golf as a vehicle because of the time spent

during the round to build the relationship. Being on the golf course, whether they are walking or riding in a cart, that almost forces people to make conversation and get to know one another. Since business professionals are busy with work, a passion to play golf allows them to find time to get to know someone out of the office and do something they both enjoy that results in a better relationship.

A passion for golf is an advantage because everyone is busy with other hobbies and being with family. When golf becomes the shared hobby, those people have the advantage of improving relationships and boost the quality of workplace environment. Therefore, golf is a way to make friends that can improve workplace environments. Participants experienced the improvement of trustworthiness and showed their hardworking side by seeing their personal side outside of work. Within the company, Participant 4 experienced distrust as people are willing to do anything to climb the corporate ladder. By playing golf, trust and care can be established through golf's camaraderie-type atmosphere to rely on, let your guard down, and support one another in the workplace. Participant 5 experienced golf as a different way of expanding the office. Golf is the area to build a relationship and trust that cannot be deeply made in the office or the boardroom. Contracts in businesses are not done in the office; it is only a place to sign the papers. The relationships that can be build due to playing golf together gives an advantage to the competitors of the industry.

### ***Community***

Golf is a game that offered a sense of community to all people. The participants agreed that the game of golf is about community and bring more people into the community. Participant 6 experienced golf and golf leagues as a community of professionals who support one another, even with differentiating work fields. The common thread that runs between these golfers is that

they love to golf. This participant also experienced golf as the one saving grace throughout COVID-19 because it provided community as it stayed opened during the global pandemic. It was an environment that allowed players to feel safe and still maintain interaction with others. Participant 1 experiences golf as a relational sport that is similar to business. By playing a sport where conversation flows for three to five hours, there is common ground and community that is less threatening than the typical workplace environment. Participant 4 experiences golf as a competition atmosphere where the players are not necessarily rooting against you and is able to feel supported by their peers. Business professionals are able to forget about work on the course and be competitive in a sport setting that does not deteriorate workplace relationships, but rather strengthen the bond. Golf is sport that is played by all ages and different generations. However, participants strive to put themselves in the same atmosphere and environment to have fun and react with their peers. These participants make an effort to be a part of everybody's lives through golf without standing out in order to improve community-based atmosphere.

The golf community inherently has a family-like atmosphere where people have similarities in passion. Participant 5 experiences the golf community as an atmosphere that is similar to a football team as individuals instantly become a part of a golf family because they have something in common to base a relationship off that can eventually expand in the future. These relationships are able to form because when individuals are able to talk golf, they can bond from common ground by growing relationships based off of something that is already established. This participant witnessed the golf community outside of the golf course because wearing golf brands and clothing automatically includes the individual in the golf community because people recognize unique brands such as Scotty Cameron, Travis Matthews, and Titleist. Participants experienced the feeling of friendship when you find out they are also a golfer, before

they get to know each other. Being in a friendly community, there is a lot of camaraderie being able to play with friends, family, and building network. Participants experienced entertainment and joy through the camaraderie as they have fun joking around when a bad shot is hit. By getting to get to know someone better, participant 6 experiences relational benefits, the opportunity to do business with them down the road, and have better workplace relationships and environments. Therefore, joining a league such as a Men's or a Women's Club to become a part of a community is recommended as it gives an excuse to play golf. This subtly forces the individual to seek a community that can help the individual grow in many different ways. Being in a Men's or a Women's Club means playing in their league once a week where relationships and communities can be built. As these players continue to play throughout the year, meaningful friendships are seen within the community as they are familiar with each other's lives.

Although private country clubs and public golf courses offer a variety of ways to be in a community, both communities allow the creation of friendships on the golf course that expands into the personal life. While golf is the hook to being at the course, it is the relationships that are built that retains players. However, participant 7 experiences the golf community that has changed from the past. It is perceived that the golfers nowadays do not care about the golf courses or care about the people that are there due to people's self-centered personalities. The community of public golf has changed demographics that allow all people to enjoy the benefits of golf while bringing in cases of beer and big stereos that have changed to true community of golf. While the atmosphere has shifted due to the demographic, golf is still an activity that builds relationships and improves well-being while having fun.

## **Stress Reliever**

Golfer offers a way for participants to decompress from life stress. When the golfer is walking instead of taking a cart, it allows time for individuals to reflect on their lives. It gives business professionals the opportunity to rest their mind and body and relax as they momentarily disconnect from their job responsibilities and focusing on relationship building. The responsibilities of a job can include reading documents, being on a screen, or being on the phone, and going to the golf course allows the disconnection and increases the opportunity to relax. Participants regularly experience being disconnected from their job responsibilities and social media as they put away their phones in the duration of their golf round. Many participants also experience peace and tranquility through golf. Participants look at golf as a relaxing sport that is filled with joy, happiness, and the occasional frustration when hitting a bad shot. It is a sport where people look forward to being outside in nature and look forward to playing again due to the enjoyment the game and the people in the group brings. Participants are exceptionally joyful when a shot is executed perfectly, making a long putt for birdie or par, or chipping in.

A participant explained that just an hour of the driving range to hit balls, chip, and putt allowed them to feel better and release built up tension that can affect workplace relationships; anger can be taken out on other people and is detrimental to the workplace environment. Having stress that brings negative emotions into the workplace can be detrimental to the workplace environment. Being able to understand the importance of finding a way to decompress is critical in improving the well-being of business professionals. With golf being an outdoor sport, participants experience enjoyment of the sunlight, mental calmness, and stress relief. Participants experience the pressure to stay busy and continue working, even when their work was completed due to the anticipation of the following day and the need to stay ahead. Being able to find

activities that allow business professionals to relax can increase motivation by knowing they do not have to sit around at work with nothing to do.

### ***Mental Well-Being***

The act of relieving stress was a component to improving mental well-being. Playing golf allows individuals to leave business at the office and get out to play golf that brings mental ease to improve their well-being. There are two ways to play golf: by yourself or with others.

Participant 5 experienced a meditative type of emotion when playing by themselves because due to the sport being individual and quiet. Playing golf as a single allows the individual to be alone and in their own thoughts without worrying about others. This creates a sense of peacefulness that is desired to feel calmness and happiness. Participants experience golf as a mental sport that requires critical thinking, while allowing time to be alone and think about anything on the mind.

It is an opportunity to be outside in nature and brings ease to the mind of these players. By playing a sport that takes many hours to play, participants experienced being able to disconnect from social media, which impacted their mental well-being. Participants saw social media as a platform that harmed their well-being; by getting outside and disengaging from toxic platforms, mental well-being and subjective well-being can be increased. By reducing social media engagement, individuals are able to find their center and be themselves without trying to mimic the misleading lifestyles of others. Additionally, golf is experienced in a way that increases creativity and works the other side of the brain. Golfers have the opportunity to shape different shots to execute their shots that creates the best outcome for their next shot. Golfers are required to think outside the box and be creative in the way they shape their shot such as hooking the ball or slicing the ball a certain amount, especially if the golfer is facing a difficult shot. The golf

course and the range is one of the healthiest places to be as it works both sides of the brain while getting the necessary physical activity to stay active and healthy.

Participant 6 experiences golf as a soothing environment since the “golf courses in the evening is one of the most beautiful places to be, due to the way the sunlight hits them,” and especially when they play by themselves as it provides the opportunity to play music out loud, be uninterrupted for the duration of the round, and clear their mind to decompress. The golf course provides a way for individuals to experience nature and its beauty while playing an enjoyable sport. Being able to decompress and take your mind off of the stressors can remotivate individuals and see better performances at the workplace while increasing the individual’s mental well-being. Happiness can occur from the joy that is experienced through golf, their playing partners, and the mental ease the game offers. Not only is golf great for business and friendly relationships, but it is also a great family sport. With golf giving individuals the opportunity to spend quality time with their playing partners, it is an opportunity to take the spouse and kids on the course. Participant 6 experiences mental well-being and satisfaction through the enjoyment of playing golf with their family. Even if the kids are young or do not know how to play, the quality time that can be found on the golf course will be significantly better than being on their phones at home. These kids are able to go out and swing clubs, experience nature, chase butterflies, or simply just walk the course. Having these kids comfortable in golfing environments can encourage them to be active in their future, relieve stress, and achieve mental well-being in a healthy way to increase happiness currently and understand how to find happiness later in life.

### *Physical Well-Being*

Stress can be relieved through physical activity. Participants experienced well-being through the physical activities that golf requires such as walking nine, 18, or even 36 holes. With the passion for golf, participants were able to find an outlet for exercise to stay in shape as you walk anywhere between three to six miles in 18 holes depending on the course and where the ball is hit. The participants see golf as a way to stay in shape, while doing things they enjoy and fostering new and old relationships. Additionally, Participant 2 experienced being able to get exercise by the swing the club, staying loose, and walking. This makes the individual feel like their health can improve and let go of any felt pressures by being able to walk on the course. Commonly, Participant 6 experienced needing “enough rest to do things that allow you to stay healthy, create healthy habits, keeping your body in good shape. The game of golf drives healthy habits because you need to be in good shape, especially to play at a higher level.” All of the participants recognize the importance of getting sufficient physical activity to improve their health and look to golf to get the exercise and sunlight for their personal well-being. Playing at a higher level on a competitive standpoint requires working out at the gym and eating health, which all contributes to the improvement in physical well-being. Golf affects the individual’s physical activity through cardio and mobility throughout their round that contribute to living healthy lifestyles. Participant 5 sees golf as a sport that has “intricate components that go into the physical side of golf as many people including athletes and business professionals wear health bands.” Health bands like Garmin, Apple Watch, and Fitbit can monitor an individual’s health by tracking their physical activity and sleep to make sure they are getting adequate amount of activity and rest. A participant experienced that because of golf, they became more aware of their eating habits and adapting to food sources that allowed them to maintain high energy for four to

five hours that help their physical and mental strength. The majority of participants prefer walking on the course compared to taking a cart because of the physical benefits playing golf offers as they perceive it to be healthier to be outside and walking. Getting enough physical activity is a necessary component to attaining SWB and PWB. Work commonly consists of sitting in front of a screen and being at the desk for the majority of the day. Being able to intake green/natural environment and exercise will benefit well-being.

### **Belief of Success Through Self-Efficacy**

Participants experience success in their relationships, workplace environments, and personal well-being through golf. It gives individuals the opportunity to open doors to multiple conversations that lead to friendship or a new client. Participants believed that success can be experienced and cultivated by playing golf through the processes of goal setting and building confidence. Through increasing connections and building new relationships, there is an increase for the opportunity to improve professional connections that can help further the individual's career paths and expand job opportunities. As golf provides the opportunity to meet new people and build relational bonds, connections to other people and other businesses can be expanded. Participant 4 was aware that "you never know who the next jobs coming from" so being on the golf course to network is a benefit as networking creates mutual benefit as long-term relationships are molded. Having access to powerful people and cultivating positive relationships with those people can increase the likelihood of success in the work life. Participant 2 experiences growth in their company because of golf as they are able to mend the relationships of current clients as well as being able to pick up new clients through the participation of golf and the community it offers. Each participant believes they can be successful through golf because of the opportunity to build rapport and improve relationships that cannot be done in the

office as you get to know the personal side of a player. Golf is recommended to their peers, coworkers, and other business professionals because if they are not golfing, they are missing out on the opportunity to grow personally, relationally, and business-wise. Participants experience building relationships that lead to successful business relationships on the golf course as it can build trust and be a part of a family-like community through leagues and the overall golf community.

As business professionals live busy lives, these participants make it a goal to block out time for golf. It is recognized that there no better place to find an outlet for their own personal well-being and professional well-being than being on the golf course. Golf is an outlet for business professionals to decompress their day while improving relationships with others. The participants see golf as a vehicle of success as it offers many benefits. It is a chance for business professionals to meet a new group of people that they would typically not meet if it was not for the golf environment. Participants collectively state that golf should be on everyone's schedule, no matter what industry they are in if they want to be successful. The chance to meet people is offered greatly on the golf course, compared to any other setting.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Discussion**

The findings of this study indicated that well-being was cultivated in business professionals by playing golf due to the benefits the sport offers. It is expected to support golf as a method to improve well-being. The findings also relate to POB as it provides human experiences of a positive mechanism (e.g., playing golf) to improve the workplace environment. Golf improves relationships as it builds trust and community within the golf group, allows individuals to decompress from the stressors of their workplace or personal lives, and inherently creates an environment that allows individuals to become successful through self-efficacy. Having the opportunity to interact with a client or coworker for four to five hours in an unfiltered and uninterrupted environment is an enjoyable benefit to relationships. Being able to decompress from life stress and being away from work are a necessary component to healthy living. The relational expansion and releasing stress contribute to SWB and PWB. The success that is built by golf through self-efficacy is a process within SCT that also contributes to well-being. Golf is an activity that is encouraged as it aids in well-being through a community that supports each other, building and creating relationships, being in nature, and giving time to yourself to decompress. Support from peers can increase the feeling of belonging in a community that brings satisfaction to the individual. Building those relationships can greatly affect the individual personally as it can make life more enjoyable and playing a game with someone you share the same passion with. Within the workplace, teamwork is an important aspect that makes them

more productive and trust that the work is being done correctly. Additionally, building professional connections can help further career paths and job opportunities.

### **Advancement to Subjective Well-Being**

SWB is seen to improve in individuals as they set goals and progress toward that goal, engages in activities they place value on, and interact with their support system (Lent, 2004). SWB can occur through the joy that is experienced by golf and the mental ease from its meditative type of emotion it offers. Golf is an activity where these participants made a goal to play at certain times of the week as it enabled a place to interact with a friendly community. As feelings of happiness requires work (Ryff & Singer, 2008), participants made sure to set time aside to participate in sport, leisure, or recreational activities. The participants felt that playing golf and going to the driving range was the best way to increase happiness as it was an opportunity to decompress and socialize. By building relationships in the golfing community, the participants experienced enjoyment as they saw improvement in their lifestyles through better relationships and healthier living. The shared passion and interests within the golf community increase the level of bonding, camaraderie, and socialization to belong to an environment where they belong. Social activities have positively impacted well-being (Lloyd & Auld, 2002) and the golfing environment offers social events that raises conversation and strength all types of relationships. Especially with golf being a four-person game, golfers can encounter higher interactions and communication compared to other sports, while creating and nurturing social relations. As SWB focuses on emotions like bodily pleasures and self-interests (Ryan & Deci, 2001) that is experienced by the individual (Campbell, 1976), these participants see golf as an outlook for enjoyment as they can exercise to release stress that can negatively affect physical health. Additionally, when stress is taken out in the workplace or on other coworkers,

relationships and the workplace environment can be jeopardized. Golf gives the individuals the opportunity to find happiness and increase SWB through the release of stress, clearing their mind, being outdoors, and interacting with others outside of the office setting.

As well-being is affected by green exercise (physical activity in natural environment; Rogerson et al., 2020), golf is a physical activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages to increase well-being. Consistent physical activity prevent conditions such as mental health (e.g., depression and anxiety), cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer, and maintaining a healthy weight (e.g., Durstine et al., 2013; Lahart et al., 2019; World Health Organization, 2010) that contributes to SWB by living a healthy lifestyle. It is a physical environment at the golf course as well as outside by wearing golfing brands and an emotional environment as they develop deeper relationships that improve their SWB. Relationships are built beyond the superficial business relationships that are formed in the office or boardroom as they engage in each other's lives. Having this sense of community is an important concept to an individual's quality of life (Warner & Dixon, 2011; Warner et al., 2013) as SOC increases SWB (Davidson & Cotter, 1991). It is important to understand the effects of community as it also increases performance outcomes, retention, continued participation (Kellett & Warner, 2010). As SOC can positively affect an individual's confidence and in-group loyalty because they feel accepted and supported (McMillan, 1996; Sarason, 1974), golf may be an essential activity to increase workplace well-being and SWB. Golf leagues provides the chance to build friendly atmospheres within the company and get to know people in the workplace they normally do not work around while strengthening current relationships. Building these workplace relationships can improve the workplace environment that allows workers to enjoy their coworkers and improve efficiency in the workplace by understanding the personalities and knowing what actions will provide the

best outcome. Creating an environment that is enjoyable to individuals is important to SWB as it affects their level of happiness.

### **Building on Psychological Well-Being**

Individuals who experience PWB are self-actualized, take responsibility, honest, and are focused on purposes outside of themselves (Maslow, 1965). While these participants are avid golfers, they encourage coworkers, clients, and friends to participate as it increases their overall well-being. They are selfless and want to see other people succeed, even they are in the same industry. These participants understand that golf is an activity that offers great benefits like physical activity, being in nature, and meeting new people. It is a pathway toward success, deep passion, commitment, and progress towards meaningful goals. Golf provides a lifestyle that can foster harmonious existence with others and aspire toward their “true self” (Rogers, 1961, 1964). With golf being a camaraderie-type atmosphere, golfers can trust the people they play with (coworkers and clients) and are able to let their guard down to further strengthen those relationships by showing who they truly are. The time spent alone on the golf course is the chance to authentically connect with the self. Participants “striving for perfection represents the realization of one’s true potential” (Ryff, 1995, p. 100) as they continue to play golf in order to reach their life goals and experience fulfillment. The participants understood that golf is a way to increase network and find peace to experience mental clarity.

The family-like community that golf cultivates is similar to a self-actualized person. Self-actualized people are empathetic, have a great capacity for love, have friendships that are deep and meaningful, and can closely identify with others (Maslow, 1965). Being on the golf course can cultivate that relationship and possibly mold an individual to becoming self-actualized. Playing golf brings in different emotions and creates meaningful relationships through

the hours of communication and bonding. The game of golf teaches lessons that can crossover to life and the office. Participants experiences golf as a game of emotions where mentally strong golfers that can control their emotions and their body that influences lifestyles. Additionally, golf affected participants in a competitive aspect where it taught life lessons to be confident, independent, create relationships with their surroundings, taking care of nature, and grow as an individual; these are all aspects of obtaining PWB. Through the participation of golf, the connections of physical, cognitive, and emotional aspects with an individual and their role in their workplace can be experienced (Kahn, 1990). By engaging and communicating on the golf course, the organization's goals may be a topic of discussion with processes to move toward those goals (Macey et al., 2009). These conversations lead to work that is fulfilling as they become filled with high energy and mental resilience.

### **Application of Social Cognitive Theory**

SCT suggests that by experiencing satisfaction at work, they are likely to experience positive emotions (Lent & Brown, 2006). Cultivating workplace relationships that affect satisfaction is a critical aspect in increasing well-being. The constructs of SCT include self-efficacy and outcome expectations (Young et al., 2014). How individuals perceive success affects how they view themselves. Playing golf is a mechanism that can be utilized to increase the chance of success that boosts confidence. The SCT model to maintain an active, healthy lifestyle requires social support, self-efficacy, and realistic outcome expectations behaviors (Anderson et al., 2006). The community that golf fosters is a supportive group of individuals due to the camaraderie and trust that is built on the golf course. Golf is also a game of challenges where the player is required to have a realistic outcome such as enjoying the nature or being able to exercise while playing a fun sport. Golf is an outlet to cope with stress and find resources to

meet demands of the workplace that relate to self-efficacy. Stress can be released by stepping away from the office for natural environment intake and get exercise. Resources can originate or build through conversations with others by being able to reset and clear the mind on the golf course. Since self-efficacy pertains to personal goals, morals, and standards, while being monitored through performance (Hawley et al., 2010), golf is a “game of honor” that teaches goals, morals, and standards. Due to golf’s positive effects, goals are set to play golf and set outside of the office, while taking steps to maintain health. This also pertains to their standards at work, golf, and health by setting goals to reach or maintain those standards. Golf inherently consists of being ethical as there are no rules official in a casual round of golf. Players are required to be honest and abide by its rules because it is the right thing to do.

This study showed that golf is a tool to increase interactions with others which created a better workplace environment. This view adds that well-being can be influenced by setting relevant goals and making efforts that progress toward that goal (Ryan & Deci, 2001). These relevant goals could include playing golf as a way to relieve stress and find inner peace while interacting with others. As self-efficacy is the belief and the ability that the individual is capable of living an active life (Bandura, 1997), the participants made efforts to meet new people and build relationships; they all made efforts and set goals to play golf a certain amount of time each week. These participants are engaged with their work as they show vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) and strive to make efforts to improve their workplace well-being and success. Within the social cognitive model, these participants show the steps to attain positive emotions: (a) setting attainable goals that are clear, valued, and challenging (e.g., setting times to play golf), (b) finding ways to move towards fulfillment through valued work outcomes or nonwork projects (e.g., building relationships and connections that affect the

workplace positively), (c) identifying coping methods to counter unfavorable work conditions (e.g., engaging in sport, leisure, or recreational activities), (d) cultivating positive self-efficacy beliefs (e.g., having control over their behavior and their social environment to believe they can succeed with those actions), and (e) discover resources to maximize work skills to reach goals (e.g., seeing golf as a way to reach goals due to its community and access to deeper relational benefits). Goals are set to play golf by joining leagues, using lunch breaks to play golf, or playing every weekend even during a busy week. Since playing golf aids in the sense of fulfillment through friendships that are built, participants strive to reach those goals. Coping methods to release work and life stress include golf, hunting, fishing, biking, and kayaking. However, golf was the main form of stress release due to its social aspect. These participants were able to engage in self-efficacy beliefs as they understood benefits of golf of physical exercise and decompression of stressors. Playing golf provides opportunities to attain resources that improve well-being in personal lives and in the workplace. Participants experience golf as a pathway to success as it offers the aspects for individuals to succeed in ways no other sport provides. Therefore, these participants make time for their golfing activity, including time for the driving range. Some participants not only make time for golf but uses their lunch break to play nine holes or go to the driving range to decompress and clear their mind. Other participants that are on salary-base makes sure their work is completed ahead of time for them to be able to leave the office and take care of themselves.

Playing golf provides an enjoyable experience that benefits SWB and PWB that is also in line with SCT. Being able to successfully cope with stress and creating alone time can clear the mind of negative thoughts that occurred throughout the day. By letting go of unnecessary thoughts and releasing stress, SWB is increased with the opportunity to experience PWB.

Providing an outlet that increases satisfaction is important to improving SWB and PWB. The golf course provides a meditative type of emotion that people need to experience to improve SWB and have a sense of fulfillment for PWB. The community of golf inherently provided a way for participants to experience support for each other and build meaning relationships that affect their personal lives along with their work lives.

### **Practical Implications**

The findings of this study support golf as a mechanism to improve relationships, relieve stress, and be successful in a way that improves well-being in business professionals. By understanding the positive effects of golf, individuals can understand how well-being can be increased in their lives. This study aimed to understand how business professionals experienced the effects of golf in their daily satisfaction with their life and in the workplace. Understanding how sport affects individuals and the general business is important in improving well-being as stress can be generated in the workplace. Additionally, getting along with coworkers and clients are an important component of business and personal well-being. With the encouragement of the participants for others to join golf activities, it shows that golf has affected them in a positive way. The relationships with coworkers and clients are significant affect the overall work experience and well-being by influencing functions, efficiency, and behavioral outcomes (Hamilton, 2007). Being able to cultivate good relationships with the surrounding environment is critical in order to obtain and maintain well-being in business professionals. Managers of all industries might consider giving out golf memberships to their employees to increase awareness on healthy living while encouraging employees to get to know each other in a way that promotes efficiency and happiness in the workplace. While giving away memberships may not be

attainable in all situations, partnering with a golf course to receive deals for the employees may be an option.

One component managers of companies and businesses might consider is to devise times to allow their employees to engage in sport, leisure, or recreational activities such as golf to increase their well-being that can also affect the well-being of the workplace environment. This could include longer lunch breaks or being able to leave work early. Having longer lunch breaks can relieve stress by knowing they do not have to rush playing golf or eating while working. Creating leagues for the company can increase better relationships in the office and increase efficiency and satisfaction. Leagues that promote physical activity can develop positive attachments to their organizations through camaraderie (Kim et al., 2013). Additionally, a manager that includes their employee to collaborate in different situations allows them to feel work empowerment (Kane-Urrabazo, 2006). Building the relationships between a manager and their employee could increase trust in the employees that increases the opportunity to collaborate in important workplace decisions which ultimately empowers the employee. Physical activity plays an important role in maintaining personal well-being as individuals need a certain amount of exercise each day. The physical component of golf allows individuals to achieve the recommended amount of physical activity (Sorbie et al., 2020). It is critical to understand how sport can be managed and implemented for non-sport organizations to experience well-being through sports as managers should take care of their employees and their well-being. While participation in physical activities decline with age (Barnes & Schoenborn, 2003; Bélanger et al., 2011), golf is a physical and mental sport where people of all ages can participate in. Golf challenges individuals in a way that brings out creativity and build relationships that people may not normally have the opportunity to do.

### **Limitations and Future Direction**

This study was not without limitations as some interviews were conducted over Zoom as COVID-19 prevented face-to-face interactions. Therefore, rapport was harder to build as it is not as personal being online compared to being in person. It cannot be assumed that all golfers in the workplace experience the same effects as the participants. Although the gathered participants and their results were conducted until data saturation was met, there was a lack of variety of industries of the business professionals. This study consisted of three participants from the business sector, three participants in the golf business, and one from the electronics sector. The lack of variety could skew results to make golf seem more favorable as they are the dominant sectors who play golf. With participants being interviewed after the informed consent, the participants may have felt the need to only speak the positive effects of golf in a way that is socially accepted. This could prevent the understanding of true benefits to the game of golf and its effects on the workplace environment. As the participants were six males and one female, it mainly leaned on the male perspective in the findings and lacked the female perspective who could have experienced golf in a different way. In life satisfaction studies, women and older adults have reported lower life satisfaction and happiness compared to men and the younger population (Bejaković & Kaliterna Lipovčan, 2007). Another limitation this study faced was that all the participants were white and would provide a white perspective.

Future research would benefit from examining the participants of golf in within business professionals to recognize who is included or excluded within demographics. Understanding and identifying those who are excluded could be beneficial in the reasoning behind the participation of golf. As golf is predominantly played by the white communities, future research could consider looking at the marginalized communities to understand the differences in their golfing

experiences if they have one. Different socioeconomic classes could also be examined to see how well-being is experienced as golf is considered an expensive sport. Future researchers could examine specific organizations that implement golf programs or leagues in their workplace environment to compare the effects of golf on individuals and their well-being. This could also include other sport, leisure, or recreational programs such as softball or walking/jogging programs as physical activity and being outdoors has been seen to improve well-being. Therefore, future research could identify the differences in well-being in different physical activities. Additionally, researchers could examine the differences of well-being through the participation of golf within different generations (e.g., Gen X, Millennials, Baby Boomers, and Gen Z). Lastly, future research can benefit from looking at the trust factor that is built from playing golf as it is a contributor to personal and workplace well-being.

### **Conclusion**

This study was created to understand the lived experiences of the participants who are business professionals as it explores the influences of golf on their well-being by playing with coworkers or clients. This study was conducted to grasp a better understanding of a specific phenomenon of interest which are the influences of golf on well-being. The findings found that golf created an outlet to increase well-being by building relationships with other golfers, improve physical and mental well-being as they decrease stress levels caused by personal and workplace issues, and become successful. Playing golf was a way to build trust and rapport that benefit relationships between coworkers or clients that ultimately affect the workplace. By improving work-life well-being, individuals can experience personal well-being (Kim et al., 2019), and this study explored the experiences of business professionals and pertains to the intersection of sport/leisure and experiences at work. As stress increases the level of depression and anxiety and

being emotionally or physically distant to others (Moracco & McFadden, 1982), playing golf is a way to reconstruct current lifestyles to become healthier in a way that copes with stress. Being resilient and open to new experiences can increase the positive and energetic approaches to their view of life (Tugade et al., 2004). Starting to play golf as at a young age will open up a variety of experiences that cultivate positive emotions in the personal live and eventually the workplace environment. Golf can influence the work environment as it is an activity that brings people together and get to know each other better.

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APPENDIX

**APPENDIX A**

**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL**



UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN COLORADO

Institutional Review Board

Date: 05/25/2021  
 Principal Investigator: Marisa Hisaki  
 Committee Action: **IRB EXEMPT DETERMINATION – New Protocol**  
 Action Date: 05/25/2021  
 Protocol Number: [2105025622](#)  
 Protocol Title: Intersection of golf and workplace well-being  
 Expiration Date:

The University of Northern Colorado Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol and determined your project to be exempt under 45 CFR 46.104(d)(7)(2) for research involving

Category 2 (2018): EDUCATIONAL TESTS, SURVEYS, INTERVIEWS, OR OBSERVATIONS OF PUBLIC BEHAVIOR. Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by 45 CFR 46.111(a)(7).

You may begin conducting your research as outlined in your protocol. Your study does not require further review from the IRB, unless changes need to be made to your approved protocol.

**As the Principal Investigator (PI), you are still responsible for contacting the UNC IRB office if and when:**



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- You wish to deviate from the described protocol and would like to formally submit a modification request. Prior IRB approval must be obtained before any changes can be implemented (except to eliminate an immediate hazard to research participants).
- You make changes to the research personnel working on this study (add or drop research staff on this protocol).
- At the end of the study or before you leave The University of Northern Colorado and are no longer a student or employee, to request your protocol be closed. \*You cannot continue to reference UNC on any documents (including the informed consent form) or conduct the study under the auspices of UNC if you are no longer a student/employee of this university.
- You have received or have been made aware of any complaints, problems, or adverse events that are related or possibly related to participation in the research.

If you have any questions, please contact the Research Compliance Manager, Nicole Morse, at 970-351-1910 or via e-mail at [nicole.morse@unco.edu](mailto:nicole.morse@unco.edu). Additional information concerning the requirements for the protection of human subjects may be found at the Office of Human Research Protection website - <http://hhs.gov/ohrp/> and <https://www.unco.edu/research/research-integrity-and-compliance/institutional-review-board/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole Morse".

Nicole Morse  
Research Compliance Manager

University of Northern Colorado: FWA00000784